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Systematic approach to enhance the participation of construction industry SMEs in apprenticeship programs

WP2. Good business practices concerning
apprenticeship in Europe

August 2017

D4. STRATEGIC ROADMAP



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Introduction

Description of WP2

Work Package 2 (WP2) of the Co-Tutor project has been designed for detecting and benchmarking good practices in different EU countries where there is a successful SME's participation in apprenticeship programmes through dual system training, work practices, alternance training, etc., in short, experiences where apprenticeship in a company is combined with vocational education or training in the year course.

This work package has lasted until June 2017, when a Strategic Roadmap has been defined, which proposes some measures and recommendations that will help to overcome the barriers that SMEs find in their way to participate in apprenticeship.

In order to get this general picture and to be able to get valuable information about the models followed in other countries, a series of different and consecutive tasks have been implemented:

Task 1. Good practices analysis, for the identification and definition of successful strategies that some countries are using to involve SMEs in apprenticeship programmes. The main activity of this step was a survey replied by experts from European organisations from countries with a long tradition in apprenticeship programmes. To get respondents involved, partners used their links with two relevant European networks: FIEC (European Construction Industry Federation) and REFORME (network for the Vocational Education and Training in the construction sector in Europe).

Task 2. Analysis of constraints, once the good practices about apprenticeship have been identified and described. Partners have identified the existing barriers that are hindering a fully SME participation in apprenticeship programmes. For that, four (4) Focus Groups have been organised (two groups per country), with participants linked to construction training, construction companies, and employment.

The outcome of these two activities have been reflected in a specific document, named [Report on Good Practices and National Constraints](#)

Task 3. Strategic Roadmap, as a result from the previous two activities, a **Strategic Roadmap** (Task 3) has been designed, which constitutes the third stage of this Work Package, being a strategy oriented towards different stakeholders to propose an action plan that improves the SME participation in apprenticeship.

This Strategic Roadmap is fully described in the present document.

Good practices analysis

The main objective of this task was to identify successful strategies that some EU countries are using to get SMEs involved in apprenticeships programmes. For that purpose, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed to be replied by relevant key informants, representing organisations involved in apprenticeship in their countries.

Their replies have allowed partners to get important information concerning level of institutions' involvement, how to increase the apprenticeship offer by companies, fields where apprenticeship could be improved (marketing, courses definition, mobility, etc.), support measures for companies and apprentices.

Extensive information about the results of this questionnaire may be found in a detailed report, however, some of the most relevant reflections taken out from them were the following:

- Promoting apprenticeship programmes may help to reduce youth unemployment rates.
- In the countries where the dual system is highly implemented, it has been observed that there is a great awareness towards apprenticeship by key actors, and especially by companies.
- In the countries involved in the survey the rate of apprentices being hired at the end of their process is high (around 75%). Hiring apprentices makes sense in those large companies that apply a corporate planning strategy and therefore hire even if they do not have immediate ad hoc positions for them, differently to small companies that hire only for immediate necessity and usually only already skilled workers.
- Social partners are considered important even if their role towards apprenticeship is limited to the definition of the contractual aspects, promotion of training, be present on the board of directors of some training centres and, in some cases, consulted upon the state of educational programmes, but are not decisive in the final version of the regulation.
- Financing comes from the sector (social partners managing training centres or building associations) rather than from the governments (except few cases).
- To the final question *What would you improve and what do you suggest?* some answers are contradictory; they reveal that companies are reluctant to perceive themselves as a training centre (delegating where there are vocational training centres).

Analysis of constraints

The main objective of this second activity integrated in WP2 was to identify which are the existing barriers that are hindering a fully and successful participation of SMEs in apprenticeship programmes, especially in the countries participating in the project (i.e. Italy and Spain). Also, to raise proposals for measures to overcome those barriers and to know and analyse positive experiences carried out in other EU countries.

In order to achieve the aims described above, a series of Focus Groups were planned and organised in both countries (two in Italy and two in Spain). A total of 38 experts have been involved in the groups. Participants were selected according to their profile and their knowledge about the labour market, the construction sector, the SME scope, the training modalities and their relationship with apprenticeship.

The barriers and constraints identified and defined have been the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Lack of training culture | • Legislative deficiencies |
| • Lack of knowledge and information on VET | • Company characteristics (size, structure) |
| • Role of company tutor | • Hours compatibility |
| • Lack of benefits for the company | • Negative image of the sector |
| • Company fear s towards student's capacity for certain tasks | • Lack of time |

- Negative vision on VET (seen as the 'second option')
- No integration between labour world and education/training world

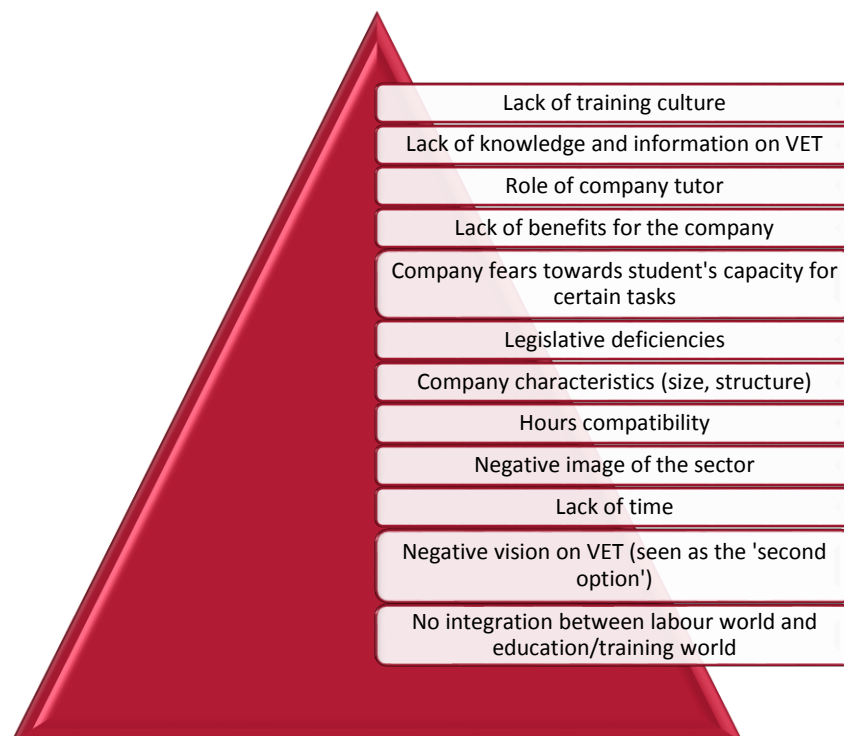
For each of these barriers a series of measures were suggested, in order to overcome the obstacles that the SMEs of the construction sector are to deal with. These measures, in turn, have led to a series of recommendations, which are exhaustively described in the following section, the **Strategic Roadmap**.

STRATEGIC ROADMAP

Barriers and constraints

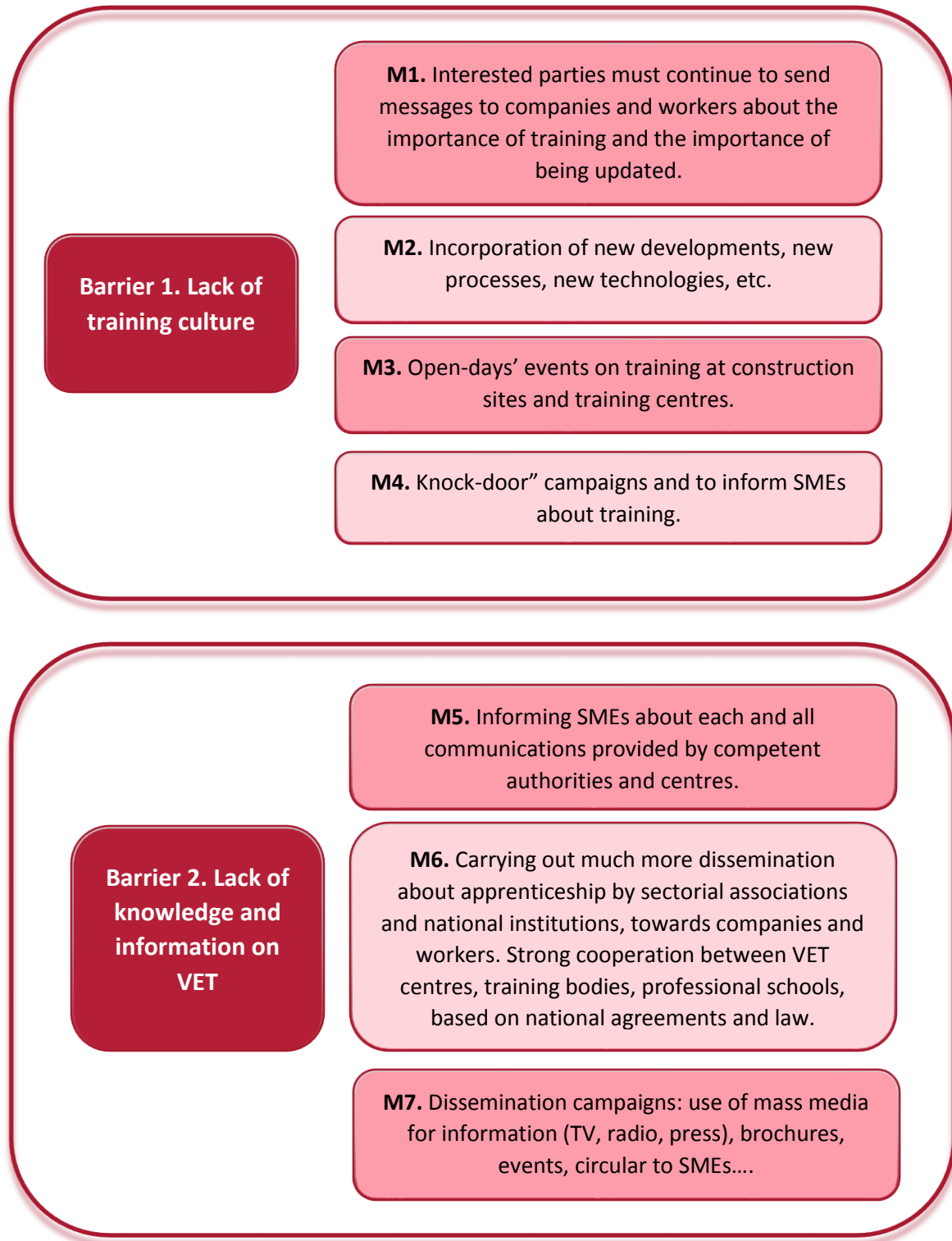
The current **Strategic Roadmap** is the concrete result derived from the previous two activities (*Analysis of Good Practices* and *Analysis of Constraints*), and constitutes a strategy oriented towards different stakeholders in order to propose an action plan to improve the participation of the SMEs from the construction sector in apprenticeship initiatives.

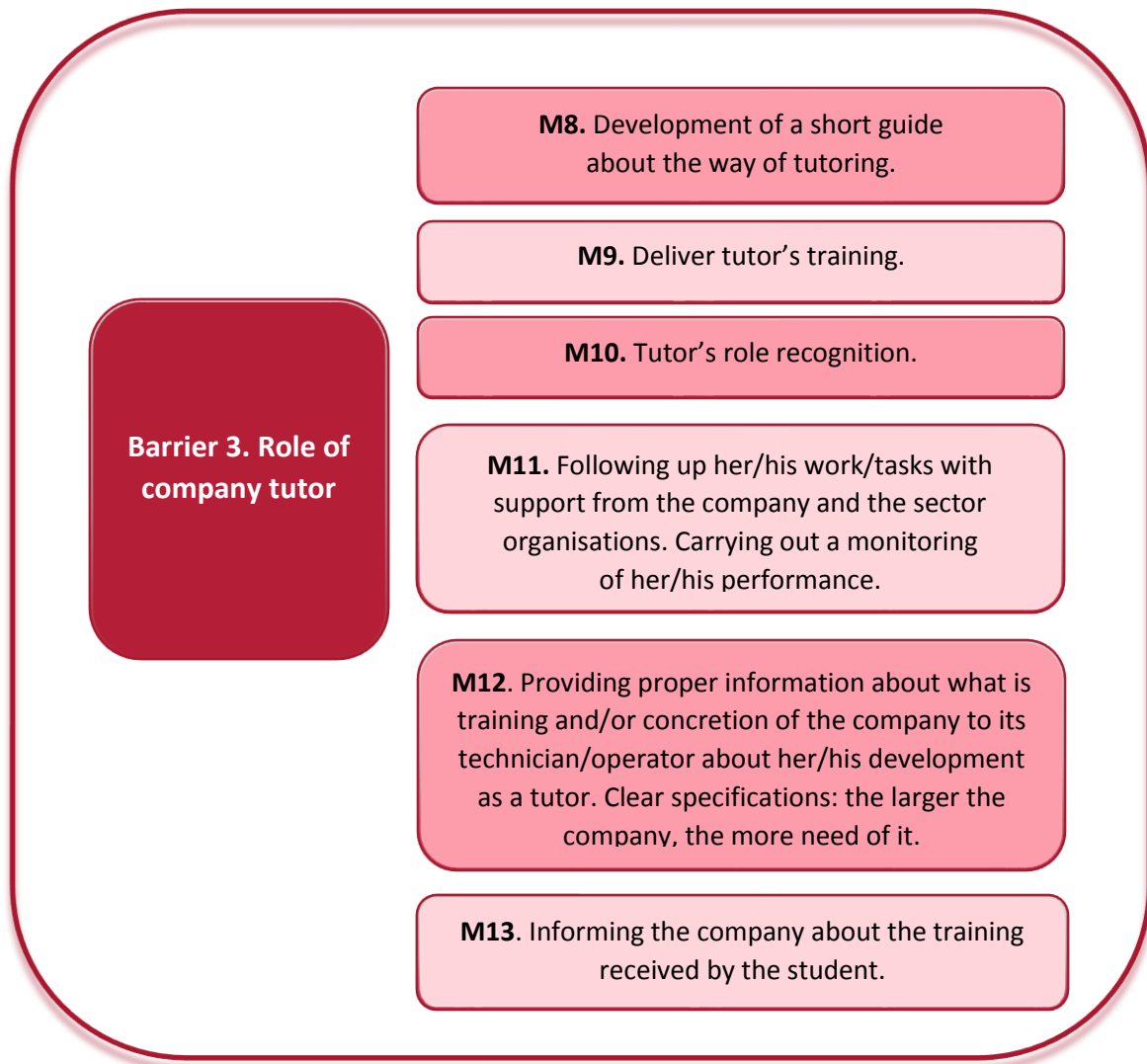
During the first stages, the following barriers and constraints were identified, defined and prioritised by the experts who have actively participated in the project:



Measures proposed

Next step was to propose, for each of these obstacles, a series of measures (**M**) addressed towards overcoming them. Thus, a comprehensive inventory containing the most relevant measures suggested was elaborated.





**Barrier 4. Lack of
benefits for the
company**

M14. Transmission of information through channels that are trusted by the companies (employers' associations, chambers of commerce - in some European countries-, etc.).

M15. Written information about the benefits already existing for the SMEs regarding the incorporation of apprentices, allowing the implied persons to know the value of apprenticeship.

M16. Determine possible (already unknown) benefits that effectively may promote the integration of students/apprentices. These should mainly be economic: bonuses for training contracts, special fiscal incentives for companies with tutors.

M17. For Public Procurement: consider the possibility of hiring a certain percentage of apprentices could be envisaged, and the company should have a strong discount in this cost.

M18. Companies could resort to a kind of qualification for older workers (unemployed over 50 years old) to be tutors inside the small firms in case of public work, co-financed by the Government (i.e., the company that hire older workers could receive a subvention from the Government). The training centres may organise training paths for the company that can help them to maintain the quality level.

Barrier 5. Company fears towards student's capacity for certain tasks

M19. Ex-ante evaluation to determine trainees' skill level.

Barrier 6. Legislative deficiencies

M20. Distinguish, simplify, and specify the scope of the 'practices'.

M21. Inter-relating practices and making them more flexible from the point of view of lifelong learning and the right to training.

M22. Actual activation and application of the legislated training system.

M23. Counselling/advice as the most relevant element.

Barrier 7. Company characteristics (size, structure)

M24. Making Administrations aware of the fact that they have to take construction SMEs characteristics into account for introducing them in the apprenticeship programmes.

Barrier 8. Hours compatibility

M25. Elaborating specific training programmes, with a concrete timing for each student/company, accepted by the Administration.

Barrier 9. Negative image of the sector

M26. Addressing young people, schools and high schools, to show youngsters what are the job opportunities in the construction sector, and the training paths available.

M27. Showing a professional image of the construction sector and its potential, the actions and initiatives developed (infrastructures, rehabilitation, housing, cultural heritage, etc.) to make people aware of the importance of the sector. “This cannot be done by anyone” campaign.

M28. Recommending a certain educational level for those wishing to access the sector (avoidance of the image of low-qualification industry).

M29. To go on working for the improvement of health and safety, training and labour environment, which contribute to a better perception of a construction job.

M30. Using audio-visual campaigns (Radio/TV/Media) to improve sector image.

M31. It is necessary to end with the informal economy, for example through registers of “good companies” or labels.

Barrier 10. Lack of time

M32. Address apprenticeship as another activity to be successful in the business.

M33. The distribution of tasks and HR must be correctly implemented.

Barrier 11. Negative vision on VET (seen as the second option)

M34. Dissemination actions to promote VET.

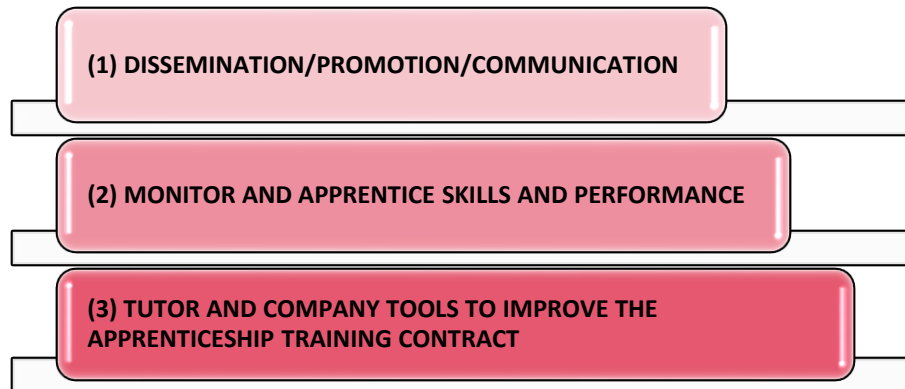
Barrier 12. No integration between labour and education/ training worlds

M35. Implementation and/or improvement of guidance services.

Recommendations suggested

After analysing the constraints faced by SMEs from the construction sector regarding apprenticeship programmes, and reflect about the different measures that could address those barriers, different recommendations for implementing those measures have been suggested.

These recommendations are dealing with different aspects belonging to the field of apprenticeship.



Each of these sections include different recommendations, as indicated below:

1) DISSEMINATION / PROMOTION / COMMUNICATION

- Recommendation 1 *White Paper to reinforce the training culture in SMEs*
- Recommendation 2 *Door-knock campaigns and open-days' events*
- Recommendation 3 *Institutional communication channels to inform and involve SMEs on VET*
- Recommendation 4 *Dissemination campaigns*

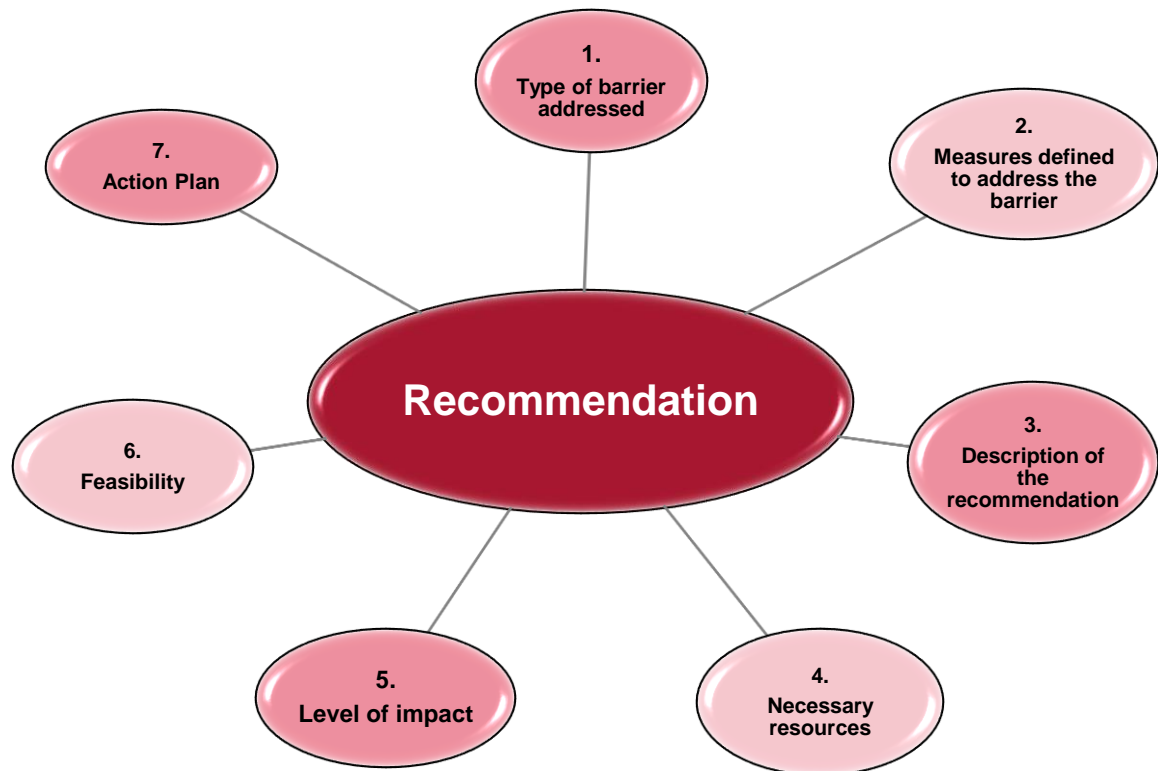
2) TUTOR'S AND APPRENTICE'S SKILLS / PERFORMANCE

- Recommendation 5 *Guide concerning tutoring tasks and functions*
- Recommendation 6 *Evaluation system for tutor's performance*
- Recommendation 7 *Standard document about trainees' skills*
- Recommendation 8 *Practical exam for apprentices*

3) TUTOR AND COMPANY TOOLS TO IMPROVE THE APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING CONTRACT

- Recommendation 9 *Decalogue of apprenticeship benefits*
- Recommendation 10 *Proposal for Public Administration*
- Recommendation 11 *List of older workers to act as in-company tutors*
- Recommendation 12 *White Paper to propose improvements to current legislation*
- Recommendation 13 *Register of companies participating in apprenticeship*
- Recommendation 14 *Orientation and guidance services towards apprenticeship programmes*

Each recommendation is shown in the form of a flashcard, in order to facilitate its understanding, and includes several sections:



1. **Type of barrier addressed.** Each recommendation may refer to one or more barriers from those identified and indicated above. A brief description of each barrier is provided, in order to facilitate its significance and relevance in the context of the project.
2. **Measures defined to address the barrier.** They maintain the same order provided to the different measures proposed for each barrier (M1, M12, etc...).
3. **Description of the recommendations.** After indicating the recommendation proposed for the barriers, a brief description of the recommendation is provided.
4. **Necessary resources.** It refers to the human resources necessary for the implementation: social partners, stakeholders in the construction sector, training experts, labour market experts, training centres, companies...
5. **Level of impact.** The level of impact has been assigned according to partners' perception of the effect and influence that the implementation of a given recommendation would have in the application of apprenticeship programmes in the construction SMEs. Impact may be in some location between high, medium or low.

6. **Feasibility.** The feasibility level has been assigned according to partners' perception in terms of four variables, in a scale from 0 to 100.
- Cost = the higher the number, the more expensive the implementation.
 - Relevance = the higher the number, the more relevant would be the implementation.
 - Probability = the higher the number, the more probable would be for the recommendation to be implemented in the future. A low number would mean scarce probability to be implemented
 - Facility = the higher the number the more easy to be implemented. If the number is low it would mean that the implementation is quite difficult to be carried out.
7. **Action plan.** The action plan would be the period of time necessary for implementation in case the recommendation is finally carried out in the medium/long terms. It is shown in a yearly basis, each year being divided into four periods of three months each.

The following pages shows the information related to each of these recommendations.

Dissemination, promotion and communication actions

Dissemination, promotion and communication actions have confirmed to be the most valuable and effective tools when intending to ensure that the key messages of the initiatives and activities carried out are reaching the target collectives and are clearly understood.

For that purpose, it is important to have clear and specific objectives, and to count on a supporting operative strategy.

In the context of the Co-Tutor project, the following actions are recommended, in order to efficiently deal with several of the barriers identified: lack of training culture; negative image of the sector; lack of knowledge and information on VET; lack of benefits for the company; negative vision on VET (seen as the 'second option').

Recommendation 1

White Paper to reinforce the training culture in SMEs

Recommendation 2

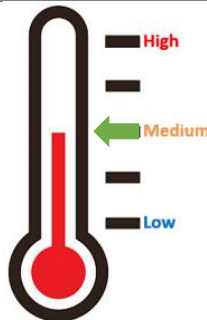
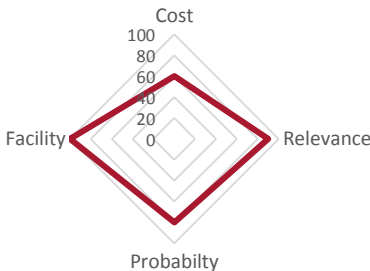
Door-knock campaigns and open-days' events

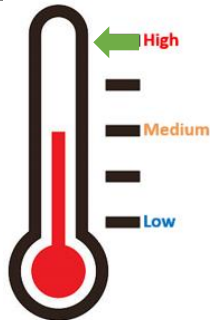
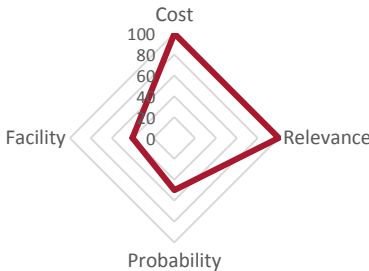
Recommendation 3

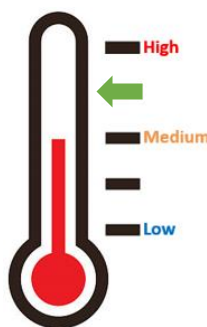
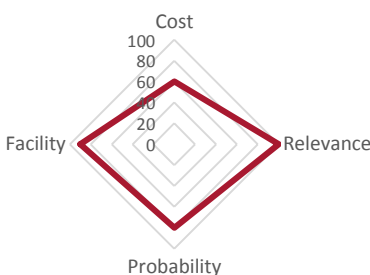
Institutional communication channels to inform and involve SMEs on VET

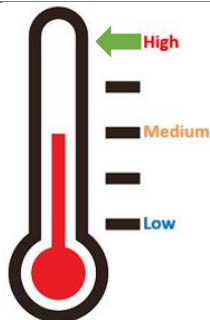
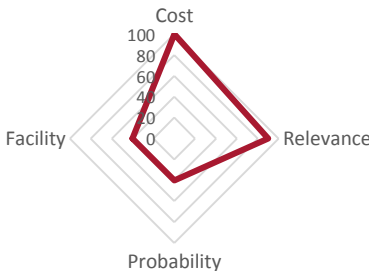
Recommendation 4

Dissemination campaigns

RECOMMENDATION 1											
White Paper to reinforce the training culture in SMEs											
Type of constraint				Lack of training culture							
<p>Even if training is considered necessary by most of the population for increasing the companies' competitiveness, and is usually integrated within the large companies, the situation is quite different in the SMEs. Several studies and analysis show that many SMEs consider training as an expense rather than an investment, due to several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The need to get fast results.• The lack of guarantee of obtaining positive results.• The fear that the worker may go to another company, thus losing the money invested.											
Measures defined to address the constraint											
M1. Messages sent by interested parties to companies and workers about the importance of training and the importance of being updated.											
M2. Incorporation of new developments, new processes, new technologies, etc.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R1. White Paper to reinforce the training culture in SMEs.				<p>In order to deal with the barrier identified, through implementing the measures defined above, the recommendation is to elaborate a <i>White Paper</i>.</p>							
				<p>This document should be used as a guideline geared towards SMEs and workers, stressing the relevance of being updated in terms of training, with regards to any aspect affecting the company: processes, technology, developments, staff, etc.</p>							
				<p>It should be intended to help them to make decisions and especially to raise awareness about the apprenticeship programmes in the construction sector, and should include proposals, suggestions and a line of action.</p>							
				<p>This White Paper will be intended to be used as a consultation document both before starting the training process as well as during and after it has been finished.</p>							
Required resources											
<p>Experts in the construction sector</p> <p>Experts in the general labour market</p> <p>Advisory training experts, especially on VET</p>											
Level of impact				Feasibility analysis							
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 2											
Door-knock campaigns and open-days' events											
Type of constraints				<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of training cultureNegative image of the sector							
Several studies and analysis show that many SMEs consider training as an expense rather than an investment, due to several reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The need to get fast results,The lack of guarantee of obtaining positive results,The fear that the worker may go to another company, thus losing the money invested. Also, it still remains a somehow negative image of the construction sector. The industry needs to change and look into the future, renew it also in the light of technological products and processes, organisational innovations and in line with European directives and recommendations.											
Measures defined to address the constraints											
M3. Open-days' events on training at construction sites and training centres.											
M4. "Door-Knock" campaigns to inform SMEs about training.											
M26. Addressing young people, schools and high schools, to show youngsters what are the job opportunities in the construction sector, and the training paths available.											
M27. Showing a professional image of the construction sector and its potential, the actions and initiatives developed (infrastructures, rehabilitation, housing, cultural heritage, etc.) to make people aware of the importance of the sector. "This cannot be done by anyone" campaign.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R2. Door-knock campaigns and open days' events				Awareness campaigns should be implemented in order to attract SMEs attention towards training and apprenticeship. These actions may be good chances to stress the importance of training to increase competitiveness and to allow SMEs, training centres and students to know the value of the apprenticeship programmes, showing the advantages and benefits that these programmes may provide.							
				These actions should also show a more positive picture of the construction industry, displaying all its potentialities in terms of professionalism and employment.							
Required resources											
Construction social partners Experts in the construction sector Advisory training experts, especially on VET											
Level of impact						Feasibility analysis					
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 3											
Institutional communication channels to inform and involve SMEs on VET											
Type of constraints				<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of knowledge and information on VETLack of benefits for the company							
There is an important lack of knowledge about in-company training and lack of training programmes. Also, there is scarce information about the dual system, how does it work and what does it imply. Some companies know that there exist scholarships for doing practices at work for university or higher VET students; however, they are not aware of the existence of practices alike for students of other training typologies.											
In general, companies –especially SMEs- do not see the benefits of training, and concretely of apprenticeship programmes, and the apprentice is consider an inconvenience rather than an advantage.											
Measures defined to address the constraints											
M5. Informing SMEs about each and all communications provided by competent authorities and centres.											
M6. Carrying out much more dissemination about apprenticeship by sectorial associations and national institutions, towards companies and workers. Strong cooperation between VET centres, training bodies, professional schools, based on national agreements and law.											
M14. Transmission of information through channels that are trusted by the companies (employers' associations, chambers of commerce - in some European countries -, etc.).											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R3. Institutional communication channels to inform and involve SMEs concerning VET				<p>Communication should be provided in an organised manner by stakeholders, social partners and official bodies, addressed towards those collectives and institutions that constitute their target, namely construction SMEs, workers and VET centres (students and trainers).</p> <p>Information must be true, complete and trustworthy, and should appear as the basis of a responsible and constant relationship among all the parties involved.</p>							
Required resources											
Stakeholders and social partners Experts in the construction sector Training experts											
Level of impact						Feasibility analysis					
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 4											
Dissemination campaigns											
Type of constraints				<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of knowledge and information on VETNegative image of the sectorNegative vision on VET (“second option”)							
<p>Apart from the important lack of knowledge and information about VET and in-company training, it is noteworthy that VET is in many occasions considered as a less valuable training option, especially by families and students themselves. This leads to a shortage of young people who will choose VET instead of other type of education (ie. University) –even if there is a trend reversal in the last years-.</p> <p>This, together with the negative image of the construction sector by a good part of the population makes it necessary to carry out dissemination actions for promoting both VET and the sector, as well as to persuade SMEs of the importance of training and apprenticeship for a better performance.</p>											
Measures defined to address the constraints											
M7. Dissemination campaigns: use of mass media for information (TV, radio, press), brochures, events, circular to SMEs....											
M30. Using audio-visual campaigns (Radio/TV/Media) to improve sector image.											
M34. Dissemination actions to promote VET.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R4. Dissemination campaigns				Dissemination activity should be carried out using all the available channels: mass media, brochures and leaflets, social networks, web, external advertising, etc. The channel should be selected according to the desired level of impact, and actions must be clearly focused on the target groups and the aims pursued, to avoid waste of resources, effort and time. The message must be unequivocal and be the same in all the channels utilised.							
Required resources											
Communication experts Stakeholders and social partners Experts in the construction sector Training experts											
Level of impact						Feasibility analysis					
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

Tutor's and apprentice's skills and performance

The research carried out in the project has confirmed that nowadays, the role of the in-company tutor assigned to apprenticeship programmes and processes is not clear enough, or even, this role does not exist as such, due to lack of information or because many companies, especially those with a quite small structure and resources, find it difficult to afford it.

Currently, there is not a clear definition of the role of the company tutor in the apprenticeship programmes, even in large companies. In SMEs this figure is not even considered as such, and this role is assumed by one of the workers or the owner, who, many times consider this task as a burden rather than a challenging benefit for the company.

On the other hand, the role of the apprentice is also quite imprecise and sometimes her/his functions are not clear or there are some preconceptions about her/his capability of performing certain work.

In order to deal with these topics, the following recommendations have been established. , actions are recommended, in order to efficiently deal with several of the barriers identified: lack of training culture; negative image of the sector; lack of knowledge and information on VET; lack of benefits for the company; negative vision on VET (seen as the 'second option').

Recommendation 5

Guide concerning tutoring tasks and functions

Recommendation 6

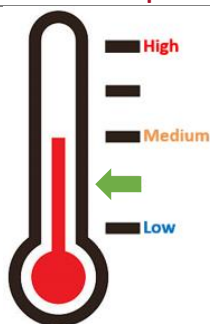
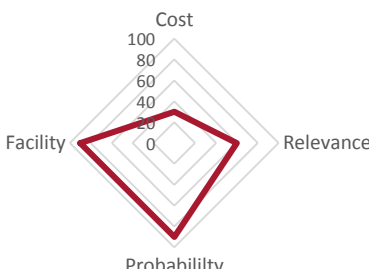
Evaluation system for tutor's performance

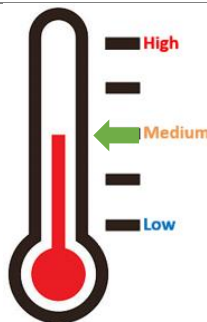
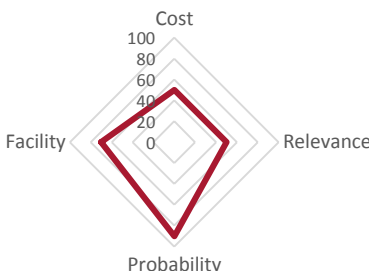
Recommendation 7

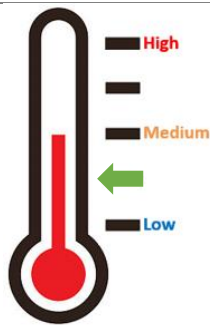
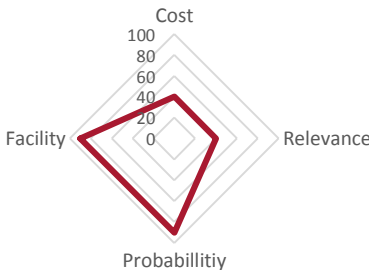
Standard document about trainees' skills

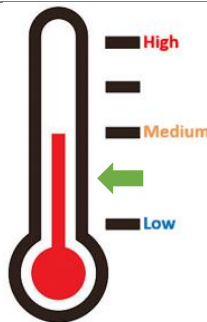
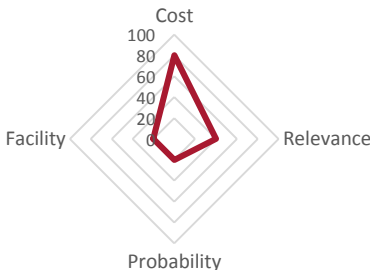
Recommendation 8

Practical exam for apprentices

RECOMMENDATION 5															
Guide concerning tutoring tasks and functions															
Type of constraint								Role of company tutor							
Currently, there is not a clear definition of the role of the company tutor in the apprenticeship programmes, even in large companies. In SMEs this figure is not even considered as such, and this role is assumed by one of the workers or the owner, who, many times consider this task as a burden rather than a challenging benefit for the company.															
In addition, the SMEs structure, particularly the small and micro-companies structure and resources, make it difficult for these companies to afford this figure.															
Thus, for SMEs it is not easy to have a specific person assigned as company tutor, and furthermore, in case they decide to have a company tutor, they don't know which would be the needed criteria for carrying out the selection.															
Measures defined to address the constraint															
M8. Development of a short guide about the way of tutoring.															
Description of the overcoming strategy															
R5. Guide with tips and advices concerning tutoring tasks and functions.								It must be clear that the role of the in-company tutor is the key factor for the success of the apprenticeship programme in the SME. A short document including simple guidelines about the tutor's performance would be of great help to establish the tasks and functions that may be assumed by this tutor.							
								Being a tutor should imply a positive recognition within the company (a person who is able to train others to perform the work in the best way), instead of a problematic responsibility towards the apprentice.							
Required resources															
Social partners Companies Advisory training experts															
Level of impact								Feasibility analysis							
															
Action plan															
2017				2018				2019				2020			

RECOMMENDATION 6															
Evaluation system for tutor's performance															
Type of constraint								Role of company tutor							
Currently, there is not a clear definition of the role of the company tutor in the apprenticeship programmes, even in large companies. In SMEs this figure is not even considered as such, and this role is assumed by one of the workers or the owner, who, many times consider this task as a burden rather than a challenging benefit for the company.															
Measures defined to address the constraint															
M11. Following up her/his work/tasks with support from the company and the sector organisations. Carrying out a monitoring of her/his performance.															
M12. Providing proper information about what is training and/or concretion of the company to its technician/operator about her/his development as a tutor. Clear specifications: the larger the company, the more need of it.															
Description of the overcoming strategy															
R6. Evaluation system for monitoring tutor performance. Observation grid for the company and questionnaire for trainees.								Once the functions of the in-company tutor are clearly defined and described, it is necessary to carry out a follow-up of her/his performance with the aim of ensuring the quality of the training and accompaniment provided, as well as for improvement of the whole programme within the company.							
								This evaluation must never be considered as an 'exam' and the tutor should not feel that s/he is being scrutinised. The result of this monitoring activity should exclusively be used for a better development of the tutor's role and performance.							
Required resources															
Social partners Companies Advisory training experts															
Level of impact								Feasibility analysis							
															
Action plan															
2017				2018				2019				2020			

RECOMMENDATION 7											
Standard document about trainees' skills											
Type of constraint				Role of company tutor							
There is generally a lack of interest by the SME owners and workers in having a specific person acting as a company tutor, because this person will have to combine her/his own work with the activity as tutor. Thus, it is necessary to reinforce the role of the in-company tutor, as well as the learning process in the company, so it can be useful for both parties and for the apprentice.											
Measures defined to address the constraint											
M13. Informing the company about the training received by the student.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R7. Standard document providing information about trainees' skills at the beginning of the apprenticeship programme.				<p>The company and the tutor should be aware of the knowledge, skills and competences owned by the apprentice at the beginning of her/his apprenticeship process, in order to adjust the training procedure as much as possible, allowing for a perfect fitting between the training received in the training centre and the one received in the working place.</p> <p>Also, this will allow to carry out a reliable assessment of the knowledge, skills and competences improved and/or acquired by the students after the finalisation of the programme.</p>							
Required resources											
Stakeholders Training experts Training schools											
Level of impact				Feasibility analysis							
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 8															
Practical exam for apprentices															
Type of constraint				Company fears towards student's capacity for certain tasks											
Companies acknowledge to have some preconceptions and fears about the apprentice's skills towards the performance of certain tasks, especially if they involve the use of material and/or equipment and machinery that the trainee will need to use without having former experience, in order to comply with the training programme.															
Measures defined to address the constraint															
M19. Ex-ante evaluation to determine trainees' skill level.															
Description of the overcoming strategy															
R8. Practical exam				With the purpose of obtaining concrete information about the skills owned by the trainee, it would be highly recommended to have an initial evaluation to check to what extent the student is able to use specific equipment or material.											
				It should only be intended as a way to collect evidence about the apprentices' performance, rather than as an examination, with the aim of adapting the activity and improving the results of the apprenticeship programme.											
				This practical test could be linked to the Standard Document described above (Recommendation 7) as the practical evidence of owning the knowledge, skills and competences indicated in the document.											
Required resources															
Stakeholders Social partners Companies Training schools															
Level of impact								Feasibility analysis							
															
Action plan															
2017				2018				2019				2020			

Tutor and company tools to improve apprenticeship training contract

During the work performed in the project, it has been confirmed that many companies –mainly SMEs- are not aware of the benefits of training and apprenticeship programmes. It may be considered as a cost and implies time that should be taken from other activities.

It is necessary, therefore, to implement initiatives that help tutors and employers to gain knowledge about the potential benefits that apprenticeship programmes may involve for the competitiveness of the company. Recommendations presented in this field are the following.

Recommendation 9

Decalogue of apprenticeship benefits

Recommendation 10

Proposal for Public Administration

Recommendation 11

List of older workers to act as in-company tutors

Recommendation 12

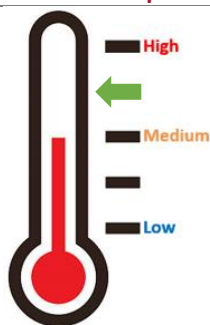
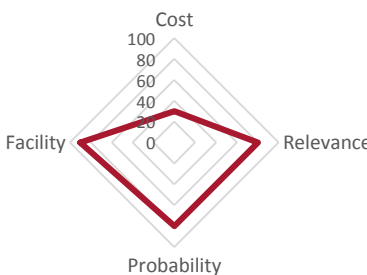
White Paper to propose improvements to current legislation

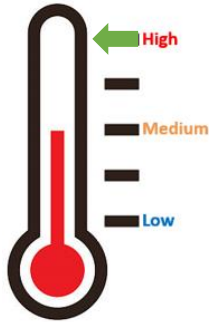
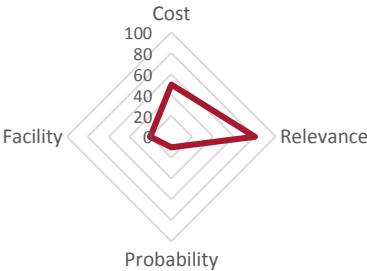
Recommendation 13

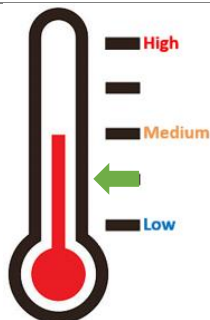
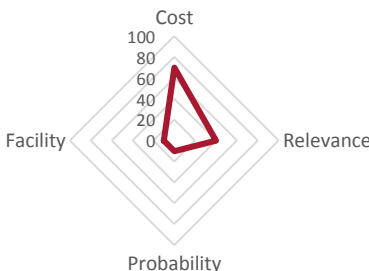
Register of companies participating in apprenticeship

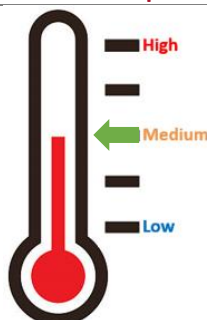
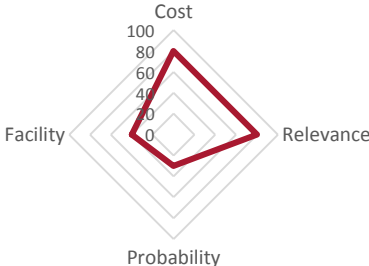
Recommendation 14

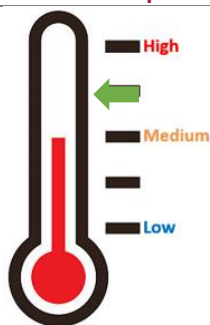
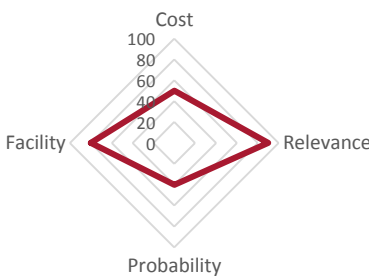
Orientation and guidance services towards apprenticeship programmes

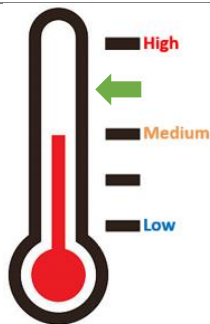
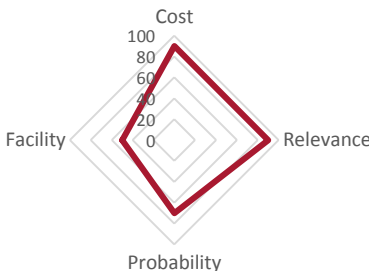
RECOMMENDATION 9			
Decalogue of apprenticeship benefits			
Type of constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of benefits for the companyLack of time		
<p>Companies –mainly SMEs- do not see the benefits of training, or the apprenticeship programmes. In terms of economic issues, this is generally perceived as a cost. In terms of performance and productivity, the companies usually do not find any benefit in incorporating apprentices, and even it is many times perceived as a decrease in productivity.</p> <p>From the perspective of the employer, apprenticeship implies time, that has to be taken from other necessary activities to be performed. There is an important lack of culture regarding the performance of practices periods at work, company does not consider that training is in line with its needs.</p>			
Measures defined to address the constraints			
<p>M15. Written information about the benefits already existing for the SMEs regarding the incorporation of apprentices, allowing the implied persons to know the value of apprenticeship.</p> <p>M16. Determine possible (already unknown) benefits that effectively may promote the integration of students/apprentices. These should mainly be economic: bonuses for training contracts, special fiscal incentives for companies with tutors.</p> <p>M32. Address apprenticeship as another activity to be successful in the business.</p>			
Description of the overcoming strategy			
<p>R9. Decalogue of apprenticeship benefits for construction companies.</p>		<p>This document will include 10 sentences, which, in a simple and clear way, will describe the main and more significant benefits derived from the implementation of apprenticeship programmes in the SMEs of the construction industry.</p> <p>Once designed, it should be spread among the companies and check to what extent it has been understood and accepted by addressees.</p>	
Required resources			
<p>Stakeholders</p> <p>Social partners</p> <p>Training experts</p>			
Level of impact		Feasibility analysis	
			
Action plan			
2017		2018	
2019		2020	

RECOMMENDATION 10											
Proposal for Public Administration											
Type of constraint				Lack of benefits for the company							
Companies and more in particular construction SMEs do not see the benefits of training and apprenticeship programmes. In terms of economic issues, this is generally perceived as cost. In terms of performance and productivity, the companies usually do not find any benefit in incorporating apprentices, and even it is many times perceived as a decrease in productivity.											
In addition to that, there are different legal barriers and burdens that should be overcome.											
Measures defined to address the constraint											
M17. For Public Procurement: consider the possibility of hiring a certain percentage of apprentices could be envisaged, and the company should have a strong discount in this cost.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R10. Proposal for public entities to consider this possibility during procurement process and fiscal benefits to companies participating in apprenticeship programmes.				One of the main resistances against apprenticeship is the perception that it would imply spending a significant amount of money and time.							
				As participation in apprenticeship programmes is done under a voluntary basis, the interested parties may launch the proposal of providing some kind of incentives to those companies hiring a certain number of apprentices when participating in Public Procurement processes.							
				This proposal should be launched after attaining a consensus among all the involved stakeholders, according to the legal framework on public procurement and after the removal of current legal barriers and burdens that impede the promotion of apprenticeship and training contracts at the moment. It is important to take into account the compatibility with the principle of efficiency in public spending and the principle of freedom of enterprise and also the proportionality with the object of the contract.							
Required resources											
Stakeholders											
Social partners											
Level of impact						Feasibility analysis					
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 11											
List of older workers to act as in-company tutors											
Type of constraint				Lack of benefits for the company							
Companies –mainly SMEs- do not see the benefits of training and apprenticeship programmes. In terms of economic issues, this is generally perceived as a cost. In terms of performance and productivity, the companies usually do not find any benefit in incorporating apprentices, and even it is many times perceived as a decrease in productivity.											
Measures defined to address the constraint											
M18. Companies could resort to a kind of qualification for older workers (unemployed over 50) to be tutors inside the small firms in case of public work, co-financed by the Government (i.e., the company that hire older workers could receive a subvention from the Government). The training centres may organise training paths for the company that can help them to maintain the quality level.											
Description of the overcoming strategy											
R11. List of potential older workers that may act as in-company tutors				With the purpose of avoiding the loss of knowledge and know-how of companies, a good initiative would be to create a register containing information regarding unemployed workers over 50 years of age who would be willing to take over the role of in-company tutor for apprentices.							
				This pursues a threefold objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transference of knowledge from older workers to young people.• Employment of unemployed people (whose employability is challenging due to age).• Implementation of apprenticeship programmes.							
Required resources											
Stakeholders Social partners											
Level of impact				Feasibility analysis							
											
Action plan											
2017			2018			2019			2020		

RECOMMENDATION 12			
White Paper to propose improvements to current legislation			
Type of constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Legislative deficienciesCompany characteristics (size, structure)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hours compatibilityNegative image of the sector
The barriers identified above may, to a certain extent, be tackled with the introduction of the current recommendation (White Paper with proposals to improve legislation). All these are considered as obstacles that hinder the introduction of apprenticeship programmes in the construction SMEs: confusing regulation about training, fragmented legislation, administrative impediments and lack of flexibility for SMEs, differences between companies, negative picture of the construction sector...			
Measures defined to address the constraints			
M20. Distinguish, simplify, and specify the scope of the practices’.			
M21. Inter-relate practices and make them more flexible from the point of view of lifelong learning and the right to training.			
M22. Actual activation and application of the legislated training system.			
M23. Counselling/advice as the most relevant element.			
M24. Making Administrations aware of the fact that they have to take construction SMEs characteristics into account for introducing them in the apprenticeship programmes.			
M25. Elaborating specific training programmes, with a concrete timing for each student/company, accepted by the Administration.			
M28. Recommending a certain educational level for those wishing to access the sector (avoidance of the image of low-qualification industry).			
M29. Keep on working for the improvement of health and safety, training and labour environment, which contribute to a better perception of the construction jobs.			
Description of the overcoming strategy			
R12. White Paper agreed by stakeholders to propose improvements to current legislation.	With the intention of trying to implement the measures defined above, it has been suggested to elaborate a White Paper after an agreement among interested parties, with proposals and guidelines for the revision of the current legislation affecting construction SMEs and training, which may be of some help when addressing social dialogue among sectorial stakeholders.		
	It should be intended to be a supporting tool to find meeting points on common interests and to facilitate decision-making.		
Required resources			
Stakeholders Social partners Training experts Companies			
Level of impact		Feasibility analysis	
			
Action plan			
2017		2018	
2019		2020	

RECOMMENDATION 13															
Register of companies participating in apprenticeship															
Type of constraint								Negative image of the sector							
The construction industry is highly complex and diverse and several changes are being experimented in terms of innovation, technology and production; however, in terms of employment the sector is still considered critically by most part of the population, partly due to the intrinsic nature of the construction activity (hard work), high mobility and low qualification.															
Measures defined to address the constraint															
M31. It is necessary to end with the informal economy, for example through registers of “good companies” or labels.															
Description of the overcoming strategy															
R13. Register of companies that participate in apprenticeship programmes.								Construction companies participating in apprenticeship programmes could be included in a register available for relevant stakeholders.							
								The purpose of this document would be to let others know which companies are carrying out good practices in terms of training, and to allow training centres and students to select a proper place to perform the practical part of the dual training programme.							
Required resources															
Stakeholders Companies															
Level of impact								Feasibility analysis							
															
Action plan															
2017				2018				2019				2020			

RECOMMENDATION 14															
Orientation and guidance services towards apprenticeship programmes															
Type of constraint				Lack of integration between labour and education/training worlds											
There is no true integration between the world of school and the business world, it does not adequately prepare young people to work and does not provide the basic skills for an easy business inclusion. School must also provide adequate guidance services in terms of professional career.															
Measures defined to address the constraint															
M35. Implementation and/or improvement of guidance services.															
Description of the overcoming strategy															
R14. Setting up orientation and guidance services towards apprenticeship programmes				In order to tackle the poor connection between education and business, it would be recommended to set up guidance services where relevant and valuable information about apprenticeship programmes should be available for students and trainers.											
				Individual and/or group sessions should be organised for students to help them make a decision regarding the kind of activities they may perform and which companies are available to carry out the practices, in order to point their actions towards a successful professional career.											
Required resources															
Stakeholders Training experts Sectorial experts															
Level of impact								Feasibility analysis							
															
Action plan															
2017				2018				2019				2020			

Conclusions

This Strategic Roadmap has been established based on the exhaustive analysis of the constraints and obstacles faced by the construction SMEs for the introduction and implementation of apprenticeship programmes. These imply the hosting of apprentices enrolled in dual training systems, where practices in companies are carried out together with the training in an educational centre.

For this analysis a good number of experts have participated providing relevant knowledge about the construction sector, the labour market, the VET sphere, etc.

A total of 12 main barriers have been defined, and these have led to 35 specific measures that may be implemented to deal with these barriers. In turn, 14 specific strategic recommendations proposed, addressed towards the execution of the suggested measures, have been established.

From this analysis, the barriers identified thanks to the cooperation of relevant experts have been decisive in the configuration of the Roadmap, which is adapted to the needs and structural characteristics of the SMEs of the construction sector in Italy and Spain. Among the obstacles, the ones considered as most important are those related to the lack of training culture in the companies –especially SMEs–, as well as the lack of information about apprenticeship and VET.

Actions intended to deal with these barriers in order to solve them to the maximum possible extent are, in the context of the Co-Tutor Project, in line with the [European Alliance for Apprenticeship](#) (EAfA), whose main aim is to *strengthen the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships in Europe*. This platform was launched in July 2013 to support youth employment and the transition from education and training to the working world through apprenticeship programmes, a form of work-based learning that has been proven to be successful in several European countries.

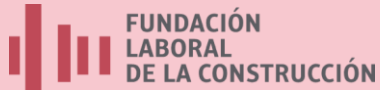
The proposed recommendations have been detailed in fact sheets. In them, project partners have intended to establish a prioritisation of actions, according to criteria of relevance, probability, facility and cost. It is not a simple task due to probable subjectivity, however, consensus among partners has been reached, based on their experience and knowledge of the sector and the educational/training aspects.

The following table may serve as a final conclusion, as it shows recommendations in a prioritised way (in percentage), where:

- Relevance refers to the importance of the proposed recommendation to deal with the barriers identified for the implementation of apprenticeship programmes in construction SMEs in Italy and Spain.
- Probability refers to the existing perspective that the recommendation may be developed and implemented considering the current situation of the sector and the SMEs and the future situation.
- Facility refers to the disposition and available developments from the technical point of view.
- Cost refers to the estimation for the initiation, development and implementation of the recommendation.

No.	RECOMMENDATION	RELEVANCE (%)	PROBABILITY (%)	FACILITY (%)	COST (%)
3	Institutional communication channels to inform and involve SMEs on VET	100	80	90	60
2	Door-knock campaigns and open-days' events	100	50	40	100
1	White Paper to reinforce the training culture in SMEs	90	80	100	60
14	Orientation and guidance services towards apprenticeship programmes	90	70	50	90
13	Register of companies participating in apprenticeship	90	40	80	50
4	Dissemination campaigns	90	40	40	100
9	Decalogue of apprenticeship benefits	80	80	90	30
12	White Paper to propose improvements to current legislation	80	30	40	80
10	Proposal for Public Administration	80	10	20	50
5	Guide concerning tutoring tasks and functions	60	90	60	30
6	Evaluation system for tutor's performance	50	90	70	50
7	Standard document about trainees' skills	40	90	90	40
8	Practical exam for apprentices	40	20	20	80
11	List of older workers to act as in-company tutors	40	10	10	70

Project's coordinator



Fundación Laboral de la Construcción
España (FLC). Spain

Partners



Confederación Nacional de la
Construcción
España (CNC). Spain



Associazione Nazionale Costruttori Edili
(ANCE). Italy



Ente per la Formazione e l'addestramento
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