

SPANISH FINAL VALORIZATION EVENT

APPRENTICESHIPS AND HIGHER EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

(October 30th, 2019)

The Spanish Final Valorization Event took place at the premises of the School of Labour Relations of the Complutense University of Madrid, from 9:45 to 13:30 h.

Not taking into account four members of the Appr team (3 UCM, 1 AEDHE), the following 17 participants attended, adding up a total number of **21 people**.

	Name	Institution	Position
1	Angel Goya	Comunidad de Madrid	Training Subdirector
2	César Rodríguez Casero	IES Alonso de Avellaneda	Jefatura de Estudios FP Dual y Ampliada
3	Cristina Sánchez Baeza	IES Alonso de Avellaneda	Apprentice
4	Eva García Cívico	Cámara de Comercio de Madrid	Responsible of VET and dual training programs
5	Federico Morán	Fundación para el Conocimiento Madri+d	Director
6	Jorge Torrents	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Director of the School of Labour Relations
7	Juan Ramón Velasco	Universidad de Alcalá de Henares	Vice-rector
8	Mario Garcés	The Mindkind	Director
9	Margarita Barañano	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Director of the Department of Applied Sociology
10	Marta del Castillo Coba	Consultora especializada en formación	
11	Mercè Chacón	Generalitat de Cataluña	Director General for Planning in the field of universities & research
12	Millán Arroyo	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Associate Professor
13	Mónica Moso	Fundación Bankia para la Formación dual	Head of the Knowledge and Innovation Centre for Dual+
14	Pilar Vázquez	Alianza para la FP Dual	Consultant for educational institutions
15	Ramón Paredes	Wandetec Management	Director

16	Salvador Lorenzo	Repsol	Diversity Manager
17	Víctor Sardá	Technical School of Construction of the Politechnic University of Madrid	Director of student's and Institutional affairs

We had different types of participants:

- Management positions in public administrations: 3
- Academic managers (HEI and VET): 3
- Academics interested in the subject: 3
- Aprendice: 1
- Managers in institutions devoted to the promotion of VET and dual training programs: 2
- Chamber of commerce: 1
- SME /Large firms Managers: 4

The main objective of seminar was to disseminate the findings and tools of the ApprEnt project and to discuss some crucial issues related to VET and HE apprenticeships in Spain.

The agenda of the meeting was:

1) WELCOME

2) PRESENTATION OF THE APPRENT PROJECT

Three members of the ApprEnt Project presented our main results and tools: Lucila Finkel gave a general presentation of the Project (using PowerPoint), Pilar Parra presented the main tools (every participant had a set of copies translated into Spanish) and Mª José Díaz Santiago explained, with the help of a Powerpoint presentation, the main features of the prototype course for mentors.

3) ROUNDTABLE: LEARNING FROM THE VET APPRENTICESHIP' EXPERIENCE

The moderator (Iñaki Vilela, from AEDHE) posed some questions to the participants, which are summarized below:

- **In your opinion and knowledge of other systems in other countries, ¿what are the main difficulties to face in the implementation of a dual training system in Spain?**

Participants pointed out several factors: the labour-legal constraints (our “contrato de formación y aprendizaje” is not working well and is very limited), the fact that our programs need to be more modular and the problem of the design of our educational itineraries that are very rigid and stable in time.

We need a much more flexible legal framework, more implication of the different stakeholders and design the educational itineraries together with the enterprise.

- **How can we get SMEs to be more involved in apprenticeships?**

One participant pointed out that the responsibility for the slow implantation of the apprenticeship model is not of the educational system. Big firms are aware of its importance, but small companies tend to use excuses such as no time to teach, no economic rewards, etc. The problem of the Spanish market is that it seeks competitiveness based on low salaries and not on qualifications.

To overcome these problems, it is necessary to show the benefits of apprenticeships as we have done in the ApprEnt project.

The representatives of the Alianza para la FP dual and of Fundación Bankia para la Formación Dual explain that their work help to facilitate and accompany the enterprise into this new model of teaching and learning. Transferability of results (good practices) is very important. In addition, it is crucial to train teachers and employees to become supervisors and mentors and explain SMEs that through apprenticeships they can be prepared for the challenge of the next generational relief.

- **How do you think interrelation between firms and educational institutions can be improved?**

Participants talk about “capillarity”, that is, the spread of the benefits of apprenticeships. If one firm adopts it, other firms from the same sector might get to understand its importance and benefits. Also, in some sectors, if the matrix company incorporates apprentices, the smaller companies of the value chain might consider the possibility of entering into the apprenticeship world.

In relation to mentor training, participants believe that training should be develop to both the academic supervisor and the firm mentor, and in our national context, it is very important to insist in the idea that an apprentice is not a regular worker. In addition, it is necessary to develop a legal attachment through a contract.

Another issue that we need to take into account is the importance of the curriculum. Apprenticeship in itself is fine, but only if there exists a pedagogical plan to assure proper development of the apprentice. This idea is linked to mentor training, since pedagogical techniques need to be incorporated in the training of mentors and supervisors.

- **How the relationship between firms and educational institutions can became a success?**

Most of the remarks dealt with the issue of helping SMEs in many ways: mentor training, better and simplified regulations, incorporating the unions into the negotiations, joint curriculum design, and trying to change the idea of professional prestige. If people are proud of the interconnection between the educational and the work worlds, and they clearly see the benefits of the apprenticeships, it would be easier to devise successful formulas in order to advance in its implementation.

4) ROUNDTABLE: APPRENTICESHIPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moderator: Lucila Finkel, UCM.

The ApprEnt team coordinator explains that there are some interesting initiatives taking place at Spanish Universities, concentrated in the Basque Country and in Cataluña. It is important to take into account that the translation into Spanish of the term "Apprenticeship" is not always very clear, since "aprendizaje" has a similar meaning than the term "learning", and does not necessarily refers to a model in which learning takes place outside the education institution. Therefore, we chose to explain the term and use instead "dual-learning experiences" or "dual-vet programs". We started with three main preliminary questions:

- **How do you foresee apprenticeships in Higher Education in our country?**

Participants pointed out the fact that, despite our history with "universidades laborales" which no longer exists, the Spanish University System is different from other countries because we do not have universities of applied science and research universities, and therefore it is more difficult to think of dual-learning experiences. In addition, we need to take into account that the validation of prior learning has not started at Higher Education.

The representative of the Catalonian Regional Government explained how they are working in Cataluña to regulate apprenticeships, not only in formal education but also in the system of employment professional training (certificados de profesionalidad).

- **Do you think that the VET apprenticeships experience in Spain is important for universities?**

There is a general agreement that there are many issues that can be applied to higher education, although one must consider some peculiarities and problems:

- Higher education is challenged by non-formal knowledge that is taught within companies or by big companies (for example, Microsoft).
- Many needs of qualification require rapid responses that universities are not prepared to offer, since it takes a couple of years to design and get a new degree approved.
- In Spain, companies do not recognize the value of a doctoral degree and sometimes they avoid hiring people with a Ph.D. because "they wasted many years of their career". If you want to promote Industrial Doctorates (which is a form of a research apprenticeship), enterprises must change this view.

- **How can accreditation agencies help to foster apprenticeships at higher education?**
 The moderator presented the Basque Country regulation agency (UNIBASQ) document that sets up the requirements for a degree to be considered dual. It is the only agency that has regulated it.
 The Director of the Madrid' agency pointed out that the responsibility for the approval of new degrees is not entirely them, since the University Council has the last word. Nevertheless, he proposed to create a committee with some of the participants to start working on a new regulation for the Madrid region. It was a very hopeful proposal!
- **What challenges do universities face in adopting apprenticeship schemes?**
 Participants posed some ideas on this issue:
 - As already discussed, one of the main problems is the current lack of regulations.
 - Another problem is the fact that in 2010, Spain adopted the 4+1 system (4 years for a bachelor degree and 1 year for a master's degree). The number of credits for the final dissertation work is limited, so it is not easy to spend enough time in a lab, for example.
 - There are some legal restrictions in allowing external staff to teach in formal degrees.
 - Labour markets change rapidly, and universities require time to implement changes.

However, despite all these potential drawbacks, there was a general agreement of the importance of apprenticeships and the necessity to start moving on. As one participant pointed out "VET apprenticeship has helped to create a dual culture, and it will happen in universities as well".

5) CONCLUSIONS

The Spanish team concluded by expressing our gratitude for attending, and summarizing some of the main points that were tackled during the Seminar. Some participants expressed their willingness to keep in touch and meet again in the future to continue exchanging information and ideas on the VET and University dual system in Spain.