

# Challenges and recommendations

## Attractiveness/ Image of VET

- VET is not attractive and has a bad image in comparison to higher education. It is necessary to increase the attractiveness by informing enterprises, schools, parents and pupils about the strengths of the VET system and career opportunities. Important factors for increasing VET's attractiveness are income for apprentices and raising the quality of apprenticeships.

## Micro enterprises

- The vast majority of companies in Southern European countries are micro enterprises with less than 10 employees. These companies often don't have the resources and capacities for providing good apprenticeships. Moreover, they are often „*closed shops*“ due to family business. There is a special need for supporting structures and financial resources for apprenticeships in these companies. There should be additional incentives for family companies to open their apprenticeships for non-family-members.

## Lack of control

- The VET system lacks of control mechanisms that protect apprentices of misuse and guarantee good apprenticeship. So, it is important to clarify and document rights and obligations of apprentices and of apprenticing companies. Trade unions should have the possibility to control the performance of apprenticeships and apprentices should have the possibility to articulate their interests.

## Funding and Financing

- There are either limited or non existing structures for financing apprenticeship. It is necessary to initiate a dialogue process with all relevant stakeholders in order to discuss solutions.

## Governance

- The existing governance structures neither consider the needs of the labour market nor the interests of apprentices. The reasons for that are on the one hand that trade unions are often not adequately involved in the governance of VET. On the other hand the VET system is governed top down. So, the local needs and interests are not considered adequately. It is necessary to involve the trade unions more actively in the governance structures and to strengthen the local level. Moreover, the governance should follow a long-term perspective and guarantee an long-term reliability.

## Framework conditions

- In some countries there is a lack of vocational orientation for pupils. So, there is a need for a better infrastructure of vocational orientation. Moreover, the apprenticeships in companies should be supported by educational services in a better way. It is necessary to promote a structure of educational services.

**The partners agree on the need for transnational exchange and cooperation to promote good apprenticeship in Europe. They look forward continuing this process.**