INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING TRAINEESHIPS IN TURKEY

An assessment of the extent and quality of traineeship provision

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

PREFACE

This report assesses the extent and quality of existing traineeships in initial vocational education and training (IVET) in Turkey in the context of the European Training Foundation's (ETF) strategic project on vocational education and training (VET) provision and quality assurance. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the ETF's multiannual action aiming to support Turkey in the implementation of the European Union (EU) Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs) on work-based learning (WBL) through an evidence-based and multi-stakeholder approach.

The report consists of main findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the desk review and empirical research to support the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in policy- and decision-making to improve the quality of traineeships in IVET.

The report comprises six chapters. Whilst Chapter 1 presents the rationale for the study, Chapter 2 introduces the methodology and methodological instruments used for data collection and analysis. Chapter 3 is based on desk review findings looking at the international, European and national contexts, as well as the extent and quality of the existing traineeship provision. Chapter 4 presents the empirical research findings based on stakeholders' perspectives. In this chapter, strengths of IVET traineeship implementation and key challenges of the quality of traineeships are explored. Chapter 5 draws conclusions along eight main axes of traineeships: governance; provision; funding; teacher and company trainer competences; certification and recognition of teachers and company trainers; selection, guidance and motivation of trainees; assessment and quality assurance; and social inclusion. Chapter 6 explores key priorities identified by the European Apprentices Network in *Key priorities for quality apprenticeships* (EAN, 2018) and lists a set of recommendations built on findings and conclusions about the existing IVET traineeship system in Turkey.

1. RATIONALE

Given today's challenging technological and economic climate, countries seek ways to skill, upskill or reskill their workforce, for young people and adults alike, mobilising both the public and private sectors to gain a competitive edge and, at the same time, ensuring their citizens have enriched learning experiences in school, work and daily life. Cooperative energy and effort of both sectors to address today's challenges can only be efficient and effective when all key players, elements and processes in the system are well integrated.

VET, through WBL, distributes or alternates the learning workload between two subsystems: the school and the enterprise. WBL exists at all levels, sectors and modalities: from IVET to post-secondary/non-tertiary VET and continuing VET (CVET) in higher education; in formal, non-formal and informal education sectors; in apprenticeships, traineeships/alternance/cooperative learning, internships, virtual learning; and in job familiarisation modes in pre-VET such as job shadowing.

As there are strengths of learning in school and the workplace, a coherent set of standards, tools, players and processes is necessary to bring the two worlds together and ensure that these subsystems complement each other and work well together.

Bringing the school and work together, learners, employers and essentially the whole society benefit from a quality WBL system: economic incentives for employers, rights for learners, reduced youth unemployment, and social inclusion are all such effects of a quality system.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study has involved the collection and analysis of both primary and secondary data and information to support the assessment of the extent and quality of existing traineeships in IVET in Turkey: (1) the desk review and analysis of all relevant national documents and selected international publications related to the quality and quality assurance of traineeships in IVET since 2005 from national and donor projects and international good practices of WBL; and (2) empirical research comprising an online survey and qualitative interviews.

The methodological instruments employed for primary data collection and analysis were questionnaire surveys and interviews with IVET stakeholders in Turkey.

2.1 Questionnaire surveys

Questionnaire surveys were instrumental for providing the data and information necessary for (descriptive) statistics used to analyse the perceived quality of traineeships as part of IVET programmes. The stakeholder groups targeted with the surveys include the following:

1. IVET institutions involved in traineeships (through teachers and vice principals responsible for the traineeship processes);
2. students undertaking traineeships;
3. employers/enterprises as providers of traineeships.

The survey was conducted online since this method allowed a large number of respondents to be reached in a cost-effective and efficient way. The survey focused on traineeships (işletmelerde beceri eğitimi) only and excluded apprenticeships and internships (staj).

The survey covered all sectors/IVET programmes in Turkey. This approach has the advantage of presenting a complete picture of the quality of traineeships in Turkey without an attribution of results to certain sectors/programmes. Therefore, the findings and policy recommendations can be used as an input for developing and improving WBL policies for all sectors/IVET programmes.

The survey was implemented in 26 provinces selected from each Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) II region according to their level of development using a socio-economic development index (TC. Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2013) in order to have a balanced and representative sample for Turkey. In addition to these two main criteria, population size (i.e. the number of students and teachers in IVET schools) and gross domestic product were also taken into account for the list of provinces.

For students and teachers covered by the survey, a representative sample with 99% confidence interval and 0.01 margin of error was calculated. The online survey, which was implemented between 21 March 2018 and 9 April 2018, was answered by 10 285 respondents from 1 049 IVET schools in 26 selected provinces. A total of 5 919 respondents answered the employers/enterprises survey and there were 31 373 student responses.

2.2 Interviews

As part of the fieldwork for the study to analyse the quality of traineeships in VET in Turkey, led by the ETF, a series of 26 group interviews with stakeholders were conducted in Ankara, Bursa, Gaziantep and Antalya between 6 March 2018 and 25 April 2018. The aim of these interviews was to find out the current situation in relation to quality of traineeships in IVET, complementing the field survey, with a special focus on elements such as governance, provision, funding of traineeships, teacher and company trainer competences, certification and recognition of teachers and company trainers, selection, guidance and motivation of trainees, and quality assurance.

Interviewees included selected providers (employers) offering traineeships in IVET, representatives from VET institutions involved (directors or school–enterprise liaison persons), students and graduates from IVET programmes who underwent traineeships, and social partners and ministry/agency officials in charge of traineeships in VET.

The list of stakeholders interviewed was identified in consultation with the MoNE prior to the fieldwork (see Figure 2.1).

FIGURE 2.1 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS HELD BETWEEN 6 MARCH 2018 AND 25 APRIL 2018

MoNE	Teachers	Trainees	Companies	Social partners
Deputy Undersecretary	Ankara Balgat MTAL	Ankara Balgat MTAL	Ankara Elimko	TOBB
DG TVET	Bursa Hürriyet MTAL	Bursa Hürriyet MTAL	Ankara 100.Yıl Arçelik Servis	TESK
Provincial Directorate	Gaziantep H.M.B MTAL	Gaziantep H.M.B. MTAL	Bursa Elektronya	TISK
	Antalya Merkez MTAL	Antalya Merkez MTAL	Bursa Kordem Yetkili Servis	Gaziantep Chamber of Industry
			Gaziantep Zer Yağ	Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce
			Gaziantep Ergün Kimya	Antalya Chamber of Commerce and Industry
			Antalya Fiat Pınarbaşı Servis	TAŞPAKON
			Antalya Seviye Elektronik	

Notes: DG TVET – Directorate General for Technical and Vocational Education and Training; MTAL – Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School; TESK – Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen; TISK – Confederation of Employers Union of Turkey; TOBB – Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey; TAŞPAKON – Confederation of All Cooks and Confectioners

Source: Author's own

3. BACKGROUND FROM DESK RESEARCH FINDINGS

WBL has become a key global area of interest for all countries reforming their VET systems to increase VET relevance and appeal. A special policy agenda has been promoted in the EU for VET through the so-called Riga Conclusions (Council of the European Union, 2016). In June 2015, the ministers in charge of VET from the EU Member States, candidate countries, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein, as well as the social partners and representatives of the European Commission, endorsed the Riga Conclusions, which represent a significant milestone in strengthening the European VET policy agenda from 2015 to 2020. The EU Riga Conclusions established five MTDs, one of which is 'Promoting WBL in all its forms with special attention to apprenticeships, by involving social partners, companies, chambers of industry and commerce and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship'. Countries agreed to implement the MTDs until 2020 which will be monitored by EU agencies, namely Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) for Member States and the ETF for candidate countries.

The Riga Conclusions also gave the mandate to the ETF to support Turkey and the other candidate countries in the implementation of the MTDs. As all candidate countries have chosen WBL as their priority MTD, in 2016 the ETF started to support each country in the development of policy options for WBL through an ex-ante impact assessment. The ex-ante impact assessment report on Turkey was done in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT) and Directors General for Vocational Education and Training (DGVT) members from Turkey, and was finalised in March 2017.

The ex-ante impact assessment of WBL in Turkey, done in close cooperation with the MoNE, identified three major policy options that were assessed positively for their mid-term impact (2020) concerning image, attractiveness and quality of VET as well as relating to benefits for businesses and public finance of VET.

It was agreed with the MoNE that the ETF would provide support for the implementation of all three policy options in the period 2017–20:

1. increase supply and access to apprenticeships;
2. improve quality of traineeships for VET students;
3. improve data collection/analysis on different WBL schemes.

The policy option on apprenticeships is being addressed by a comprehensive review of the apprenticeship and on-the-job learning system in companies in Turkey, supported by joint European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, ETF and MoNE action. The activity started with the establishment of a national steering group on 27 April 2017.

The policy option of data collection is transversal and will be addressed through integration in the actions mentioned above. An expert meeting organised by the ETF took place in Turin, Italy on 17 January 2017, involving the MoNE, Turkstat (the Turkish Institute of Statistics), Union of Municipalities and the EU delegation to Turkey. The meeting identified the current situation for data collection in Turkey and existing data gaps with a view to improving the information base on WBL and possibly to develop a monitoring framework as part of quality assurance for WBL in Turkey. A follow-up meeting was organised by the MoNE in Ankara in March 2017.

The policy option on quality of traineeships (the subject of this study) is addressed by multiannual and joint MoNE–ETF action aiming to review and improve the quality of traineeship provision and to develop a national quality assurance framework for VET traineeships.

This study is part of the multiannual action feeding into the second policy option – quality of traineeships – identified in the ex-ante impact assessment of WBL in Turkey. It started with a review of relevant international, European and national initiatives and literature.

3.1   International context

The WBL domain in the international context is mainly delineated by the work and support of international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the World Bank, and initiatives such as the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN). Below is a summary of a selection of documents that analyse, set the basis, identify the main issues and challenges, and provide recommendations for policy and implementation in regard to WBL in a global context.

As a precursor to GAN, the Feasibility Study for a Global Business Network on Apprenticeship (Gopaul, 2013) was commissioned by the ILO. The purpose of this feasibility study is to gather information from businesses about their current apprenticeship programmes and to seek their views on how an international network on apprenticeships could be valuable to them. On the basis of information and experience collected from businesses and other interested parties in selected sectors and countries, the study has documented country apprenticeship practices, explored the expected mandate and objectives of this network, identified the types of services that would be valued, ascertained the possible degree of commitment of potential members, and examined options for the network's governance structure and viable financing mechanisms.

GAN, established in 2013, brings together the IOE, the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD, and the ILO. GAN coordinates efforts of member companies, mobilises resources, enables and shares best practices and platforms, and consults. GAN also works on a strategic level, facilitating multi-stakeholder exchange on a global scale (with organisations like the EU, ILO and OECD) and reinforces the links between coalition members and GAN Networks with the following principles:

■ strengthen the commitment and visibility of companies' and organisations' engagement in apprenticeships and internships as part of a sound human capital development strategy;
■ share best practices in the areas of apprenticeships, internships, mentoring and on-the-job training;
■ encourage a network of committed companies and organisations, at the global and local levels, to support effective knowledge-sharing action programmes and partnerships and to scale up international cooperation to this effect.

In 2017, GAN published a *Catalogue of best practices and action by member companies*, which indicates achievements of member companies in promoting work readiness programmes and equipping young people with skills to join the workforce.

The *ILO toolkit for quality apprenticeships, Vol. I: Guide for policy makers* presents the ILO's approach to quality apprenticeship systems and demonstrates what differentiates them from other forms of skills training and WBL (ILO, 2017). It also lists their benefits and gives examples of international commitments that have been made to promote them. The six building blocks that make up the foundations of a sound, well-functioning quality apprenticeship system are introduced in the guide: meaningful social dialogue; robust regulatory frameworks; the stakeholders' clear roles and responsibilities; equitable funding arrangements; strong labour market relevance; and inclusiveness.

A set of checklists for key features and rationale, as well as for each of the building blocks for a sound and well-functioning apprenticeship system, are presented below.

TABLE 3.1 CHECKLISTS FOR KEY FEATURES AND RATIONALE FOR A SOUND AND WELL-FUNCTIONING APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

Key features	Yes	No
In your country, is apprenticeship defined and regulated by an official document (e.g. laws, ministerial decrees, collective agreements, and/or policy decisions arising from social dialogue)?		
If YES, does the definition of apprenticeship include the following:		
■ a combination of on-the-job training and off-the-job learning?		
■ training to carry out a specific occupation?		
■ a written contract that details the roles and responsibilities of the apprentice and the employer?		
■ a written contract that provides the apprentice with remuneration and standard social protection coverage?		
■ the opportunity to obtain a recognised qualification on the successful completion of a formal assessment?		

Rationale for promoting quality apprenticeships	Yes	No
In your country, is there evidence to show that:		
■ apprenticeships facilitate the school-to-work transition?		
■ apprenticeships promote coordination between the world of education and the world of work?		
■ apprenticeships make good business sense?		
■ apprenticeships provide a cost-effective way of delivering Technical and VET (TVET)?		
■ apprenticeships are good for the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)?		
■ the government, employers, trade unions and young people are aware of the benefits of apprenticeships?		
■ there are international and regional initiatives to strengthen apprenticeships?		

Social dialogue	Yes	No
In your country,		
■ Do the social partners – employers' associations and trade unions – enjoy the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining?		
■ Are there tripartite and/or bipartite bodies that formulate, implement and monitor a regulatory framework and strategy for apprenticeship training?		
■ Are the social partners formally involved in the design of apprenticeship systems at national and/or sectoral level?		
■ Are the social partners formally involved in the implementation of apprenticeship systems at national and/or sectoral level?		
■ Do the social partners have the adequate technical capacity to participate in social dialogue at the national and/or sectoral level on apprenticeship training?		
■ Are the social partners formally involved in the accreditation of training institutions?		
■ Are the social partners formally involved in the accreditation/registration of enterprises that train apprentices?		

Regulatory framework	Yes	No
In your country,		
■ Is there a national law that sets out the legal and regulatory framework for apprenticeships?		
■ Does the regulatory framework provide a clear outline of the rights, roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders?		
■ Does the law provide for the establishment of an oversight or regulatory body whose role is to ensure that all stakeholders comply with the rules governing their roles and responsibilities?		
■ Are the social partners (employers' associations and trade unions) represented on the regulatory body?		
■ Does the regulatory framework stipulate the standards for the main training and skills development requirements for the successful completion of the apprenticeship?		
■ Does the regulatory framework determine the minimum and maximum duration of the apprenticeship?		
■ Does the regulatory framework determine the minimum and maximum duration of the on-the-job training and off-the-job training?		
■ Does the regulatory framework stipulate that a written contract is signed between the employer and apprentice, or between the employer, apprentice and training institution/chamber/intermediary body?		
■ Does the regulatory framework outline the basic apprenticeship-related terms and conditions, including entitlement to: • remuneration? • leave in line with that of other workers? • safety and health measures, and compensation for injury at work?		
■ Does the existing regulatory framework set minimum qualifications for TVET teachers and trainers?		
■ Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship, does the apprentice obtain a recognised TVET qualification?		
■ Does the regulatory framework specify the funding arrangements between government and employers?		
■ Does the regulatory framework specify a quality assurance mechanism?		
■ Does the regulatory framework define policy measures to promote gender equality and social inclusion in apprenticeships?		

Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders	Yes	No
In your country, are the following stakeholders involved in the design of apprenticeships: ■ young people and apprentices? ■ enterprises that train apprentices? ■ workers' representatives in enterprises? ■ in-company mentors/trainers/supervisors? ■ TVET institutions offering off-the-job training? ■ TVET teachers and trainers? ■ local/sectoral coordination support services? ■ trade unions? ■ employers' associations? ■ ministries and public administrations in charge of TVET and employment?		

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Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders	Yes	No
In your country, are the following stakeholders involved in the implementation of apprenticeships: ■ young people and apprentices? ■ enterprises that train apprentices? ■ workers' representatives in enterprises? ■ in-company mentors/trainers/supervisors? ■ TVET institutions offering off-the-job training? ■ TVET teachers and trainers? ■ local/sectoral coordination support services? ■ trade unions? ■ employers' associations? ■ ministries and public administrations in charge of TVET and employment?		
In your country, are the roles and responsibilities of the following stakeholders clearly defined: ■ young people and apprentices? ■ enterprises that train apprentices? ■ workers' representatives in enterprises? ■ in-company mentors/trainers/supervisors? ■ TVET institutions offering off-the-job training? ■ TVET teachers and trainers? ■ local/sectoral coordination support services? ■ trade unions? ■ employers' associations? ■ ministries and public administrations in charge of TVET and employment?		

Equitable funding arrangements	Yes	No
In your country,		
■ Are initiatives taken to calculate the costs and benefits, both financial and non-financial, of apprenticeship training for enterprises?		
■ Are initiatives taken to calculate the costs and benefits, both financial and non-financial, of apprenticeship training for apprentices?		
■ Are initiatives taken to calculate the costs and benefits, both financial and non-financial, of apprenticeship training for governments?		
■ Do governments finance off-the-job training?		
■ Do governments provide employers with incentives to take on apprentices?		
■ Do employers finance on-the-job training?		
■ Do employers remunerate apprentices for the on-the-job training period?		
■ Do employers remunerate apprentices for the off-the-job training period?		
■ Are current funding arrangements sufficient to sustain apprenticeship training?		

Labour market relevance	Yes	No
In your country,		
■ Is there a system for assessing and anticipating skills needs?		
■ If a system is in place, are the social partners – employers' associations and trade unions – formally involved in the assessment and anticipation process?		
■ Is there a mechanism in place to translate identified skills needs into the development of apprenticeship programmes and qualifications?		
■ If there is a mechanism in place, are the social partners formally involved in the development of programmes?		
■ Are the social partners involved in monitoring the implementation of apprenticeships?		

Labour market relevance	Yes	No
■ Is a system for assessing the skills of apprentices in place?		
■ Are the social partners involved in assessing the skills of apprentices?		
■ Does successful completion of a quality apprenticeship lead to a nationally recognised qualification?		
■ Is a system for providing guidance, counselling and support services to apprentices and employers in place?		
■ Are tracer studies regularly conducted, and do the findings inform the reform of apprenticeship training programmes?		
■ Are employer satisfaction surveys regularly conducted, and do the findings inform the reform of apprenticeship training programmes?		

Inclusiveness – Opportunities for all	Yes	No
In your country,		
■ Are statistics on apprenticeships and underrepresented groups collected?		
■ Are effective policy actions (e.g. awareness-raising campaigns) taken to encourage underrepresented groups to take up apprenticeships?		
■ Do governments provide employers with incentives to take on apprentices from underrepresented groups?		

Source: ILO, 2017

A roadmap to vocational education and training systems around the world (Eichhorst et al., 2012) provides a better understanding of VET around the world, proposing five types of vocational systems: (i) vocational and technical schools; (ii) vocational training centres; (iii) formal apprenticeships; (iv) dual apprenticeship systems combining school training with a firm-based approach; and (v) informal training. The strengths and challenges of each system are discussed first, and then evidence on the effectiveness of VET versus general education and between the different VET systems is reviewed.

Towards a model apprenticeship framework: A comparative analysis of national apprenticeship systems (Smith and Kemmis, 2013) is based on 11 country case studies of national apprenticeship systems including Turkey. The analysis and framework for a model apprenticeship system are presented first in the report, with the country case studies at the end. The Turkish part of the report was prepared by Özlem Ünlühisarcıklı.

The *Overview of apprenticeship systems and issues* (Steedman, 2012), commissioned by the ILO, examines both informal and regulated apprenticeships and their advantages for the employment prospects of young people, in particular in regulated systems. It then sets out the conditions necessary for the development of apprenticeships, drawing on examples from a number of G20 countries. The roles and responsibilities of the principal agents involved in regulated apprenticeships are examined and the paper ends with conclusions and lessons drawn from the cross-country analysis. Gradual upgrading of informal apprenticeships, expanding regulated apprenticeships, developing an appropriate regulatory framework, national recognition of apprenticeship certification, and the facilitator role of government were emphasised as essential conclusions and lessons drawn from the comparative analysis.

Table 3.2 presents a summary of the main findings from the documents outlining the international context.

TABLE 3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT – MAIN FINDINGS

Five main types of IVET provision around the world through:
- vocational and technical schools;
- vocational training centres;
- formal apprenticeships;
- dual apprenticeships;
- informal training.

Six pillars of quality apprenticeship systems according to the ILO toolkit for quality apprenticeships:
- meaningful social dialogue;
- robust regulatory frameworks;
- clear roles and responsibilities of stakeholders;
- equitable funding arrangements;
- strong labour market relevance;
- inclusiveness.

Most prominent issues faced in apprenticeship systems in G20 countries:
- need for gradual upgrading of informal apprenticeships;
- expanding regulated apprenticeships;
- developing an appropriate regulatory framework;
- national recognition of apprenticeship certification;
- the facilitator role of government.

3.2   European context

WBL in the European context is covered under the EU policies, processes and actions such as the Copenhagen Process, the Bologna Process, the Bruges Communiqué, the Torino Process, the Riga Conclusions, the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF), the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), the European Quality Framework for Traineeships, and initiatives like the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and BusinessEurope. This section reviews a selection of initiatives and documents, setting the basis, analysing and identifying the main issues and challenges, and providing recommendations for policy and implementation for WBL from a European perspective.

3.2.1   Policy instruments and initiatives

The Council of the EU's Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships (QFT) was adopted in March 2014. The QFT proposes guidelines for traineeships outside formal education to provide high-quality learning content and fair working conditions so that traineeships support education-to-work transitions and increase the employability of trainees. The QFT also contains guidelines on transparency regarding compensation and social security coverage, as well as hiring chances. These aspects should be clear to applicants at the application stage for a traineeship position.

The 22 quality elements that are part of the QFT are directly transposable into national legislation or social partner agreements. The QFT is particularly relevant as a reference for quality offers of traineeships under the Youth Guarantee, since many national Youth Guarantee schemes foresee traineeships as one of the four types of offers for young people.

Two and a half years after the adoption of the QFT, as part of the communication on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative, the Commission also examined how Member States' existing and new legislation and social partner agreements comply with the requirements of the QFT. The Staff Working Document *Applying the quality framework for*

traineeships found that half of the EU Member States have undertaken – or plan to undertake – legal changes to align their national framework with the QFT (European Commission, 2016).

In 2017, the European Commission adopted a proposal for a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA). This initiative is part of the New Skills Agenda for Europe, launched in June 2016. It also ties in with the European Pillar of Social Rights, which foresees a right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning.

The European Commission has identified 14 key criteria that EU countries and stakeholders should use to develop quality and effective apprenticeships. This initiative will help increase the employability and personal development of apprentices and contribute towards a highly skilled and qualified workforce that is responsive to labour market needs.

To assess the quality and effectiveness of an apprenticeship, the framework proposes seven criteria for learning and working conditions:

1. written contract,
2. learning outcomes,
3. pedagogic support,
4. workplace component,
5. pay and/or compensation,
6. social protection,
7. work, health and safety conditions.

The framework also proposes seven criteria for framework conditions:

1. regulatory framework,
2. involvement of social partners,
3. support for companies,
4. flexible pathways and mobility,
5. career guidance and awareness raising,
6. transparency,
7. quality assurance and graduate tracking.

The European Commission supports the implementation of these criteria through relevant EU funding. The European Social Fund alone contributes up to EUR 27 billion to education and training, and the EU also supports apprenticeships through various other instruments.

In addition, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships has so far mobilised over 750 000 places for young people. At least 390 000 apprenticeships have already been offered under the Youth Guarantee. Erasmus+ supports mobility for apprentices, including a new ErasmusPro initiative aimed at supporting 50 000 placements for vocational learners in companies abroad for the period 2018–20.

The European Apprentices Network was established in 2017[1] in cooperation with the European Youth Forum, and with support from the European Commission.

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[1] For more information, see: https://apprenticesnetwork.eu

For the period 2017–18, the network was composed of individuals who are either apprentices themselves or are mandated to represent apprentices through their position in youth organisations. The role of the network has been defined as follows:

■ to develop the views of young people on apprenticeships through exchanging experiences and best practices, discussing challenges, sharing information on important educational and employment policies and research developments on apprenticeships;
■ to function as an informal consultative body of the European Commission on apprenticeships, particularly for the Commission's European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA), by providing input to European Commission proposals/initiatives, events, EAfA meetings, etc.;
■ to facilitate contact between youth organisations and other apprenticeship actors;
■ to develop a concrete proposal for a larger and more consolidated European Network of Apprentices, as of 2019;
■ to attend and contribute to meetings of the European Commission and EU Presidencies on apprenticeships and VET.

The EAfA[2] is part of the EU's strategy to tackle high youth unemployment and to provide the skills that are needed to ensure sustainable growth and jobs. The EAfA is a unique platform which brings together governments with other key stakeholders, like businesses, social partners, chambers, VET providers, regions, youth representatives and think tanks. The common goal is to strengthen the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships in Europe. Mobility of apprenticeships has also recently emerged as an important topic.

The EAfA was launched in July 2013 with a joint declaration by the European social partners (European Trade Union Federation, BusinessEurope, European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises), the European Commission and the Presidency of the Council of the EU. This was followed by a Council Declaration by EU countries. Although managed by the Commission, the success of the EAfA lies with the implementation of national commitments and the commitment of partners, notably through pledges by stakeholders. Turkey is a member of this alliance.

BusinessEurope, established in 1949, has a membership base of 41 industrial and employers' federations from 35 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe. They represent small, medium and large companies. BusinessEurope has put together 12 main recommendations geared for the EU, the Member States, the employer organisations and the companies on *How to improve the quality and image of apprenticeships* (BusinessEurope, 2012).

3.2.2 Research and publications

Work-based learning in the EU candidate countries compares the WBL systems of five EU candidate countries: Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey (ETF, 2017). The paper provides a brief and clearly structured picture of WBL in the candidate countries and addresses the following questions:

■ Which national institutions and stakeholders are involved in WBL?
■ To what extent is practical training, and in particular WBL, anchored in formal (upper) secondary VET programmes?
■ Are cooperation mechanisms for WBL in place?

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[2] For more information, see: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147

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- How is WBL financed?
- Are there systems in place to prepare teachers and trainers for WBL?

The analysis also covers the following two aspects of WBL:

- Are learning outcomes or learning objectives specified for the WBL components of the VET programmes?
- Are assessment procedures or tools for WBL in place?

Further, tables in the paper's annexes provide detailed information for each candidate country on the following issues:

- How many and what kind of VET programmes (occupation, sector) are offered in the country?
- How many students are enrolled in those VET programmes?
- How many schools offer those VET programmes?
- When were those VET programmes last reformed, and are there plans for future reforms?

The paper concludes as follows:

'In most of the candidate countries, the regulatory frameworks provide the policy cover for WBL during formal three- and four-year VET. Curriculum frames usually include general subjects, vocational theory and vocational practice. In theory, a substantial part of the vocational practice – or in some cases even all the practical training – could be implemented in the form of WBL. However, such frameworks have often not been supported by the necessary by-laws that would, for example, stipulate the rights and obligations of the companies, learners and VET schools. […] Furthermore, common standards for the administration and supervision of learners are often not in place. As a result, WBL is still not widespread. Instead, most of the practical training takes place in the VET schools' workshops.'

'Wherever WBL takes place, VET schools are usually the main coordinating body. In most of the candidate countries, VET schools are responsible for securing enough places for WBL, regulating the admission of learners and organising the alternation of WBL and school-based learning. VET schools usually also check and validate the suitability of the training environment. In the majority of the countries, companies are still wary of WBL and have not yet appreciated its full potential. Business associations, sector organisations and trade unions usually do not have the human and financial resources to promote and/or coordinate WBL.'

'In the majority of the candidate countries, robust mechanisms for the financing of WBL are still missing. This includes the remuneration of learners, the assessment of WBL, the ways to fund WBL within a company, and the compensation of employers for the cost of training (for instance for consumables, use of equipment, working time of in-company trainers).'

'In most candidate countries, the training of in-company trainers is not mandatory and there are no regular funds earmarked for training-the-trainer activities. Only in Turkey are enterprises obliged to provide a training master when there are eight or more apprentices or students doing their vocational practice or internship in the company. However, most countries have developed programmes to train teachers as school–business liaison persons who also coordinate WBL activities.'

High-performance apprenticeships and work-based learning: 20 guiding principles presents 20 guiding principles developed by the Education and Training 2020 working group on VET in 2014–15 (European Commission, 2015). Representatives of EU Member States, European Free Trade Association countries, and candidate countries as well as EU social partner and VET provider

organisations, Cedefop and the ETF participated in the working group, which was chaired by the European Commission.

The guiding principles respond to the following four policy challenges that need to be addressed in the promotion of apprenticeships and other forms of WBL: national governance and social partners' involvement; support for companies, in particular SMEs, offering apprenticeships; attractiveness of apprenticeships and improved career guidance; and quality assurance in WBL.

WBL requires a clear framework for quality assurance of apprenticeships at the system, provider and company levels, ensuring systematic feedback (principle 16). Conditions for quality assurance of apprenticeships should be agreed upon at all levels (policy makers, industry, VET providers) and clear roles and responsibilities for the various partners as well as mechanisms for cooperation should be defined. However, the existence of legal and formal arrangements alone cannot guarantee quality in WBL.

A key issue is that systems and institutions should be able to accommodate change. Governance should institute mechanisms ensuring that the content of VET programmes is responsive to changing skills needs in companies and society (principle 17). This may call for a systematic, evidence-based VET policy approach with regular forecasts of skills needs and evaluations of VET reforms and pilot projects.

Quality also requires mutual trust and respect through regular cooperation between apprenticeship partners at all levels (principle 18). At the local level, for example, cooperation can involve final examinations of apprentices jointly conducted by in-company trainers, teachers and representatives from the professional community to ensure coherence between school and company training. At the national level, it may involve dialogue between the involved public authorities.

Ensuring a fair, valid and authentic assessment of learning outcomes (principle 19) is an important element of quality assurance of WBL. As learning may take place in different learning environments, learning outcomes should serve as a common reference point for assessment. Furthermore, assessment should take place in a business or business-like context to be as realistic as possible. The qualifications and training of assessors is also an important aspect when ensuring the quality of assessment.

To ensure the quality of in-company training, it is important to support the continuing professional development of in-company trainers and improve their work conditions (principle 20). National recognition of trainer qualifications should be encouraged. However, a high degree of regulation of in-company trainers should be avoided as this may discourage skilled workers from becoming in-company trainers.

Work-based learning programmes for young people in the Mediterranean region is a comparative analysis report examining programmes for young people that combine learning in classrooms with participation in work in 10 Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine[3], Syria, Tunisia and Turkey (ETF, 2012). The report is based on the national reports that used a common analytical framework, on field visits to four of the countries, on a study visit to the Netherlands, and on meetings of national experts and policy makers. Its analytical framework focuses both on ways in which institutional and systemic factors influence the scale and character of WBL programmes, and on the impact of incentives and social capital (networks, trust, cooperation). It

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[3] This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual position of the Member States on this issue.

examines a wide range of programmes, some that are called apprenticeships and many that have other titles, but which share some of the same characteristics.

The study specifies that due to its unique nature, there should be different ways to quality assure WBL. This can be done by:

- attempting to influence which firms are able to employ and train young people under formal WBL programmes;
- providing either formal training or other forms of assistance to enterprise personnel, both to improve the nature of the work experience of young people within the enterprise and to improve the training and skills development competences of those who supervise the work of the young people;
- developing systems of regulation and inspection and sanctions, administered either by ministries of labour or other organisations and often regulated under labour laws;
- developing tools that can be used by enterprises and young people to structure and record the skills that have been acquired, for example competency lists or training logbooks;
- developing close pedagogic relationships between firms and the teaching staff of VET schools, such that each is able to learn from the other to address issues in the training of young people;
- using assessment and certification systems that require the competences developed in the workplace to be assessed as well as those developed within VET institutions;
- providing supplementary off-the-job training to compensate for gaps in the competences developed in the workplace;
- having periods of full-time training before the young person is placed in the enterprise.

The main objective of the *Study on quality assurance systems in work-based learning and assessment in European VET* is to describe quality assurance systems of apprenticeship programmes (as the most important form of WBL) in selected Member States and Leonardo da Vinci projects, and to make a number of recommendations of interest to all stakeholders based on the analysis and conclusions (ENQA-VET, 2009).

The selected recommendations cover the most important areas for improvement and are based on the complete study and are closely linked to the conclusions of the study. Accordingly, all the stakeholders should focus on cooperation and use the following output indicators (inspired by the indicators in the EQARF) to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes:

- employment rate of the apprentices/students;
- completion rate of the apprentices/students;
- satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences;
- time lapse between training/WBL and successful employment.

At the European level, the Leonardo da Vinci programme, currently Erasmus+ programme, should be used even more and the European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training, currently the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), should continue its activities to support the Member States in quality assurance of VET. The national system level should, as a primary objective, ensure the adequate supply of apprenticeship places, support communication between the stakeholders, secure the quality of all apprenticeship programmes and update the procedures for new apprenticeship programmes. The social partners should upgrade the focus on quality and support the supply of apprenticeship places. The enterprises should focus on the skills of the trainer, provide more places for apprenticeships, cooperate with the VET colleges and focus on the learners.

The VET colleges should have closer contact with the trainers and enterprises and focus on the learners. The apprentices should be more active and be encouraged and supported to understand their rights and responsibilities. Future research should focus on how to get the enterprises to supply places for apprenticeships, on good practice for cooperation between enterprises, VET colleges and learners, and on the internal organisation of the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes.

Table 3.3 presents a summary of the main findings from the documents outlining the European context.

TABLE 3.3 SUMMARY OF THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT – MAIN FINDING

Four policy challenges that need to be addressed in the promotion of apprenticeships and other forms of WBL:
- national governance and social partners' involvement;
- support for companies, in particular SMEs, offering apprenticeships;
- attractiveness of apprenticeships and improved career guidance;
- quality assurance in WBL.

Four output indicators inspired by EQARF:
- employment rate of the apprentices/students;
- completion rate of the apprentices/students;
- satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences;
- time lapse between training/WBL and successful employment.

Eight principles recommended on QFT, as indicated in the EU Council Recommendations on Quality Apprenticeships:
- conclusion of a written traineeship agreement;
- statement of learning and training objectives;
- statement of working conditions applicable to trainees;
- statement of workers' rights and obligations in the agreement;
- reasonable duration of traineeship;
- proper recognition;
- transparency;
- mobility.

Five guiding principles for quality assurance in WBL developed by the Education and Training (ET) 2020 working group on VET in 2014–15:
- principle 16: provide a clear framework for quality assurance of apprenticeships at the system, provider and company levels, ensuring systematic feedback;
- principle 17: ensure the content of VET programmes is responsive to changing skills needs in companies and society;
- principle 18: foster mutual trust and respect through regular cooperation between the apprenticeship partners;
- principle 19: ensure fair, valid and authentic assessment of learning outcomes;
- principle 20: support the continuing professional development of in-company trainers and improve their working conditions.

Seven key priorities of the European Apprentices Network:
- quality education and quality assurance: a learner-centred approach to apprenticeships should be prioritised (see criterion 14 of the EFQEA);
- rights, responsibilities and protection: institutions at all relevant levels (European, national, regional or local) should work together with social partners and youth organisations to implement a rights-based approach to apprenticeship programmes, recognising that apprentices have a dual status both as workers and students, and that this special status should not undermine their access to social and labour rights (see criteria 1, 5, 6 and 7 of the EFQEA);
- legally binding agreements: apprenticeships should always be regulated through a written and legally binding agreement between the educational institution, the apprentice and the employer offering the placement (see criterion 1 of the EFQEA);
- representation: individuals undertaking an apprenticeship should have structures for representation available to them at all levels of government (European, national, regional and local);
- promoting apprenticeships: better guidance should be provided to VET students to promote apprenticeships as a valuable choice. A holistic approach is essential: promoting a better narrative around apprenticeships and encouraging their take-up might only succeed if (i) it is paired with efforts to increase the quality and accessibility of programmes, (ii) better learning outcomes are ensured, and (iii) a broader recognition of apprentices' social and labour rights is fostered (see criterion 12 of the EFQEA);

- anti-discrimination: continued discriminatory practices and cultures still need to be addressed to enable certain groups of people from accessing and fully taking advantage of the possibilities offered by apprenticeship programmes (see Implementation at national level, paragraph 16 of the EFQEA);
- accessible information: accessible information on VET and apprenticeship programmes should be a cross-cutting priority in implementing better-quality apprenticeships and countering the current negative narrative, according to which VET students and apprentices are often labelled as low achievers (see criterion 13 of the EFQEA).

Seven criteria for learning and working conditions under the EFQEA:
- written contract;
- learning outcomes;
- pedagogic support;
- workplace component;
- pay and/or compensation;
- social protection;
- work, health and safety conditions.

Seven criteria for framework conditions:
- regulatory framework;
- involvement of social partners;
- support for companies;
- flexible pathways and mobility;
- career guidance and awareness raising;
- transparency;
- quality assurance and graduate tracking.

Source: Council of the European Union, 2014 and 2018

3.3   National context

The general framework for WBL in Turkey is defined in the national legislation, such as VET Law No 3308; Law No 3795 on awarding Graduates of Certain Schools, High Schools and Faculties; Presidential Decree No 1 on Organisation of the Presidency of the Republic; National Education Basic Law No 1739; Law No 6764 Amending the Statutory Decree on Organisation and Duties of the MoNE, and Certain Laws and Statutory Decrees; Vocational Qualification Authority Law No 5544; the Regulation on Secondary Education and Training Institutions; and the MoNE Directive on Recognition of Prior Learning and Equivalency signed 2 October 2017. Policy documents including the 10th Development Plan (2014–18), MoNE Strategic Plan (2015–19), the Vocational and Technical Education Strategy Paper and Action Plan (2014–18), the Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper of Turkey (2014–18), the National Employment Strategy of Turkey (2014–23) and the National Entrepreneurship Strategy and Action Plan (2015–18), all established under a multi-level and multi-stakeholder governance model, provide policy and strategic guidance for VET in general and WBL in particular. Below is a review of a selection of research, study and projects that identify the main issues and challenges and provide recommendations for policy and implementation.

The *Assessment of vocational training in enterprises (traineeship) and internship practices* carried out by the abolished MoNE Department of Education Research and Development, was published in 2011 (Gülegül and Uygur, 2011). The purpose of the study was to provide an overall assessment of practices of vocational training in enterprises and internships. Strengths and weaknesses of such practices as well as ways of mitigation were proposed. A survey was conducted of 104 managers, 730 coordinator teachers, 1 397 students and 580 in-company trainers.

The survey explored the type and characteristics of enterprises; skills and qualifications of in-company trainers; physical capacity of the company premises; relevance and adequacy of WBL provision; capacity, skills and qualifications of coordinator teachers; and any other issues or recommendations for improving traineeships and internships.

The survey identified the following problems:

- difficulties in finding enterprises for student job placements;
- skills need of in-company trainers for knowing, understanding and transferring knowledge; skills and competences set in the curricula; knowledge about relevant VET legislation; and knowledge and use of WBL tools such as student development plans;
- issues related to physical capacity of enterprises in quality WBL provision such as lack of proper material and equipment, and places for rest in the premises;
- payment-related issues;
- inadequate and irrelevant provision of practical and on-the-job training for learners.

The *Crossing boundaries in vocational education and training: Innovative concepts for the 21st century* publication contains 40 research papers from more than 20 countries, which were presented at an international VET conference of the same name as the publication, held in September 2015 in Bremen, Germany (Gessler and Freund, 2015). In the Smith and Kemmis paper (2013), Ünlühisarcıklı reviews WBL in Turkey through formal VET schools and the non-formal apprenticeship system. Here below are the main conclusions from the interviews and the challenges for apprenticeship training and upper secondary VET schools in terms of work-based practical training.

- Although there are regulations in place, apprentices work long days and usually they work on Saturdays. The only day left for them to relax is Sunday.
- Apprentices who attend vocational training centres are frequently school dropouts or have lower aspirations to pursue formal education; therefore, they are not enthusiastic about theory-based education.
- There is no standard for enterprise-based practical training of students in upper secondary VET schools. Most of the time, students do office chores instead of occupation-based work. Often, schools leave the selection of the enterprise for practical training to the students, and it is not uncommon that students do their practical training only on paper, meaning they do not take skills training at enterprises seriously and are not doing it appropriately. One VET teacher proposed that to prevent such cases, the matching process between VET students and enterprises should be restructured.
- Although upper secondary VET schools assign teachers for each student to monitor their practical training at the enterprises and report back to schools, such monitoring is not working very well as it is rarely done. In general, the dialogue between the school and enterprise for practical skills training of the students is maintained through individual effort, especially by the coordinating teacher. Where the coordinating teacher has too many students to monitor, the coordinating teacher is not able to do this to a satisfactory level.
- There is a common agreement that the workshop facilities provided at upper secondary VET schools and vocational training centres are far behind the facilities provided by the enterprises active in the sector. Therefore, practical training at the enterprises is considered very important for vocational skills acquisition for both VET students and apprentices.
- There are different views on the upper secondary VET school students and apprentices who are going to vocational training centres for their theoretical training: some prefer apprenticeship training since it is five days at the enterprise and one day at the vocational training centre, and for them, that is more appropriate to the nature of skills-based competency improvement; others say the VET system is more appropriate for skills acquisition since it is not only practical skills but theoretical and general knowledge that counts and gives more flexibility with more life options for the student.
- To conclude, apprenticeship training and upper secondary VET schools provide important opportunities for students. However, it is important to focus on the challenges and make improvements to both systems.

A master's thesis, 'Solution proposals and problems faced by vocational high school students in printing technology field during their traineeship' looks at senior students from vocational high schools in the printing technology field in Istanbul (Zengin, 2014). Some of the issues raised in this study include the need for improvement of collaboration between companies and schools; discipline and developmental age-related problems; students' lack of motivation; and payment-related issues.

A master's thesis, 'Assessment of attitudes of vocational high school third year students towards workplace and traineeships', investigates the attitudes of technical high school students at their workplaces and during their traineeships (Yilmaz, 2008). There were 190 participants in their third year of technical high school from eight vocational high schools in the Anatolian part of Istanbul. In general, trainees stated that there were good workplace conditions and their attitudes in the workplaces were positive. There were significant differences in views of the students depending on whether the enterprise had a training department; whether the coordinating teacher was from a different field or not; whether the coordinating teacher paid regular visits; and whether trainees received their payments regularly.

Another master's thesis, 'Effect of front office on-the-job training conducted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the tourism sector on the employees' aims to determine the effect of the on-the-job training on the professional development of the sector employees (Özdemir, 2013). The paper finds that there is a statistically significant difference in the knowledge levels of the trainees before and after training, and front office on-the-job training has contributed to the knowledge and skills of employees.

Table 3.4 presents a summary of the main findings from the documents outlining the national context.

TABLE 3.4 SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL CONTEXT – MAIN FINDINGS

Some challenges related to current traineeship practices in Turkey include:
- lack of available and suitable enterprises for student job placement;
- in-company trainers' need for knowledge and skills in regard to curricula, VET legislation, WBL methods including training and facilitation skills and tools and content, like student development plans;
- inadequate or irrelevant physical capacity of enterprises in quality WBL provision such as lack of proper materials and equipment, and no places for trainees and workers to rest in the premises;
- irregularity of monthly payments to trainees;
- irrelevant provision of practical and on-the-job training for trainees;
- low level of motivation of trainees;
- discipline and developmental age-related issues;
- irregularity of enterprise visits by coordinating teachers.

3.4 Extent and quality of traineeship provision

3.4.1 General framework

Apprenticeship and enterprise-based learning: A glossary[4] defines WBL as follows: 'Learning that takes place within the workplace using tasks or jobs for instruction and practical purposes. It may be formal and structured using instructional plans, or informal; or learning which occurs within an enterprise (as opposed to within an educational institution). It can take several forms, both formal and informal. Formal enterprise-based learning refers to organised or structured programs: for example, apprenticeship, sandwich courses or alternance training. Informal enterprise-based learning refers to learning which occurs incidentally, in the process of normal daily work: for example, through experience, practice, mentoring or demonstration.'

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[4] www.etf.europa.eu/eventsmgmt.nsf/(getAttachment)/973C07DC3340E03CC125731E004B95CA/$File/APPRENTICESHIP_AND_ENTERPRISE_BASED_LEARNING_GLOSSARY_020707.pdf

WBL in the IVET sector in Turkey is mainly provided in seven modalities:

1. traineeships,
2. internships,
3. formal apprenticeships,
4. dual vocational training (available for students of formal education institutions),
5. non-formal apprenticeships,
6. on-the-job training,
7. informal apprenticeships (for workers in companies).

Each of these modalities are reviewed further in Table 3.5.

TABLE 3.5 COMPARISON OF WORK-BASED LEARNING MODALITIES IN TURKEY

	Formal apprentice-ship	Non-formal apprentice-ship	Informal apprentice-ship	On-the-job training	Dual training	Internship	Traineeship
Tripartite governance	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Remuneration	Yes	Yes	Possibly	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Written contract	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social security coverage	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legal framework	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Programme of learning	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
On-the-job training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Off-the-job training	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Formal assessment	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recognised qualification	Yes	Yes	No	Possibly	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duration	4 608 hours	Variable	Variable	Variable	864 hours	320 hours	864 hours

Source: Author's own, based on ILO, 2017 (p. 7), based on Steedman, 2012.

All general and VET policies and activities in Turkey are under the mandate of the MoNE. Within the ministry, while the DG TVET is tasked with overseeing all formal TVET and certification of informal learning, the DG for Lifelong Learning oversees all non-formal education and training.

Both formal IVET and formal apprenticeship curricula are based on learning outcomes and are unit-based/modular. A curriculum specification for each vocational field specifies courses, curriculum units/modules and learning outcomes for the relevant field of training, the course and the unit/module. WBL in formal IVET and formal apprenticeship programmes are offered as a course, namely vocational training in enterprises or skills training in enterprises.

3.4.2 Organisation of traineeships: roles and responsibilities

Traineeships in IVET are regulated under VET Law No 3308, dated 5 June 1986, and paragraphs 1–6 of provision 121 of the Regulation on Secondary Education and Training Institutions. Article 3 of Law

No 3308 defines the apprentice, the student, in-company trainer (training master: usta öğretici), vocational training in enterprises, and VET institutions.

Traineeship is overseen by the coordinating deputy principal and coordinating teacher at the school end, and company representative and in-company trainers at the company end. Training of in-company trainers is regulated by law. Training masters may be awarded a training master's certificate if they successfully complete a 40-hour course provided by the MoNE. Enterprises are obliged to provide a training master when there are students engaged in work placement or internships in the company.

3.4.3 Paths, design and content of traineeships

Formal IVET in Turkey is provided in two pathways: vocational and technical Anatolian high schools (4 090 in total) offer four-year VET programmes for more than 2 million, (MoNE, 2016/17) students leading to qualifications in 54 vocational fields; and vocational training centres (546 in total) offer formal apprenticeship schemes for about 120 000 apprentices in 141 occupational profiles and 27 vocational fields. Additionally, 184 VET training institutions (VET high schools) currently offer apprenticeship programmes.

Two types of programmes are offered in VET high schools: Anatolian technical and Anatolian vocational. Curricula and assessment in formal IVET are based on learning outcomes and are unit-based/modular. Curriculum specifications for each vocational field specify courses, curriculum units/modules and learning outcomes for the relevant field of training, the course and the unit/module. WBL in formal IVET is offered as a course, namely vocational training in enterprises.

Each VET high school or vocational training centre defines the content (learning outcomes and curriculum units/modules) of the vocational training in enterprises course, with a decision by the industry representatives and coordinating teachers and field teachers in the school based on regional characteristics and priorities but focused primarily on curriculum units/modules of the relevant occupational profile. New curriculum units/modules may be developed to reflect regional characteristics and industry expectations. The newly developed unit/module is implemented upon approval of the Provincial Council of Employment and Vocational Training, and a copy of the unit/module is submitted to the relevant section in the MoNE. The vocational training in enterprises course is subject to the provisions of the Regulation on Secondary Education and Training Institutions. In programme types where vocational training in enterprises is not applicable, students do internships based on the relevant legislation.

3.4.4 Integration of learning: school-based vs work-based

All theoretical training takes place in school in formal VET programmes. Practical training is compulsory in all formal VET programmes, ranging from 1 224 hours (e.g. office management) to 1 620 hours (e.g. maritime education). This excludes time allocated for elective courses, ranging from 360 to 504 hours for Anatolian technical programmes, and ranging from 396 to 576 hours for Anatolian vocational programmes.

In addition to practical training in school, students enrolled in Anatolian technical programmes are required to complete 320 hours of internship. This is 864 hours of traineeship for Anatolian vocational programmes. All VET high school students alternate between school and work in the fourth year, Grade 12: three days in the enterprise and two days in school per week. In some programmes in the health sector, students start their internships in the third year, Grade 11, and continue in the fourth year, Grade 12.

Theoretical training for apprenticeship programmes is provided in vocational training centres and some of the vocational and technical high schools (vocational and technical Anatolian high schools, multi-programmed schools and vocational and technical education centres). Traineeships in vocational training centre programmes for apprentices are fixed to 1 152 hours a year, or 4 608 hours over four years, go from Grades 9 through to 12, alternating four days in the company and one day in the school or training centre per week.

3.4.5 Assessment of traineeships

Assessment of formal IVET is outcome-based and modular. The following criteria are used for formative and summative assessment:

■   achievement of learning outcomes for the unit/module;
■   achievement of learning outcomes for the course;
■   achievement in vocational training in enterprises and other individual achievements.

Both formative and summative assessments are conducted during WBL provision. Formative assessment of WBL is carried out by coordinating teachers and in-company trainers. Summative theoretical and/or practical assessment (beceri sınavı) is carried out by an exam commission comprised of representative(s) from the company/relevant chamber, coordinating teacher of the VET institution and in-company trainer.

The coordinating teacher provides the company and in-company trainers, along with the (vocational) development table, which is a guide with descriptions, designed according to the teacher's annual plan based on vocational knowledge, skills and competences to be gained during the traineeship. Coordinating teachers supervise students on a regular basis during their traineeships.

Students are asked to keep a work portfolio (iş dosyası) including all relevant photographs, projects and assessment tables associated with their work, practical projects, experiments and services undertaken in the companies. This portfolio also includes the WBL contract, social security registration declaration, annual plan and (vocational) development table, worksheets, monthly attendance schedule and monthly guidance report.

A Semester Grade Point Fiche is filled in by the coordinating teacher based on trainee grades for practical work and worksheets (iş yaprakları). This document is also signed by the in-company trainer and the company representative and delivered by the coordinating teacher to the coordinating deputy principal in a closed envelope. Upon validation of the documents, the student's grade for the traineeship course is registered. This process is done for both autumn and spring semesters.

3.4.6 Certification and progression

Graduates of VET high schools are awarded a VET High School Diploma and Business Licence (İşyeri Açma Belgesi) in the relevant field of training and occupational profile.

Under the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF), graduates are given a Europass Certificate and Diploma Supplement along with a transcript including information about curriculum units/modules achieved and the title of the enterprise where WBL took place. Apprenticeship training students are awarded a 'Journeymanship' (Kalfalık) Certificate (European Qualifications Framework (EQF)/TQF Level 3) upon passing the skills examination at the end of Grade 11, and a 'Mastership' (Ustalık) Certificate (EQF/TQF level 4) upon passing the skills examination at the end of Grade 12.

ETF Working together Learning for life
European Training Foundation

The recent MoNE Directive on Recognition of Prior Learning and Equivalency, dated 2 October 2017, outlines progression routes between MoNE and Vocational Qualification Authority qualifications. Accordingly, students undertaking the programmes at vocational training centres are awarded an Open VET High School Diploma upon registering on an open high school programme (VET or general) and successfully completing the general subjects.

The Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK) also awards vocational qualifications in some occupational fields in which no formal vocational training programmes are offered. Candidates over 16 years of age receive a Journeymanship Certificate when they have finished lower secondary education, have at least two years' work experience in a relevant occupation and have passed an assessment held by the relevant chamber. The MoNE supports the provision of training and assessments.

3.4.7 Selection and placement of learners

Companies with at least 10 employees are required by Vocational Education Law No 3308 dated 5 June 1986 to provide WBL opportunities for students. The VET schools/institutions usually check and validate the suitability of the training environment and in-company trainers based on MoNE standard equipment lists for TVET institutions[5]. Students are placed for traineeships at Grade 12.

Where the number of students exceeds the number of available places, a commission of field teachers (Alan Zümresi) held in the VET school places students according to their achievements. Students who are not placed for WBL complete their practical training in the VET schools.

The placement of students is usually carried out by the same commission. The process of identifying the number of trainees to be placed in each enterprise usually starts in April and concludes in May. Upon the parents' consent, the minutes of the commission are submitted to the coordinating deputy principal. At the same time as receiving the parental consent, a statement of dependency of the student is obtained, which will have an impact on the applicable percentage of the social security premium: where a student is a dependant, there is a 1% premium; otherwise, a 6% premium is applicable.

3.4.8 Traineeship contract

The school management and the student/the student's parents sign a contract with the respective company. Contracts are based on standards defined by the MoNE.

Trainees are entitled to weekend leave and leave on official holidays during their placement.

3.4.9 Traineeship funding

Students' remuneration during WBL also falls under the scope of Law No 3308. Trainees are often paid at least 30% of the net minimum wage: enterprises with two or more employees should pay no less than 30% of the minimum wage. Those with one or no employees should pay no less than 15%. In order to promote VET, and as an employer incentive, the minimum amount of remuneration is paid in the form of government contributions for a limited time – two-thirds for enterprises employing one to 19 employees and one-third for enterprises employing 20 or more.

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[5] https://mtegm.meb.gov.tr/TR/standartdonatim/index.php?s=listeler.2020-03-11

Trainees' social security premiums are covered under Law No 5510 on Social Security and Comprehensive Health Insurance. Social security premiums (covering occupational accidents and occupational diseases) for the students are paid by the MoNE.

All public VET school facilities are funded through the state budget. For private VET schools (419 in total), the students pay tuition fees. Teachers and instructors are paid by the schools' top management (founders). Funding for private VET school facilities is undertaken by the schools' top management.

In some public VET schools, companies have established workshops/laboratories/simulation centres. Public VET schools can sign a protocol with companies to ensure the establishment of such workshops and/or the refurbishment of their classrooms.

In public VET schools, teaching and learning materials are paid for by the MoNE. In private VET schools, textbooks are provided through the state budget and the laboratory/workshop materials are provided by the school.

4. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS – STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVE

The main findings involving strengths and key challenges of traineeships in the Turkish IVET system obtained from the empirical research carried out via survey questionnaires and qualitative interviews are presented below according to the different stakeholder groups: the MoNE, social partners, companies, teachers and trainees.

4.1 Strengths of traineeships in the Turkish IVET system

4.1.1 Ministry of National Education

Priorities of the MoNE in improving WBL

According to the interviews with the MoNE, a quality monitoring and evaluation system has been established in vocational and technical secondary education schools and performance criteria have been set to improve the quality of education. The process of monitoring the quality of vocational and technical education, including self-assessment and the creation of quality indexes of schools, is being developed to include WBL. Currently, the quality monitoring and evaluation system is active for self-assessment and internal assessment. During the 2016/17 academic year, all vocational and technical education schools/institutions were included in the self-assessment process.

Furthermore, A quality manual and self-assessment framework for WBL has been developed under the Erasmus+ project, İŞTEK (Quality in WBL project), to monitor and evaluate the quality of WBL. These standards and indicators have been used in the self-assessment and quality audits to be carried out in the 2017/18 school year. The framework is designed on four pillars:

- preparation and planning phase;
- delivery, assessment and evaluation phase;
- support phase;
- occupational health and safety phase.

For each of these phases, a comprehensive set of self-assessment questions, indicators and indicative sources of evidence were identified. Some of these questions include elements such as:

- selection of WBL companies;
- rights and obligations of students and employers;
- equal opportunity for boys and girls;
- vocational and personal guidance and orientation programme in the company;
- identifying working hours;
- identifying learning outcomes for WBL;
- integration of learning activities;
- quality of learning materials and resources;
- assessment and certification of WBL;
- financing of WBL;
- assessment of WBL companies;
- planning of induction, orientation and professional development of teachers and in-company trainers;
- effective communication between the school and the company;
- safe and healthy working environment for trainees;
- induction of trainees in occupational health and safety.

The MoNE emphasises that education is a process that can only succeed when all parties meet the same goal and, therefore, shapes all processes and policies in line with this philosophy of cooperation. Overall, a multi-level, multi-stakeholder participatory governance approach has been fostered by the MoNE, through which VET-sector consultation meetings were organised in 40 provinces and new ones are being planned. The MoNE takes advantage of this in policy development. All the steps taken in the field of policy development and implementation are the result of this communication.

The MoNE has recently taken a number of steps for further improvement of the quality of VET. For this purpose, VET school types have been reduced to one, namely vocational and technical Anatolian high school. Currently, these schools have two types of programmes: Anatolian vocational programmes and Anatolian technical programmes. Furthermore, specialisation and quality of VET has been increased via 20 thematic vocational high schools opened in 13 provinces. Among these high schools are:

- Adana Seyhan Şehit Bora Süelkan Motorlu Araçlar Teknolojisi Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi (Adana Seyhan), in motor vehicle technology; and
- Cezeri Yeşil Teknoloji Mesleki ve Teknik Anadolu Lisesi (Ankara Etimesgut) in renewable energy technologies.

In addition, DG TVET, with the support of provincial directorates and provincial VET and employment councils, closed 446 and opened or merged 226 VET programmes in 3 588 schools in 81 provinces according to local labour market needs, ensuring VET programmes with WBL options are available at the local level. In addition, private vocational high schools are supported as well as mobility of students at all levels.

The curricula of 54 vocational fields and 200 occupations offered in Anatolian vocational programmes and Anatolian technical programmes have been revised and updated by the curriculum sector committees. In addition, the curricula of 27 vocational fields and 142 occupations have been updated or developed to align the curricula offered in vocational training centres with those offered in vocational and technical secondary education. Skills maps for modular curricula in 199 occupations in 53 VET fields have also been developed.

Apprenticeship training is brought under the scope of compulsory education and the department of work-based VET, established within the DG TVET as per Law No 6764, amending Law No 3308. In addition, the apprenticeship system has become more flexible and permeable: due completion of Grade 11 and passing skills examination leads to awarding of the Journeymanship (kalfalık) Certificate, EQF/TQF Level 3; and due completion of Grade 12 and passing skills examination leads to the Mastership (ustalık) Certificate, EQF/TQF Level 4. A High School Diploma, EQF/TQF Level 4, is awarded for completion of missing courses via the open high school system.

Financial incentives have also been used as a means to promote WBL participation by enterprises. Two-thirds of internship/traineeship/apprenticeship wages (one-third of the minimum wage) has been subsidised by the state since December 2016. This incentive has been extended as per Presidential Decree No 356 for three school years starting 2018/19. Grade 10, 11 and 12 students are insured for occupational accidents and diseases.

Awareness-raising activities have been intensified. To this end, promotional activities (e.g. promotional films, text messages and brochures) were held to highlight the importance of vocational and technical education and access for learning opportunities. In addition, web pages (meslekitanitim.meb.gov.tr) have been created for students, parents and teachers for information on VET fields.

Computer systems have been established for various purposes. Examples include an e-module which was established for registering, tracking and certifying students' participation in social, scientific, cultural and sports activities, and a graduate tracking system (e-Mezun: http://emezun.meb.gov.tr) aims to monitor the graduates of vocational and technical secondary education institutions with the help of questionnaires filled by graduates of the students and employers.

Other notable efforts include projects aiming to integrate refugees and stateless persons under temporary protection of the Turkish state into the education system, such as through the Vocational and Technical Training and Labour Market Services Project for Syrian Asylum Seekers and Host Communities in Turkey, led by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ, a German development agency).

Joining the ETF Forum for Quality Assurance in 2017 was another step taken to increase the quality of VET in Turkey.

As noted by the MoNE, these developments were well received by the target groups and positive feedback has been provided by all stakeholders on the recent measures to improve the quality of VET.

Continuing professional development for coordinating teachers and company trainers

Continuing professional development is an area of particular importance for the MoNE. In total, 3 700 managers and 3 262 teachers participated in 147 in-service training sessions conducted between 1 January and 30 November 2017. Industry signed 26 protocols to provide training for teachers in real business environments and in this context, 352 teachers participated in 19 in-service training activities held in 2016/17 school year. In order to keep up with the developments in the field of vocational training for teachers, in-service training will continue to take place in real business environments in cooperation with the industry.

The MoNE also provides teachers with possibilities to develop transferable skills. For this purpose, 15 015 teachers and managers trained in leadership and entrepreneurship in Turkish Management Sciences Institute (TÜSSIDE) in accordance with the protocol signed between MoNE and Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBITAK). To increase general and vocational foreign language knowledge and skills, 42 workshops and laboratory teachers were sent to England in 2017 to receive 240 hours of general English training and vocational English training. Moreover, cooperation protocols with universities were signed in 81 provinces to support teachers of general and vocational subjects. In this context, 6 268 workshops and laboratory (practical training) teachers received various training in 48 provinces.

Further steps

The MoNE plans to update the Vocational and Technical Education Strategy Document and the Action Plan for the period 2018–23.

Legislative work will be completed to establish the legal infrastructure for a quality monitoring and evaluation system in VET. The self-evaluation portal (http://ozdegerlendirme.meb.gov.tr/), designed for quality monitoring and evaluation, will be improved and the auditor's reports will be put online. This portal will also serve as a national reference point for European quality assurance in vocational education. Links to international institutions/organisations engaged in quality studies in vocational education will be provided and the developments related to quality will be shared via the portal. In addition, school quality indexes will be created, and the quality map of vocational and technical education will be prepared by evaluating the results of self-assessment and quality assessment.

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The work initiated by the DG TVET with the support of provincial directorates and Provincial VET and Employment Councils to close, open or merge VET programmes and to develop curricula according to local labour market needs will continue. Also, a plan is in place to increase the number of thematic and technical Anatolian high schools from 19 schools in 12 provinces to 30 schools in 28 provinces.

Further steps will be taken to enhance collaboration with the industry. For this purpose, VET– industry consultation meetings will be held on a regular basis and the number of industry cooperation protocols will be increased. Also, the School Sponsorship (Okul Hamiliği) project will be disseminated to all vocational and technical education schools throughout the country. Collaboration with industry will also be intensified in the area of teachers' and trainers' training in real business environments.

Various monitoring mechanisms will be put in place for quality assurance. The performance of all vocational and technical secondary schools, including vocational training centres throughout Turkey, will be monitored and a report card will be presented to each institution. A vocational training in enterprises e-module will be used in all schools to monitor traineeships and internships. Further monitoring/tracking of graduates of vocational and technical secondary education institutions (e-Mezun) will be carried out. Monitoring and evaluation of student achievement, attendance and transition to higher education will continue for VET students. In order to monitor machinery, equipment, tools and materials in the workshops and school laboratories, lists for 54 VET fields and 199 occupations in schools will be entered into the system.

Activities will be held for integration of vocational and technical education with technological developments and awareness raising about Industry 4.0. Furthermore, development of instructional materials for vocational and technical secondary schools using 3D modelling techniques will continue. To train future engineers and other technical personnel, an additional coefficient will be given for placement of VET graduates on a university degree programme in the same field, which is to be determined by the Council of Higher Education.

Students enrolling in open education will be directed to vocational training centres, and mastership programmes will be promoted. Syrian citizens who are under temporary protection will also be directed to vocational training centres and they will be provided with vocational training. In addition, within the scope of the Social and Economic Integration (KFW) project through vocational training, 750 Syrian students and disadvantaged Turkish students under temporary protection will be provided with transport, food and training materials.

4.1.2 Social partners

According to the social partners, the MoNE has been taking important steps, yet employer organisations would like to engage on a deeper level and require funding for this. They note that companies are aware of the importance of VET; however, they struggle to compete and be profitable under current national and global economic challenges. Therefore, employer organisations underline the fact that companies should gain their competitive edge through investments in research and development.

Some of the social partners, especially TISK, consider GAN an important mechanism to share the quality apprenticeships programmes and best practices; develop and support apprenticeship programmes for young people; and limit local skills mismatches and collaborate with partners in order to have an impact on national policies. However, they observe that sharing company best practices within GAN is rather challenging due to competition.

4.1.3 Companies

Before accepting a trainee, all companies request some form of reference, and some require security clearance. In selected VET high schools which have school–industry protocols, trainees do their placements in Grades 11 and 12. The latter works well and is received well both by the schools and industry. An orientation meeting (about half a day) is carried out for new trainees in most companies. Orientation covers issues such as occupational health and safety, facility security, and company procedures. Occupational health and safety training is also offered in certain schools prior to traineeships. Teachers and the company trainers usually plan the traineeships together. Coordinating teachers usually visit the company at least once a week. Company trainers try to guide trainees both professionally and personally. Commitment and communication between the school and the company is essential. Most companies consider trainees to be candidate employees. In SMEs, trainees have ample opportunities for gaining practical skills, sometimes even beyond those that are planned.

Companies willing to accept placements tend to cooperate well with the schools and have some form of connection to the schools: owners or staff can be alumni. These companies prefer hiring their employees from among trainees.
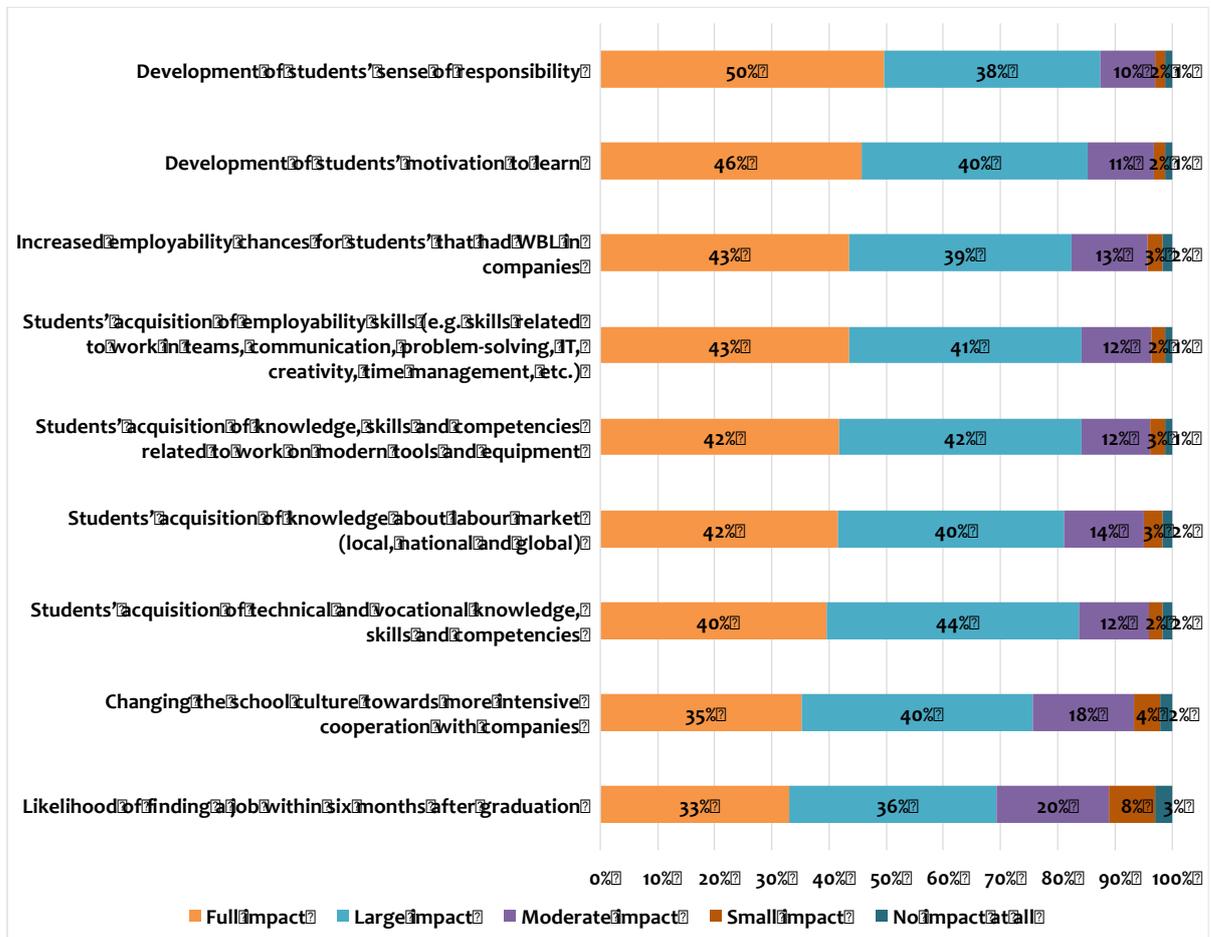
The state subsidy is well received by the majority of companies. It is a financial break for SMEs, but for some it is not so important. Companies pay more than the amount required by Law No 3308. Some companies offer extra wages, up to TRY 1 000.

Companies are of the opinion that a traineeship has a positive impact on the development of a student's sense of responsibility; acquisition of employability skills; knowledge, skills and competences for working on modern tools and equipment; motivation to learn; acquisition of knowledge about the labour market; and acquisition of technical and vocational knowledge, skills and competences. They also think that it increases employability possibilities (Figure 4.1).

'Trainees are like my sons and daughters. Their placement cannot be limited to only improvement of technical knowledge, skills and competences. They learn about life.'

Source: A company trainer

FIGURE 4.1 EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS' WORK-BASED LEARNING HAD AN IMPACT ON THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS

Aspect	Full impact	Large impact	Moderate impact	Small impact	No impact at all
Development of students' sense of responsibility	50%	38%	10%	2%	1%
Development of students' motivation to learn	46%	40%	11%	2%	1%
Increased employability chances for students' that had WBL in companies	43%	39%	13%	3%	2%
Students' acquisition of employability skills (e.g. skills related to work in teams, communication, problem-solving, IT, creativity, time management, etc.)	43%	41%	12%	2%	1%
Students' acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies related to work on modern tools and equipment	42%	42%	12%	3%	1%
Students' acquisition of knowledge about labour market (local, national and global)	42%	40%	14%	3%	2%
Students' acquisition of technical and vocational knowledge, skills and competencies	40%	44%	12%	2%	2%
Changing the school culture towards more intensive cooperation with companies	35%	40%	18%	4%	2%
Likelihood of finding a job within six months after graduation	33%	36%	20%	8%	3%

The majority of companies are willing to continue cooperating with schools in traineeship implementation (Figure 4.2). They believe that the duration and organisation of students' WBL allow companies to recover their investments, and it is possible to hire the best students after graduation.

According to the companies, traineeships allow students to become involved in the work processes of companies immediately upon completion of their studies.

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FIGURE 4.2 DEGREE TO WHICH COMPANIES AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS
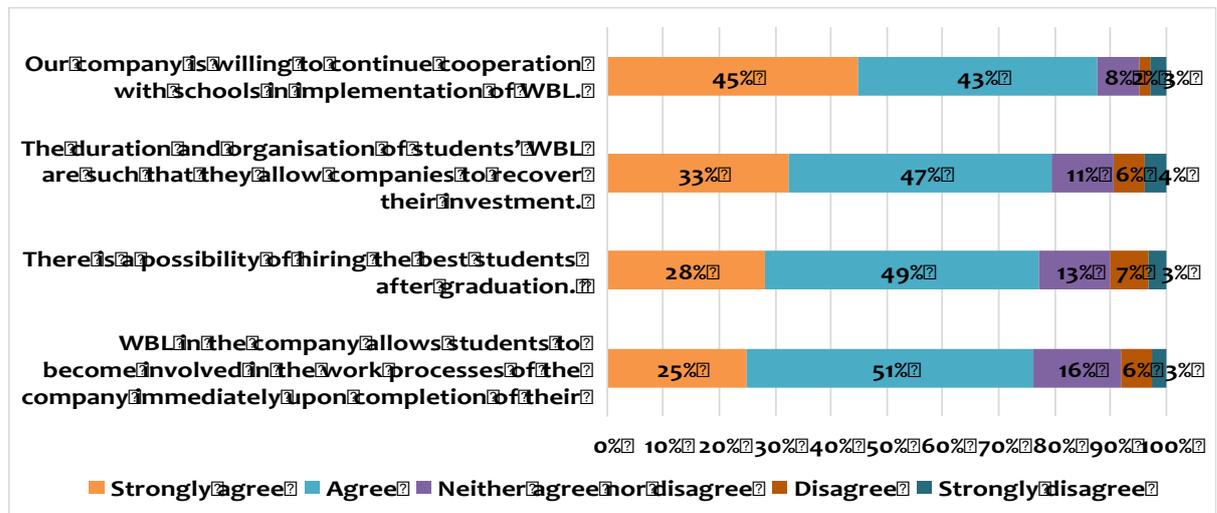
4.1.4 Trainees

Trainees mainly select placements via references from the school, the teachers, parents, relatives and friends of the families. Occasionally, a friend that completed a placement there in the past might recommend it. Proximity to school or the trainee's house is one of the selection criteria. Parents confirm/approve the company in which they will be placed.

> 'Studying for the university examination is very difficult when you are both a trainee and a worker. It is sometimes hard to switch between the school and the company.'
>
> Source: A trainee

Students attend an orientation meeting on the traineeship in the school led by the teachers to inform them of their rights and obligations. Companies usually introduce rules and procedures as well as limits for access in their facility. Trainees are usually alone on their first day in the company, though they are aware of who to contact in case of problems or issues related to their traineeship. Some trainees choose to start their traineeship earlier so they can adjust and get to know the company.

Social security and financial compensation offered to students is considered a major strength of the system. Trainees' wages are usually paid regularly, though with some delays due to delays in the state subsidy.

Coordinating teachers perform regular weekly visits. Company visits by the coordinating teachers is most welcome by trainees as it means they do not feel alone. The teachers also support the students to prepare for the theoretical and practical (summative) assessment/skills tests.

In general, students are satisfied with the professionalism and expertise of in-company trainers. Ample opportunity is given to them to express their opinion and propose some practical solutions. Generally speaking, trainees are treated equally, having opportunities to learn and participate in the planned activities, and the ability to acquire all required learning outcomes as defined by the curriculum. The

majority of students also believe that the traineeship will enable them to quickly find a job after finishing school.

> 'VET teachers have a deeper kind of relationship with their students. Students bear a smile of assurance when they see their teacher in the workplace during their traineeship. They feel proud and strong.'
>
> Source: A coordinating teacher

Students believe that a traineeship helps them acquire certain skills and competences. They are of the opinion that thanks to the traineeship, they will develop a sense of responsibility, self-confidence, teamworking skills, technical and vocational skills, knowledge and competences, employability skills (such as communication, computer (IT) and time management), and skills and competences to work on modern tools and equipment. They are also more motivated to learn and express positive views on the work environment created in companies during the traineeship.

4.1.5 Teachers

Teachers state that big companies require strong references from family members before accepting a trainee. They also note that their selections are based more on loyalty rather than merit. On the other hand, SMEs are preferred for placements by teachers as there is direct supervision and an adequate variety of tasks to complement practical training.

Continuous interaction between teachers and trainees is important. Trainees feel secure when they see their teachers in the company during visits.

Teachers think that a traineeship is an important opportunity for both students and companies. Students have the chance to recognise the field and the company, and in certain cases find employment after graduation. Companies also have the chance to probe the trainee as a candidate employee, and in certain cases prefer to employ people who they know from the traineeships.

Cooperation between companies and schools is considered high quality by the majority of teachers (Figure 4.3). The working environment and conditions in companies, general conditions of company facilities, infrastructure, tools, equipment and materials available for students are usually of good quality according to the majority of teachers.

> 'Coordination of traineeships is a 24-hour job. You are the guide, the mentor and sometimes even an older brother/sister to a trainee.'
>
> Source: A coordinating teacher

FIGURE 4.3 OVERALL QUALITY OF WORK-BASED LEARNING IN COMPANIES ACCORDING TO TEACHERS
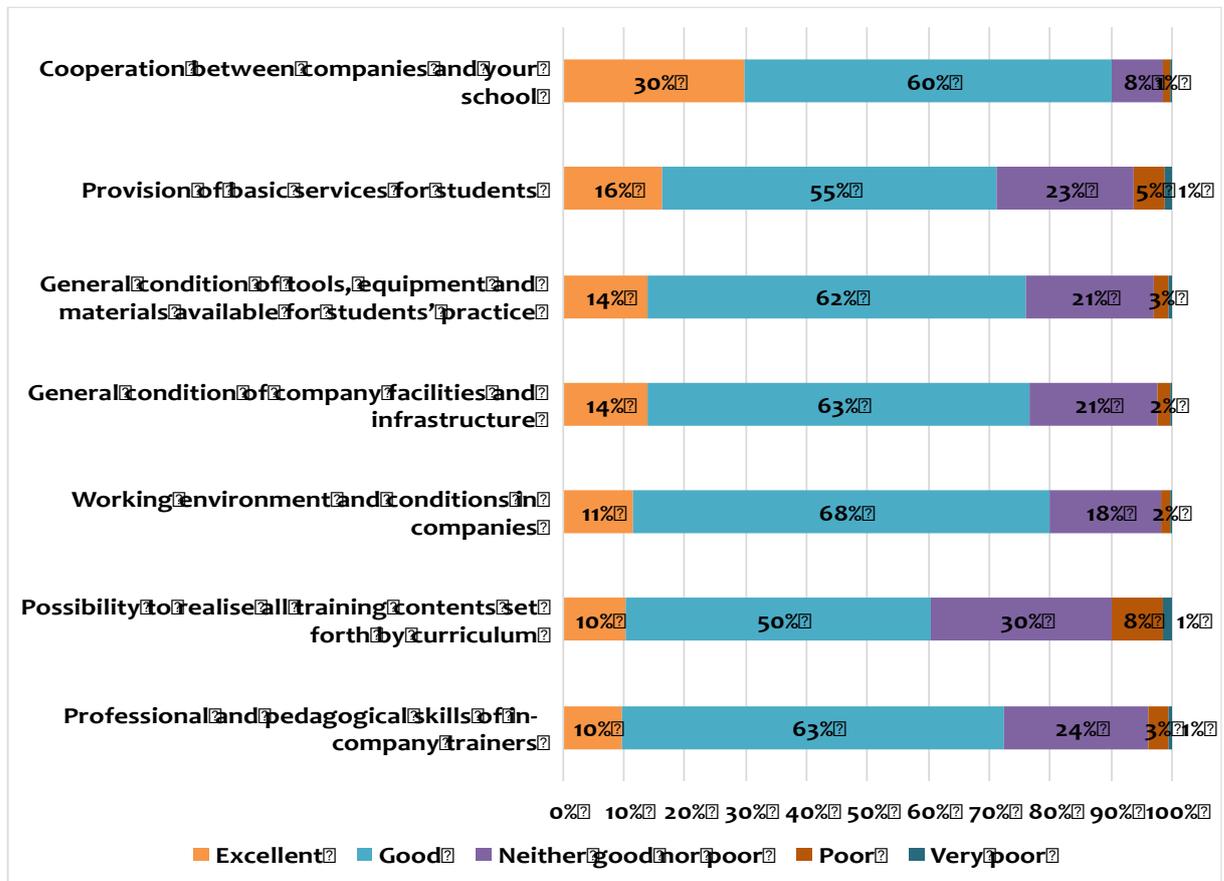
Teachers believe that traineeships have a full impact on the development of students' sense of responsibility, increased employability possibilities, acquisition of employability skills, knowledge, skills and competences for working on modern tools and equipment, motivation to learn and acquisition of knowledge about the labour market (Figure 4.4).

FIGURE 4.4 IMPACT OF STUDENTS' WORK-BASED LEARNING IN COMPANIES ACCORDING TO TEACHERS
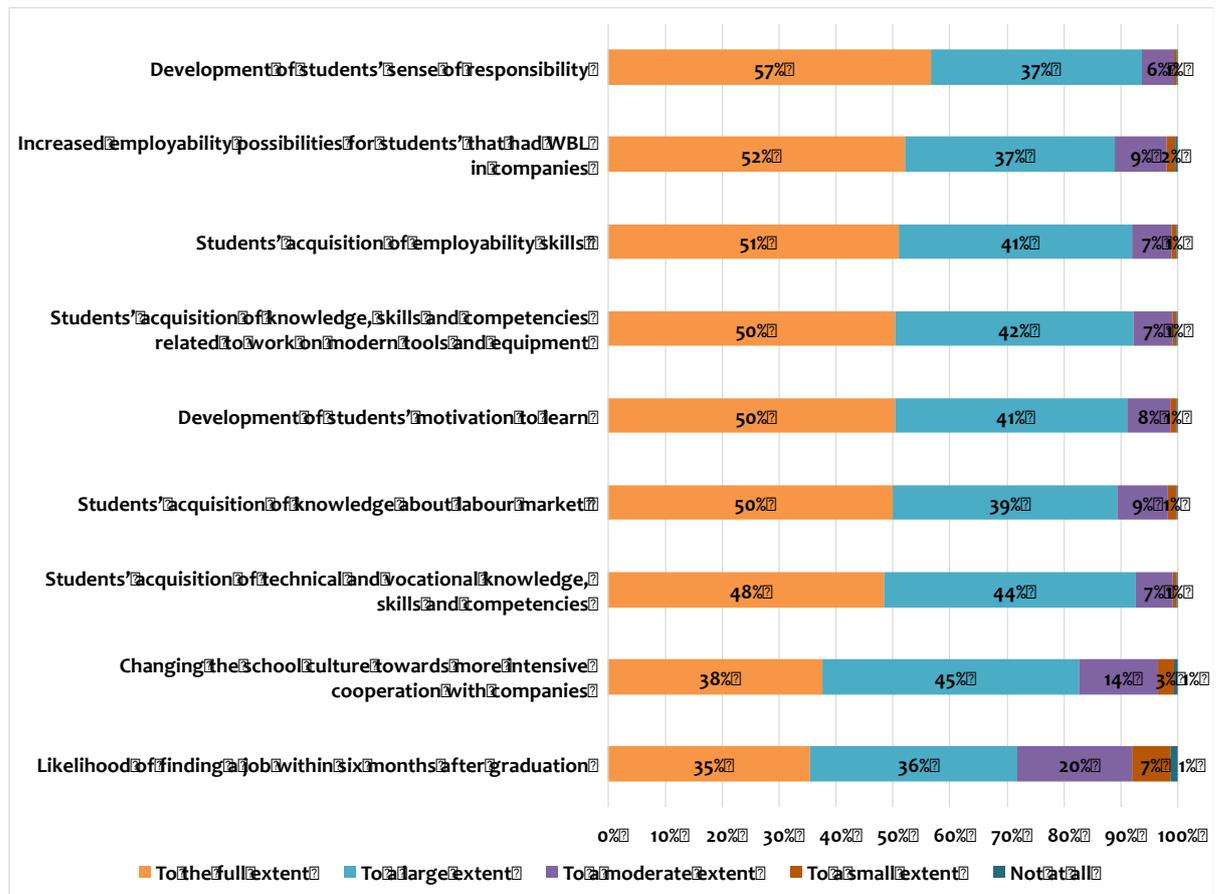
4.2 Key challenges and gaps in quality of traineeships in IVET in Turkey

4.2.1 Provision

The schools consider the challenge of not achieving all training content set in the curriculum as the weakest point in assessing the overall quality of traineeships. In addition, the issues related to curriculum alignment, in-company trainers, and materials, tools and equipment are areas that require special attention for the improvement of the traineeship quality.

As evident by the survey findings, the level of cooperation between schools, companies and other social partners at local level (provincial directorates of the MoNE, chambers, industrial zones/sites and technology development zones, and international organisations) needs to be strengthened (Figure 4.5). This fact is also supported by interview findings where it was noted that local, provincial and national as well as international traineeship opportunities are not known, and there is no coherent set of information or database that students and teachers can draw upon. Considering the key roles played by business representatives and intermediary organisations in regions, it is of particular importance to improve the level and quality of communication and cooperation between them and schools in traineeship implementation. A low level of cooperation is evident not only in developing but also for developed provinces where a large number of business intermediaries exist. Micro enterprises have lower levels of cooperation with local partners. Taking into account their high share in traineeship

provision, it is important for social partners to establish close communication and cooperation with local micro companies.

FIGURE 4.5 LEVEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN COMPANIES AND SOCIAL PARTNERS IN RELATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK-BASED LEARNING
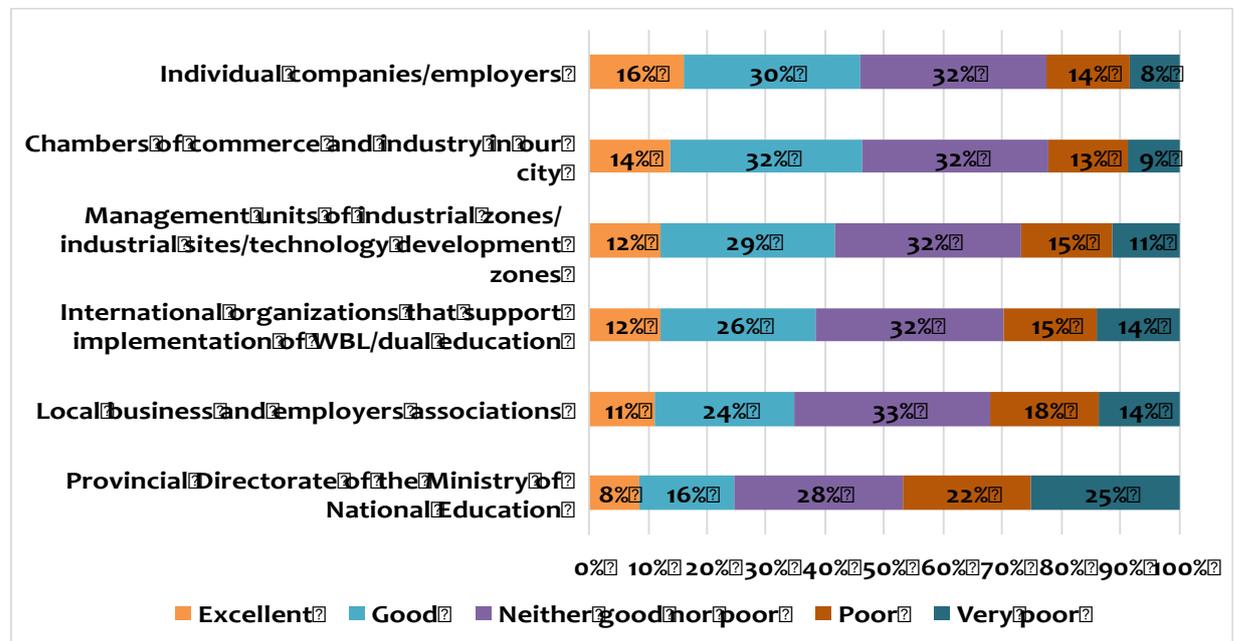

Another area that is reported as an issue is the availability of equipment, tools and materials needed at schools for the implementation of the theoretical and practical teaching (Figure 4.6). Students lack adequate knowledge and initial practical skills for the use of materials, tools and equipment. The teaching methods at schools for the educational profiles of students are also highlighted as a challenge. Teachers mainly lecture and there is minimal student-centred and practice-oriented methodology. There is room for improvement in enabling the active participation of students in a learning process in the school environment.

Industry, which is the driving force of VET, is facing many challenges in WBL provision, particularly due to the fact that the majority (about 99%) of the companies are SMEs or micro enterprises. They lack adequate physical resources, facilities and machinery, tools and equipment.

Challenges are faced in traineeships for health programmes due to the high cost of equipment and hospitals' reluctance to bear the risks. Provincial Directorates support and actively seek school sponsors for specific VET fields, with priority in training skilled workers according to sectoral needs. Provincial Directorates seek support of chambers and public agencies in fields where job placement is challenging, and enforce requirements under Law No 3308 and remind companies of the implications.

The grade system binds teachers to support students to gain knowledge, skills and competences required for a learning outcome. Though all VET programmes are modular and outcome-based (criterion-referenced), they are subject to the MoNE Regulation on Secondary Education Institutions. Accordingly, a student can complete his/her traineeship as long as the grade point average for the first term, second term and the practical exam is 50 or above, or his/her grade from the practical exam is 70 or above. Hence, the criterion referencing required for outcome-based programmes cannot be fully adhered to.

FIGURE 4.6 EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS RELATED TO THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL LEARNING IN SCHOOL AS PREPARATION FOR THEIR WORK-BASED LEARNING
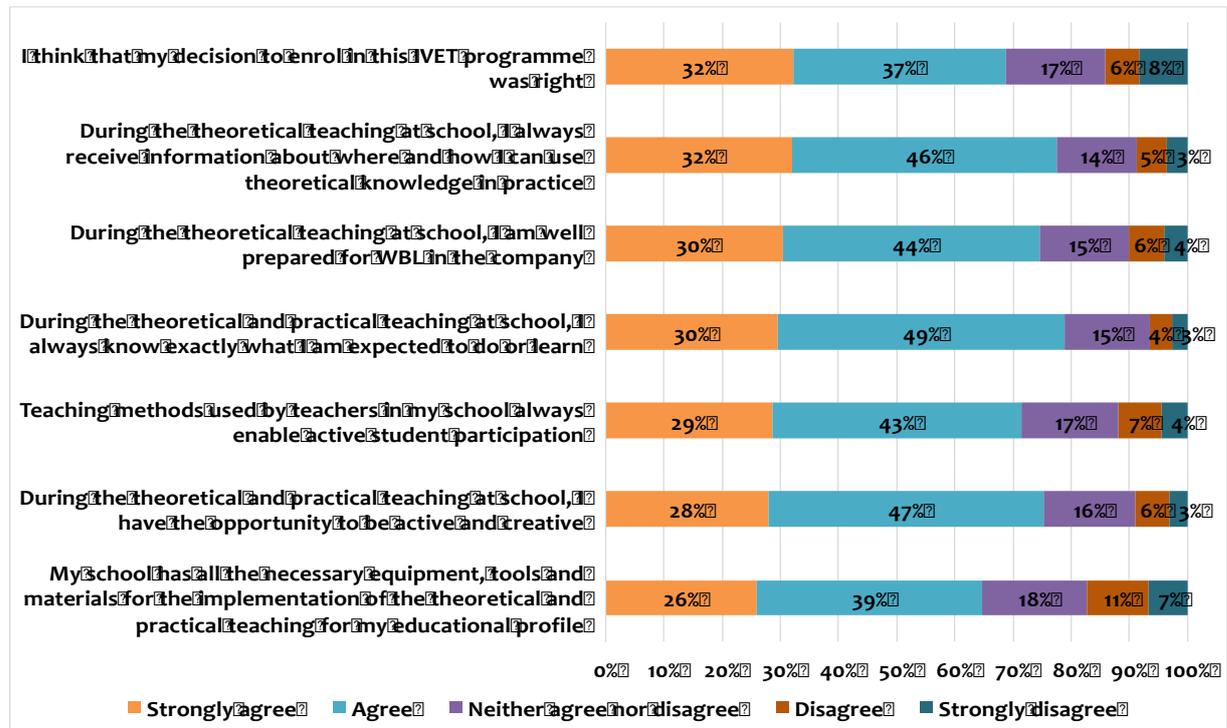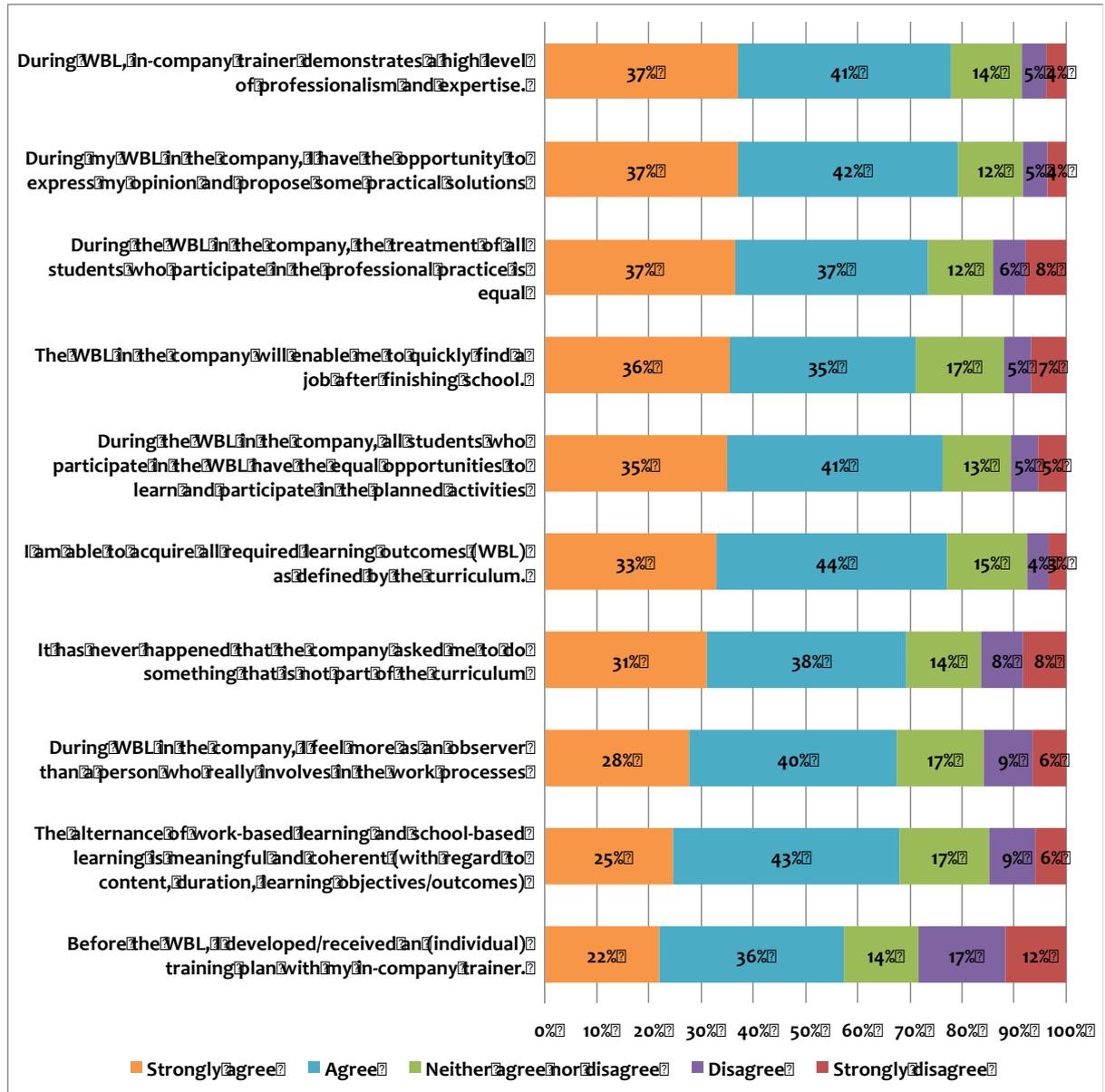

4.2.2 Integration of learning

The most important obstacle for the implementation of traineeships is insufficient number of anticipated hours allocated in companies. Also, linked with this issue are the inability to align the school schedule with the traineeship schedule and unclear distribution and misalignment between the content, duration and expected outcomes of company and school-based learning. These obstacles are more important for less developed provinces than the others.

Students are of the opinion that the provision of basic services and the possibility to understand all training content in the curriculum are often an issue in traineeships. Furthermore, students report cases where they are asked to perform tasks outside of the curriculum and feel like an observer rather than a participant during traineeships (Figure 4.7). The interviews also confirmed that students are not always engaged in their relevant job functions by the companies. The coherence of alternance of traineeship and school-based learning (with regard to content, duration and learning objectives/outcomes) is another area that needs to be improved, according to the students.

Providing students with an individual training plan with the in-company trainers before the traineeship starts is not a common practice. It was also verified in the interviews that a traineeship plan aligned with the curricula is seldom shared with the companies or students. In some companies, there are discrepancies between what students learn in school and what they do in the companies, due to technological changes.

FIGURE 4.7 EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS RELATED TO WORK-BASED LEARNING

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
During WBL, in-company trainer demonstrates a high level of professionalism and expertise.	37%	41%	14%	5%	4%
During my WBL in the company, I have the opportunity to express my opinion and propose some practical solutions	37%	42%	12%	5%	4%
During the WBL in the company, the treatment of all students who participate in the professional practice is equal	37%	37%	12%	6%	8%
The WBL in the company will enable me to quickly find a job after finishing school.	36%	35%	17%	5%	7%
During the WBL in the company, all students who participate in the WBL have the equal opportunities to learn and participate in the planned activities	35%	41%	13%	5%	5%
I am able to acquire all required learning outcomes (WBL) as defined by the curriculum.	33%	44%	15%	4%	3%
It has never happened that the company asked me to do something that is not part of the curriculum	31%	38%	14%	8%	8%
During WBL in the company, I feel more as an observer than a person who really involves in the work processes	28%	40%	17%	9%	6%
The alternance of work-based learning and school-based learning is meaningful and coherent (with regard to content, duration, learning objectives/outcomes)	25%	43%	17%	9%	6%
Before the WBL, I developed/received an (individual) training plan with my in-company trainer.	22%	36%	14%	17%	12%

Although chambers offer traineeships for VET high school students, learning outcomes of VET fields cannot be fully covered during traineeships in chambers. Trainees usually are engaged in routine tasks. However, they get ample opportunities to get to know the corporate environment. Traineeships in the chambers mainly serve the purpose of learning about the work environment and business mentality while technical training is not adequate.

Grade 12 students are normally considered personnel of the company. They are released for two-day school-based training. This fact should be emphasised in both worlds, that of school and the company. Some trainees feel the switch between school and work in a week is most challenging. They say: 'Are we employees or students?' There are also cases where companies threaten students with bad grades and irrelevant tasks are given to trainees. Those who regard their trainees as full-time employees give them overwhelming tasks, which coordinating teachers are concerned about. Another

issue is that having to complete a traineeship and the university placement examination in Grade 12 is challenging for students. They usually miss 30 days in a school year to study for their university placement examination.

The trainee's skills and knowledge regress towards the second semester. Passing the theoretical and skills assessment at the end of the year becomes challenging for some students due to their focus on the university examination. On the other hand, student absence is a general issue and alternating three days and two days between company and school disorients the students.

Coordinating teachers have too many companies to visit during traineeship implementation. Each teacher is required to visit each trainee at least once a week. Due to the high number of companies to visit by each teacher during the two days reserved in a week, visits take place less often or are shorter. Occasionally, company representatives or company trainers are not available during the coordinating teachers' visits. In particular, public companies are reluctant to accept visits by the coordinating teachers.

4.2.3 Guidance and motivation of learners

According to the companies, although most sectors consider mathematics and vocational foreign language skills to be absolutely necessary, these skills are very low among trainees. There is an obvious need to adopt science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to address 21st century skills listed by the World Economic Forum.

While the students state that they are more motivated to learn thanks to WBL and develop positive attitudes as well as some very useful skills (Figure 4.8), stakeholders are of the opinion that trainees tend to be weary, lack motivation, and have high expectations. There are various factors leading to this situation. For instance, trainees from the upper secondary VET schools usually come from low-income families. Simply having a WBL experience is overwhelming for some. Also, there are cases where traineeships are not implemented properly. Students sometimes tend to abuse it by getting medical leave during school based and WBL periods. In fact, as explained by the stakeholders, absence and discipline are the main issues faced in the traineeship system. Absence is partly due to the need to study for the university examination, and discipline issues mainly relate to the lack of sufficient developmentally appropriate guidance and counselling at the school and the workplace. In some cases, female trainees consider getting married and not working after graduation. Occasionally, students are emotionally engaged with company employees, which can be disrupting in their work life.

The lack of legal social security coverage for students in Grade 9 in their visits to enterprises is another challenge that deters schools from taking the initiative to access local labour market facilities.

Other issues faced, although occasionally, are bankruptcy of the company, abusive treatment of trainees, and disruption to the working environment by trainees. In such cases, trainees are transferred to new companies. This of course can cause complications.

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## FIGURE 4.8 EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS RELATED TO WORK-BASED LEARNING
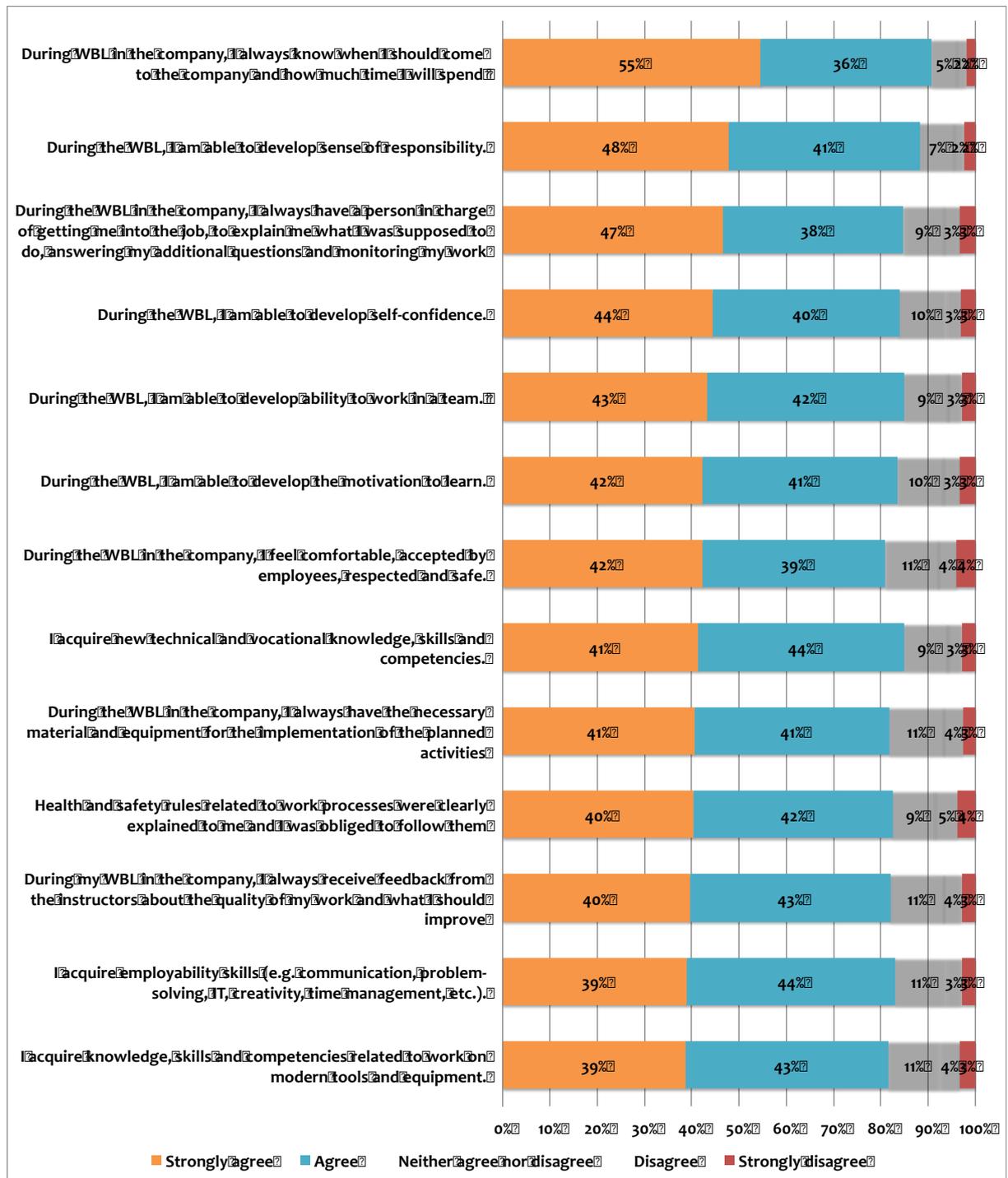
4.2.4 Trainees' working conditions and graduate employment

Teachers and companies believe that traineeships have a low impact on the likelihood of finding a job within six months of graduation (Figure 4.9). Finding a job in a reasonable period of time (six months or earlier) is a bigger issue in less developed regions. According to teachers, only half of the

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graduates who complete a traineeship find a job within six months of graduation. Students are also reluctant about whether or not the traineeship has a positive impact on finding a job.

FIGURE 4.9 EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS' WORK-BASED LEARNING HAS AN IMPACT ON THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS
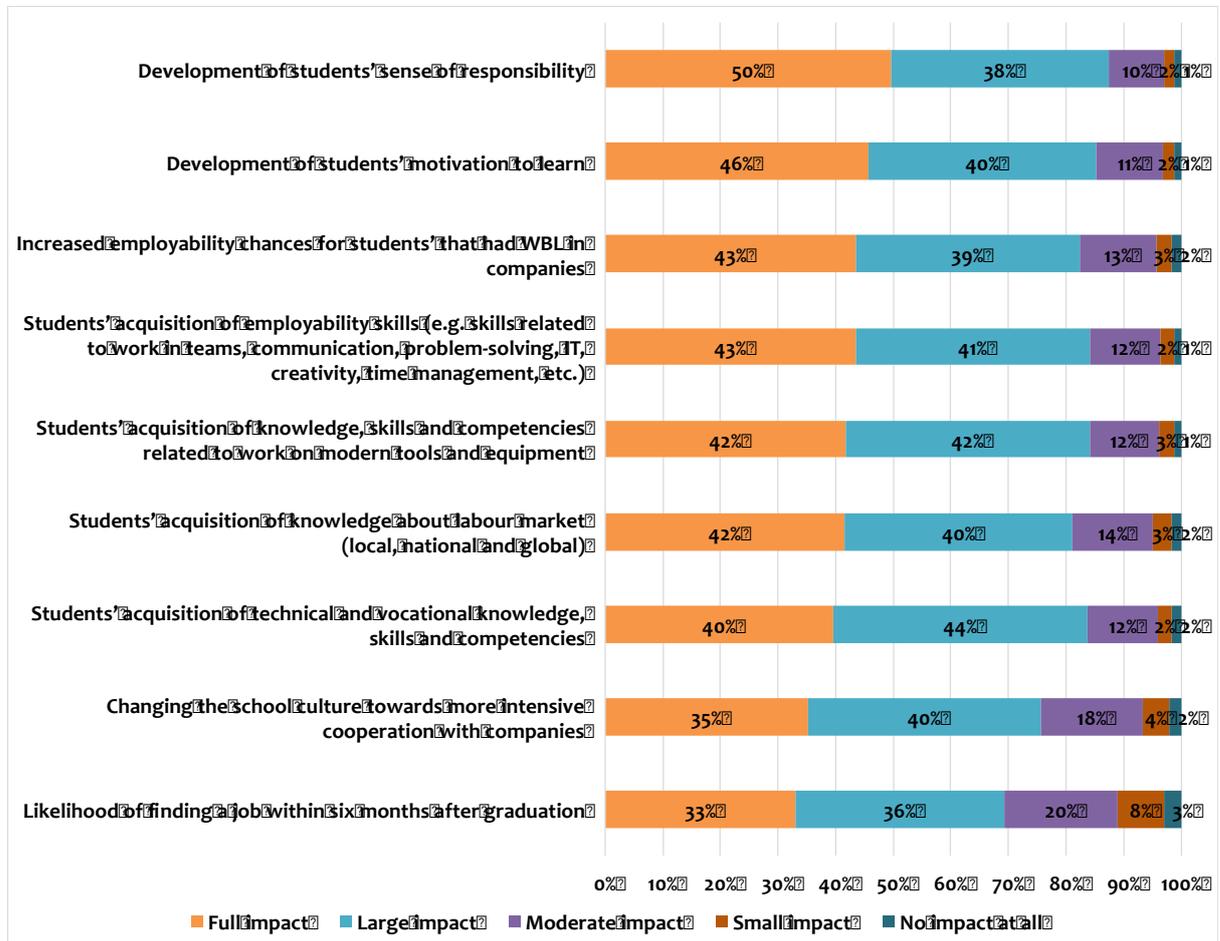
In addition, challenges exist in terms of integrating social security administration and the e-school (e-okul) system. There is no way of checking when students drop out and start open high school, because they belong to two different systems (formal and non-formal). Hence, schools occasionally continue their social security coverage and pay wages, only later realising that the student has left the formal system.

4.2.5 Funding

For companies, insufficient financial incentives for the implementation of traineeships are an issue that is faced frequently in the implementation of students' WBL. Micro enterprises cite financial barriers as more significant to them than SMEs and large firms. No state subsidy exists for companies signing protocols with schools, though companies support the school on a voluntary basis.

> 'I wish companies with signed protocols with schools could take advantage of the state wage subsidy. I hope this will change in the near future, as we have already shown our commitment to VET by taking on this work voluntarily. We would like to be recognised, too.'
>
> Source: A company owner

Some companies think that wage provision takes away the actual purpose of traineeships. For them, student conduct and morality are most important. They believe, however, that students only focus on the wages provided by companies, whereas companies present role models for trainees, not just wages, and this is highly valuable. On the other hand, some companies do not pay all of the trainees' wages. They pay only the state subsidy when the funds are released and do not pay the company part. Wages are paid very late, sometimes two to three months late.

Another issue is about working times for trainees. Trainees cannot work on Saturdays as by law it does not come under social security coverage. The same applies to working overtime. However, certain companies need trainees to work longer hours and on Saturdays.

Transport for trainees and teachers to get to companies is an issue which is not addressed due to lack of adequate funds. In most cases, companies are located very far away. Teachers have no financial resources reserved for company visits and they have to use their own cars/resources. In the case of students, some companies select trainees according to company shuttle routes to support trainee transport. In others, trainees are left to their own resources. Trainees also face problems related to meals at public organisations. These organisations in most cases ask trainees to pay for their lunches whereas their own personnel eat for free.

4.2.6 Teacher and company trainer competences

IVET school representatives believe that continuing professional development of teachers of vocational subjects is an important area that should be supported by national institutions to improve the quality of traineeships. Furthermore, no reward or recognition except for additional compensation for their coordination tasks exists for coordinating teachers, while such mechanisms could help improve the quality.

4.2.7 Assessment and quality assurance

Assessments by schools of the quality of traineeships in companies vary by region: in less developed provinces, working environment and conditions in companies, general conditions of company facilities, infrastructure, tools, equipment and materials available for students' use are of low quality compared to other provinces. Furthermore, less developed regions face bigger challenges in relation to the number of professionally and pedagogically trained trainers in companies.

Company trainers rarely attend skills assessments at the end of the year. They are usually planned during the busiest time of the year. Some sectors such as maintenance and repair of electrical appliances or Communication & Information Technology find it challenging to get a qualified workforce. Pay is low. Qualified workers prefer to carry out informal work, since they are better paid and do not need to pay taxes. The majority of these sectors run in this way or sub-contract. Some SMEs cannot always fulfil curriculum requirements for traineeships. Trainees are regarded as employees in such

companies. Those trainees prefer to do other things after graduation: many of the graduates choose not to use the skills they gained. They usually do not consider higher education either.

Quality assurance of traineeships is weak and the official review process for traineeships is inadequate. Also, there is insufficient enforcement for quality assurance of traineeship practices of coordinating teachers or in-company trainers. As underlined by the social partners, although the MoNE has taken important steps, it cannot resolve all issues. The MoNE is taking on too much regarding VET implementation. The financial implications of running too many training institutions, sometimes inefficiently, are rather high. Other social partners should be involved to support quality improvement.

Company trainers provide attendance sheets for trainees. This sometimes leads to hierarchical issues between the teachers and the company trainers. There is a lot of extra paperwork for both companies and schools: neither teachers and coordinating deputy principals nor the company representative and in-company trainers are trained for this work. Teachers often take on company responsibilities to ensure the traineeship is completed. Deadlines for paperwork required by the state to disperse subsidies conflict with company and school practices.

4.2.8 Social inclusion

Placement of students with special needs (those with an individualised learning plan) is rather challenging. They are mainly placed in public companies as these are more likely to provide a safe and secure working environment. Private companies are reluctant to accept students with special needs due to additional facilities and safeguarding measures required in the traineeship.

4.2.9 Accessible information

There is a lack of available information for placement opportunities locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. Schools are proactive though to manage this process and use their own resources. Students also solicit traineeship opportunities from the chambers where there are only a limited number of placements available.

TABLE 4.1 SOME CHALLENGES AND GAPS IN THE IVET TRAINEESHIP SYSTEM IN TURKEY

Focus	Challenges	Possible cause	Possible effect
Provision	Low frequency of company visits by coordinating teachers	■ Lack of available financial resources for coordinating teachers ■ Geographical spread of companies to be visited ■ High number of companies and trainees to be visited	■ Low quality of traineeship ■ Less monitoring and quality control of the traineeship process
	Unavailability of equipment, tools and materials at schools	■ Limited funding allocated for IVET schools for rapidly changing technology	■ Poor skills and competences of students ■ Low quality of traineeship
Integration of learning	Need to improve integration of school-based and WBL in terms of addressing learning outcomes and trainees' learning needs	■ Presence of two learning contexts ■ Lack of proper learning environment	■ Mismatch of traineeship learning outcomes and opportunities

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Focus	Challenges	Possible cause	Possible effect
Guidance and motivation of trainees	Absence and distraction of students due to the conflict of traineeship with university examination in Grade 12	■ Curriculum design and instructional planning	■ Inability to implement traineeship ■ Low motivation of trainees ■ Disorientation of trainees
Trainees' working conditions	Long working hours and working at the weekend	■ Company needs and preferences	■ Trainee overload ■ Risks in occupational health and safety due to social security coverage
	Transport and other basic services provided to trainees in companies	■ Companies located on city outskirts and rules applied by public organisations	■ Learners' reluctance to attend ■ Cost of traineeship on students
Funding	Delays in the state subsidy for companies	■ The state, schools and companies follow different calendars to fulfil formalities	■ Delays in wage payments
	Additional paperwork and formalities for schools and companies	■ Need to institute better mechanisms for quality control and to optimise processes	■ Reluctance of teachers, schools and companies to use quality control tools ■ Inefficient processes
	Limited resources for traineeships in micro and small enterprises	■ Lack of sufficient support schemes at national and regional level to provide basic resources for traineeships in micro and small enterprises	■ Low quality of traineeship experience for trainees
Teacher and company trainer competences	Need to identify and improve skills of coordinating teachers and company trainers related to management of traineeship process	■ Lack of a systematic approach for training needs analysis ■ Insufficient mechanisms for continuous improvement of skills of teachers and trainers	■ Low quality of traineeship experience for trainees ■ Low quality of service by the company trainers
Assessment and quality assurance	Need to improve self-assessment and internal assessment of traineeship process; also need to address lack of external assessment	■ Non-existence of established assessment systems for improving the quality of VET in general	■ Low overall quality of IVET traineeship system
	Absence or irregularity of sector's attendance in skills exams	■ Lack of adequate coordination in the arrangement and timing of examinations ■ Conflicts of company priorities ■ Conflicts of social partner priorities ■ Low levels of ownership and commitment to provide quality traineeships	■ Low quality of assessment in terms of validity, reliability, fairness and relevance

Focus	Challenges	Possible cause	Possible effect
Social inclusion	Learners with special needs have limited resources and possibilities to gain full advantage offered	■ Low level of awareness on the needs of learners with special needs ■ Limited support mechanisms or resources available for learners with special needs in school and the workplace	■ Discrimination of trainees and limited traineeship opportunities ■ Lack of adequate job opportunities and other social inequalities for IVET graduates with special needs
Accessible information	Lack of adequate information about placement possibilities locally, provincially, nationally and internationally	■ No coherent mechanisms or resources available for trainees and schools to identify placement opportunities ■ Weak communication and coordination between social partners at the regional, provincial and local levels	■ Mismatch of trainees and training opportunities ■ Misalignment between workforce demand and supply ■ The risk of not finding a job after graduation

Source: Author's own

5. CONCLUSIONS

Governance

VET is lacking an essential element without the leadership of industry. The lack of adequate partnership and cooperation between the key stakeholders is also an important shortcoming of the system. The education and business worlds should come together to serve the needs of the economy and society. The MoNE has so far played the leading role in VET governance. However, quality traineeship requires the active commitment and expertise of not just policy makers, notably those responsible for education and training, and employment/labour market policy, but also – and more crucially – social partners. Memorandums of Understanding, while essential, are not enough to establish and maintain close collaboration between the actors. Therefore, an increase in the quality of VET in general and traineeships in particular requires active involvement and high-level commitment of all related stakeholders (industry, business intermediaries, local and regional business infrastructure managers, development agencies, etc.) in a coordinated manner.

Industry and social partners are expected to create a nurturing environment for young learners in the companies. While businesses provide the necessary machinery, equipment and technology, it is also essential that they provide technical and pedagogic guidance by their skilled staff, and proper assessment of the learning process. The MoNE's guidance in the latter aspects is critical.

Companies providing traineeship opportunities have a special mission in society. This mission comes with additional responsibilities. Students in Grade 12 spend the majority of the school year in these companies. While they are profit-making institutions, they are also learning institutions engaged in training young people. It is essential that the social partners as well as the MoNE recognise this fact and support them accordingly.

The MoNE and social partners should find ways to improve the quality of traineeships, which may require review of existing roles and functions and reallocation of them among key players.

Provision

In finding placement opportunities, trainees are sometimes left alone and solicit companies individually. An integrated effort is required to find placement opportunities, and this can only be achieved by improving the governance system.

Trainees are often asked to work overtime or at the weekend. They are asked to carry out routine company tasks that may prevent them from achieving the learning outcomes at the end of their placements. This sometimes leads to regression in their knowledge and existing practical skills in the field.

School-based and WBL are not well integrated, partially due to the lack of proper monitoring of the existing development plan by the company trainers and coordinating teachers. Coordinating teachers also have to keep the number of company visits to a minimum or carry out remote monitoring. Trainees' needs and preferences are not systematically identified either. Company trainers are overwhelmed with company duties and tasks. The paperwork imposed by traineeships creates an extra workload on companies, who are usually supported by the coordinating teachers to fulfil procedures and formalities which, in turn, puts additional burden on the teachers.

Funding

The state subsidy for employers is well received by many companies. However, trainee wages have become fully dependent on the release of funds from the state budget, and as a result, companies choose to delay payments to trainees. The state subsidy for companies is often paid late. This leads to non-payment or delayed payment to trainees. Companies which have school–industry protocols cannot benefit from a state subsidy. Moreover, the wage payment process is tedious, and school, company and state calendars for deadlines do not align.

The trainee wage in some cases is the sole income for a trainee's family. Trainees from low-income families often face the challenge of meeting extra costs for transport and meals at companies, although coordinating teachers and the schools try to support the trainee in many cases. Furthermore, while some companies request trainees to work overtime or at the weekend, their social security does not cover such cases.

There are no funds allocated for teachers to carry out company visits. They use their own resources for this purpose and no compensation exists.

Teacher and company trainer competences

Continuing training of teachers and company trainers is a major requirement for the enhancement of quality. Company trainers lack certain knowledge and skills to manage the traineeship process. These include areas not only related to human development, communication and teamwork but also the basic knowledge of the curriculum. Coordinating teachers also lack certain soft skills, such as communication, networking, problem-solving, bookkeeping and accounting procedures.

Job descriptions for coordinating teachers and company trainers require review. All parties need to be well informed and comprehensively trained on their specific tasks for traineeships.

Company trainers should ensure that trainees are seen as learners rather than employees, and should be informed about implications of traineeships.

Certification and recognition of teachers and company trainers

Coordinating teachers have many responsibilities in addition to their teaching and administrative tasks. However, they do not have adequate power or recognition to make decisions related to traineeships. Teachers are committed and dedicated yet lack motivation and resources.

Selection, guidance and motivation of learners

Trainees are usually in a difficult dilemma during their placement in Grade 12. On the one hand, they need the practical skills and knowledge in the field which is made available through the company training. On the other hand, they need to consider higher education and the university examination. Furthermore, they are not provided with sufficient support and guidance to overcome these problems and make the right decisions. As the company trainers lack adequate student guidance skills, they also fail to motivate and mentor learners.

Social security coverage for Grade 9 students is not present for visits to enterprises under the scope of VET guidance and orientation.

Assessment and quality assurance of traineeships

There is no well-designed and implemented framework for quality assurance. Quality of traineeships is usually monitored by the coordinating teacher. However, this is more of an internal quality assurance. The teacher and the company trainer, on the one hand, and the school and the company, on the other, try to fulfil formalities and make up for each other. Teachers resort to their own resources and capacity to identify ways to improve the quality of traineeships. Quality assurance, especially external assessment of traineeships by third parties, does not exist.

Assessment of WBL also has deficiencies. Company trainers or social partner representatives often do not show up during end-of-year skills tests for various reasons. Systematic feedback mechanisms for trainees are rarely used.

Social inclusion

The practice of mainstreaming for individuals with special needs in IVET needs improvement. Teachers usually lack adequate knowledge, skills and support to cater for such special needs. Placement of students with special needs (with an individualised learning plan) is rather challenging. These students are mainly placed in public companies as these are more likely to provide a safe and secure working environment. Private companies are reluctant to accept students with special needs due to additional facilities and safeguarding measures required in the traineeship.

Accessible information

There is a lack of available information not only for placements but also for job opportunities for IVET students and graduates locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Schools are proactive to manage this process and use their own resources. Students are also asked to obtain placements through their own resources, such as family and friends. There is no coherent mechanism or a system feeding this gap.

6. KEY PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a list of key priorities and recommendations proposed to the MoNE and to the representatives of employers as traineeship providers.

6.1 Ministry of National Education

The following recommendations are proposed to the MoNE for the enhancement of traineeship quality.

Improving governance system and structures:

■ Develop and implement a Quality Improvement Plan to identify concrete actions, responsibilities and the timeframe for the work to be undertaken to enhance the traineeship quality.

■ Review the existing roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders in traineeship provision and devolve certain roles and responsibilities to social partners in terms of functions and sectors for traineeships, and empower them.

■ Design and implement a quality assurance system delineating shared and separate responsibilities of stakeholders. Ensure that quality assurance, especially external assessment of traineeships by third parties, is considered in the mid to long term and carried out via social partners by seconding VET/WBL experts to social partners to be financed by the government.

■ Establish and foster partnerships, mechanisms and tools between industry, the school and all key players in the IVET system. Ensure that these partnerships focus on the quality of the qualification and the learning process, as well as pedagogic options for achieving quality in WBL.

■ Lead the development of a traineeship portal in collaboration with the TOBB for collecting and disseminating the information about traineeships/placement opportunities according to VET fields available locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. Monitor closely and ensure that it is maintained and updated regularly by the chambers under the supervision of the TOBB. Consider integrating this system either into the existing e-school (e-okul) system or TOBB's database of companies with an additional module on WBL opportunities.

Supporting coordinating teachers and company trainers

■ Update job descriptions for coordinating teachers and company trainers. Consider sparing coordinating teachers from other tasks to make sure that they dedicate their time and energy to the effective monitoring and mentoring of trainees. Ensure that these teachers follow up each student closely by also observing and guiding them in the school environment.

■ If the current system continues, ensure that coordinating teachers' workloads are alleviated to provide sufficient time for a quality monitoring and mentoring process. Also reward coordinating teachers either financially or through certificates and other means for the additional tasks they take on when coordinating traineeships.

■ Allocate additional funds for company visits by coordinating teachers and clearly define the processes and procedures for visits and monitoring activities.

■ Conduct a training needs analysis for coordinating teachers and company trainers and repeat this analysis periodically to make sure they are equipped with the skills and qualifications required for delivering a high-quality traineeship. Ensure that teachers and company trainers receive training on all required areas, specifically in human development, communication, teamwork and implications of traineeships.

■ Provide cooperative learning opportunities for WBL-specific tasks to coordinating teachers and company trainers in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the social

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partners such as TOBB, TESK and TISK. Organise regular traineeship meetings involving all parties to review the progress.

■ Organise capacity building activities for teachers and company trainers to address the knowledge and skills gaps in special needs education and training.

Improve funding and incentive schemes

■ Make sure that social security coverage of trainees is extended for work on Saturdays or overtime.

■ In support of VET guidance and counselling, provide legal social security coverage for students in Grade 9 in their visits to enterprises.

■ Simplify the wage payment process or consider making arrangements at government level so that the state subsidy is released via schools rather than companies by depositing trainee wages in school/department accounts overseen by a committee including parents, teachers and the companies.

■ Integrate e-okul (formal) and open high school (non-formal) online systems to prevent duplications in social security coverage and wage payments of trainees.

■ Expand the state subsidy for traineeships to include companies that sign school–industry protocols.

■ Launch a trainee scholarship scheme for trainees from low-income families. Consider empowering schools to raise funds for the trainees from companies which are willing to forgo the state subsidy.

■ Collaborate with the Ministry of Development and Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology to ensure that development agencies and Kosgeb (the Small and Medium-scaled Industry Development and Support Directorate) make financial resources available to micro and small companies to improve their equipment infrastructure and technical capabilities to offer quality traineeship opportunities. Make sure that more resources are available for enterprises located in less developed regions.

Other measures for improving quality

■ Seek ways to mitigate the conflict between a traineeship in Grade 12 and the university examination. Some suggestions include spreading the traineeship over several years instead of offering it only in Grade 12 to allow students to study for the university examination or arranging it in the form of a semester block: one semester in school and one semester in company or as a full-time traineeship in Grade 12.

■ Consider making flexible arrangements for traineeship days and plan these with the students and the companies. Include possibility of considering Saturday as a workday in the traineeship agreement, provided parents, trainees and companies consent to this.

■ Ensure that schools establish structures in charge of assessment and implementation of WBL and traineeships.

  • Make sure that the schools plan timing of skills tests together with companies to ensure involvement of company trainers. Shift end-of-year theory and skills assessment to first semester to prevent regression of knowledge and skills in the second semester due to focus on university examination.

  • Periodically conduct traineeship surveys to identify learners' needs and preferences, as well as for general and specific feedback on the existing traineeship experience.

  • Identify and disseminate good practices such as the traineeship system (Grade 11 and 12) applied by the private VET high school in Gaziantep Chamber of Industry – vocational training centre, which brings together industry, the school and the state.

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6.2   Work-based learning stakeholders

The following recommendations are proposed for TOBB and TESK as the main representative organisations of employers as traineeship providers.

- Closely collaborate with the MoNE to design and regularly update the traineeship portal by encouraging companies, training providers and partners to register and bulk upload vacancy details directly from their systems to this database, saving time and resources and enabling a quicker turnaround on posting vacancies. Make sure that this system enables and allows employers who use their own recruitment sites to track successful individuals as well. Identify and examine best practices before designing the system.
- In collaboration with the MoNE and other stakeholders, plan and implement awareness-raising and information activities for companies as well as students, parents and the larger community to promote the importance of and facilitate access to traineeships.
- Support chambers, employer associations and their member companies by providing capacity building activities in fulfilling their expected tasks for traineeships and apprenticeships.
- Collaborate with the MoNE to offer supplementary training or supplementary experience in a pool of diversified workplaces for learners (apprentice, trainee, student) considering the fact that companies have difficulties in offering a wide range of work-based skills to young people over the period of a training programme to achieve intended learning outcomes. To this end, engage and coordinate a variety of companies offering specialised learning opportunities for intended learning outcomes to enrich learners' traineeship experiences.
- Create mechanisms to encourage companies to share their best practices in apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Develop a system with the MoNE to encourage and support companies capable of providing placements for students with special needs (with an individualised learning plan) through the schools' guidance and counselling units as well as guidance research centres.
- In collaboration with the MoNE, develop a recognition programme for the companies providing WBL opportunities based on clear criteria and indicators to encourage industry participation. Indicators may include the number of trainees placed within the last three years; number of graduates employed by the company; hours of continuing professional development provided for coordinating teachers and company trainers; number of company trainers; and company involvement in institutional, local and provincial VET policies, strategies and implementation.

ACRONYMS

Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
DG TVET	Directorate General for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
EAfA	European Alliance for Apprenticeships
EFQEA	European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships
EQARF	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ETF	European Training Foundation
GAN	Global Apprenticeship Network
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IVET	Initial vocational education and training
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MTDs	Medium-term deliverables
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QFT	European Quality Framework for Traineeships
TESK	Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen
TISK	Confederation of Employer Unions of Turkey
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
TQF	Turkish Qualifications Framework
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

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