



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

LEVERAGING EMPLOYABILITY



ERT is a forum bringing together around 50 Chief Executives and Chairmen of major multinational companies of European parentage covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. Companies of ERT Members are widely situated across Europe, with a combined turnover exceeding € 1,300 billion, sustaining around 6.8 million jobs in the region. They invest more than €51 billion annually in R&D, largely in Europe; which is equivalent to 18% of total EU R&D expenditure.

European industry cannot flourish unless it can compete in a global economy. This capacity to compete cannot be determined solely by the efforts of individual companies. The prevailing economic and social policy framework is crucially important and must be flexible enough to adapt swiftly to changes in global conditions. ERT aims to strengthen and support key enabling conditions which trigger innovation and entrepreneurship in the European economy.

ERT advocates policies, at both national and European levels, which help create conditions necessary to improve European growth and jobs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document has been prepared by the ERT Societal Changes Working Group, chaired by Jean-Pierre Clamadieu. We are grateful to the ERT Member companies for their valued participation and contribution.



FOREWORD

THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN COMPANIES IN DEVELOPING YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

European companies need young people who not only have the right education for the job, but increasingly so the right personal skills and mindset to help expand their businesses in an ever more dynamic and competitive global economy.

Educators and employers have a shared responsibility in ensuring that the knowledge and the skills, both hard and soft, young people learn at school and in university can be put into practice "on the job".

Young generations also need to be employable, that is agile in adapting and entrepreneurial in acquiring skills and understanding, to succeed in a job market environment that is rapidly changing, spurred on by a digitally-driven economy.

Youth employability is essential to secure and improve Europe's innovation and growth, in an ageing society where a growing share of retiring employees will need to be replaced by proportionately fewer young people.

Our publication shows what governments, schools, universities and business can do together to give young, talented people the best opportunities to transition from school and university into professional life and pursue their development there, contributing to economic growth, job creation and social welfare in Europe.

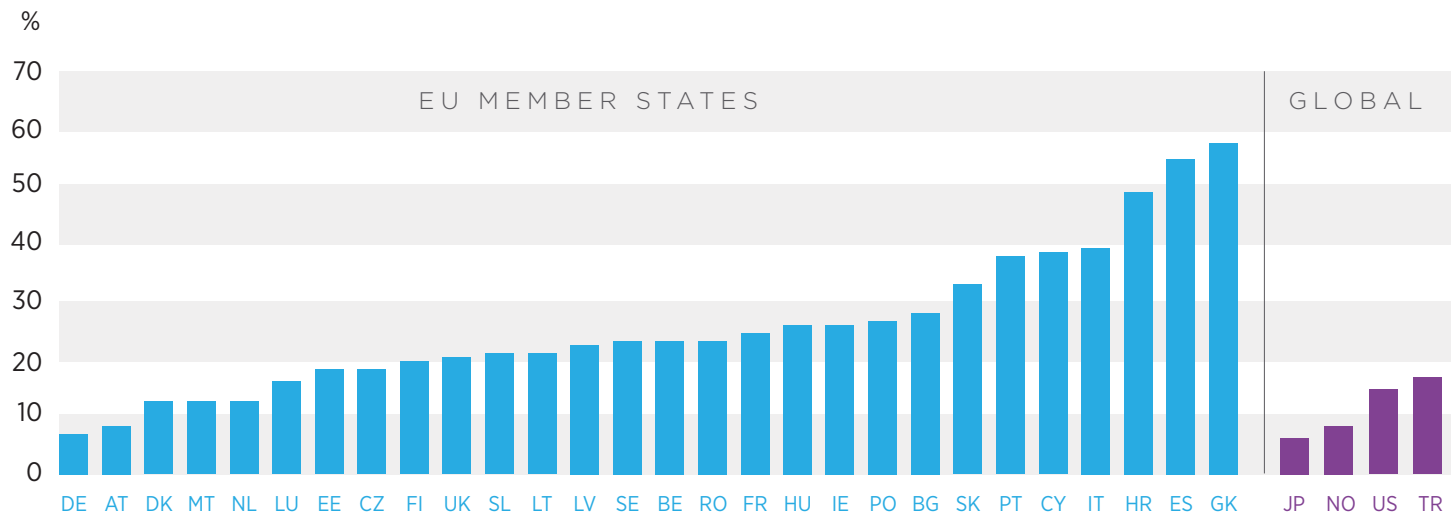
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Jean-Pierre Clamadieu

Chairman of the Executive Committee and CEO, Solvay
Chairman, ERT Societal Changes Working Group

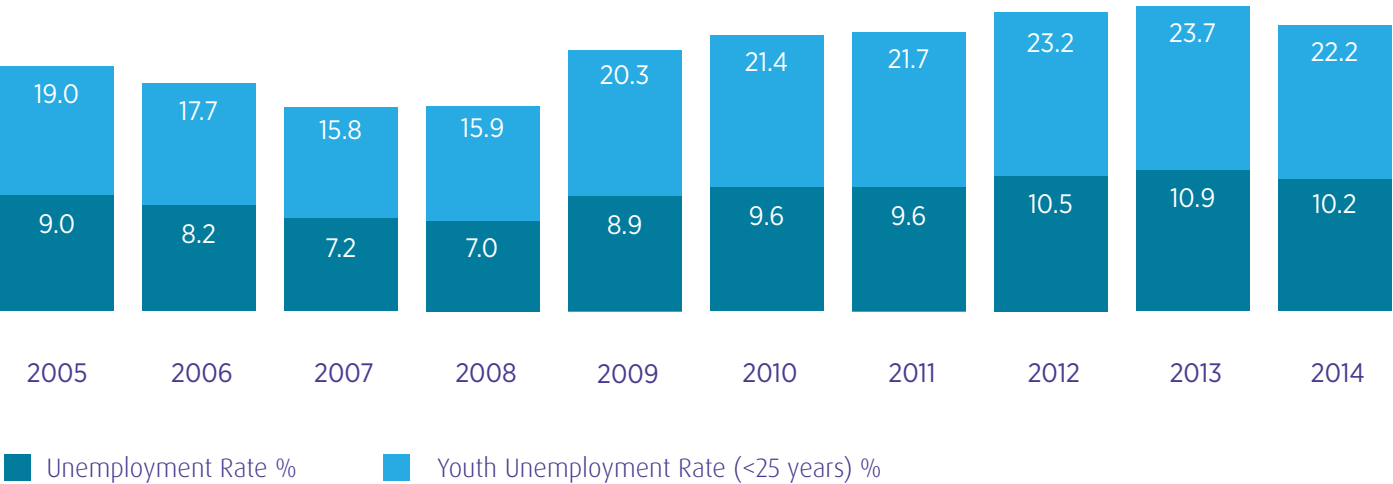
September 2015

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES



Source: Eurostat

On average 22.2% of the economically active population younger than 25 in the EU-28 was without a job in 2014 with large variations amongst the EU Member States. This average is high compared to other regions in the world. It is also roughly double the overall unemployment rate (see graph below) which is a clear indication that there is a lack of employability among Europe’s young.



Source: Eurostat

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Boost the skills for a digital Europe: ICT and STEM

Promote the spirit of entrepreneurship

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Update the School Curricula – build in interaction with business and other areas of the society (e.g. public sector) at all levels of education: primary, secondary and tertiary

Unleash the full potential of Vocational Education and Training (VET) by improving its image

Implement and promote embedded (“dual”) learning

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1 JUMPING THE SKILLS GAP

Young people need the essential hard and soft skills to function in society and in their future professional life. Continuous improvement of people's skills increases and maintains their employability, which refers to their ability to develop themselves or find a new job within or outside their company. Especially in times of economic crisis, young people need the opportunity to sharpen their skills so that they can quickly join the job market once economic growth picks up again. Europe must avoid a jobless recovery.

The skills mismatch

In February 2015 nearly all of the 15 ERT Member companies participating in a survey observed a skills mismatch: a deviation between a graduate's skills and the skills needed in their company.

The following skills and experiences were mentioned most frequently as underdeveloped or lacking:

- personal and social skills / autonomy and personal independence
- soft skills: working in teams, communication
- practical experience / industry understanding / consumer orientation
- digital and technical skills
- project management
- English

Skills for a Digital Europe: ICT and STEM

To embrace the full potential of digital technology, all Europeans – no matter what age – need ICT skills (Information and Communication Technology). This benefits not only the IT industry in Europe, but also impacts the growth and innovation capacity of almost all sectors of the European economy due to widespread and continuing digitisation.

Industry continues to have difficulties in finding and recruiting people with a STEM background (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). Engineers are especially in demand. A particular challenge is convincing girls to opt for STEM training.

Europe might face a **SHORTAGE** of up to:



ICT Professionals by 2020

BOTTLENECKS
are largest in:



+



+



=

+/- **60%**
of European **ICT vacancies**

Testimonial SAP: Preparing the next generation for the future of work

The vision of the “SAP University Alliances” programme is to build the next generation of talents for the digital enterprise and to drive innovation from academia and next generation users to the digital enterprise. The programme opens up the world of SAP to more than 2,100 universities in more than 89 countries worldwide and aims to develop highly qualified graduates with critical skills for the 21st century workforce. Through a community of over 8,000 faculty members and engagement at over 1,400 events annually, SAP University Alliances has inspired students around the world about SAP.

In partnership with SAP’s 6 University Competence Centres and 4 Academic Competence Centres around the world, universities gain access to an ever-expanding range of SAP software, enabling faculties to help students better connect business and IT concepts to practice. SAP University Alliances also foster entrepreneurship and innovation through crowdsourcing, inspiring students to form startup companies leveraging SAP technologies.

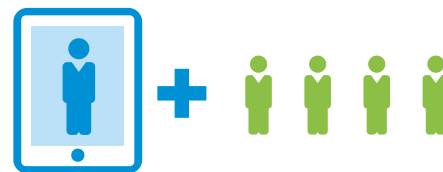
DEMAND for ICT practitioners:

+ **3%** yearly



Number of people **graduating** with computer science, maths, pure science, technology and engineering degrees is **DECREASING**

For every high-tech job, up to **four non high-tech jobs** are created in the local economy.



Source: DigitalEurope (eSkills for jobs in Europe)

A national strategy to promote STEM education: Jet-Net – the Dutch STEM platform

In 2004, the Netherlands was facing an increasing demand from industry for STEM graduates while at the same time, the number of STEM graduates was declining. The Dutch Ministries of Education, Economic Affairs and Social Affairs and Employment came together to establish a National STEM Platform with the objective of increasing the number of STEM students by 15% by 2010. This target was updated for 2011-2016, to increase the number of STEM graduates from 25% to 40%.

A critical component of the overall Dutch national STEM platform is the Jet-Net concept, a coordination programme for industry-education interaction, which was launched at the initiative of five Dutch multinational companies. The Jet-Net programme links schools and teachers with companies and STEM professionals and ensures that quality resources are available in all regions. The success of the Dutch Jet-Net programme has led to it being transferred and adapted to local conditions in Denmark.

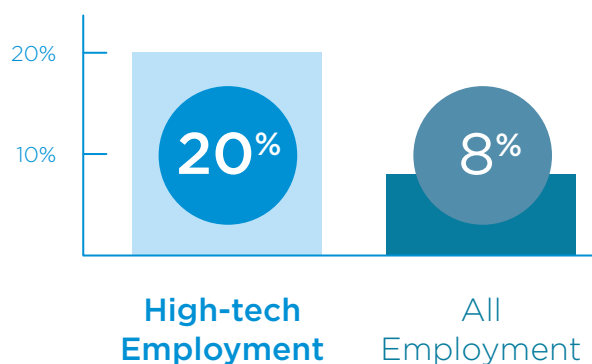
Missing Job Profiles

An ERT survey amongst 15 companies identified a number of hard-to-find job profiles. Nearly all of them are in STEM-fields:

administration business computer digital ICT e-mobility
healthcare **engineering** foremen
geoscience manufacturing project marketing
production maintenance management sales
petroleum sciences telecoms shiftwork technician

ERT Member companies indicate that ICT experts are lacking in classic IT domains such as technical programming, product configuration and app development. Technology is also evolving rapidly, which creates the need for new job profiles such as data developers, data architects, data analysts, administrators and data scientists.

Employment Growth 2000 > 2011



Source: High Technology Employment in EU, Discussion Paper, University of Leuven, Dec. 2013

Gender split of science & technology graduates (EU-28)



17.1 tertiary graduates in science and technology / 1000 inhabitants between 20 and 29 years old

Source: Eurostat

ERT Recommendations

- **Encourage the modernisation of the EU Member States' education system**

No student should leave school without a basic set of STEM and ICT skills as these are essential to operate and function in a fully digitised information society. Member States must develop and implement national STEM and ICT skills strategies which could include setting national targets.

- **Promote a positive image of STEM and ICT – in particular directed towards girls and women**

STEM and ICT related professions are still perceived as unattractive by many young talents. All stakeholders should join forces to promote STEM and ICT as a rewarding domain with exciting career perspectives for men and women.

- **Raise awareness of future and new job profiles**

The European Commission, business and research centres should co-operate to identify early on new STEM and ICT job profiles and the associated skill sets. The outcomes should be promoted via a dedicated pan-European and cross-industry campaign, leading to the required changes in university curricula and occupational standards.

- **Support innovative STEM and ICT training initiatives**

Specific ICT training courses can address short-term qualification needs and help young unemployed people in particular to find a job. The European Commission and Member States should support such initiatives, for example by providing public funding for training platforms and IT training vouchers for unemployed talents.

- **Develop a regular EU-level platform involving business, national ministries of education and industry as well as other stakeholders working in the Member States on the promotion of STEM and ICT**

The objective of the platform would be to:

- enable the partners to compare best practices throughout the EU
- compare how STEM and ICT skills shortages are tackled in a structural way with long-term impact
- identify common needs that could be addressed at EU level
- encourage other EU Member States that are not taking sufficient action

The Spirit of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is not only about setting up one's own company; it is also about the citizen's capacity to act and perform in an ever changing world full of risks and opportunities. Not all citizens will become entrepreneurs, but all citizens need to have an enterprising attitude – towards their choice of initial study, to their careers, to further education and training and to their lives.

Global Enterprise Project: liaising business and schools

The Global Enterprise Project (GEP) involves hundreds of entrepreneurs from diverse international companies in raising young people's awareness of globalisation, fostering entrepreneurship and reinforcing the skills they need for the modern workforce. Over a period of 3 years, it has reached approximately 20,000 students in 13 EU Member States with the help of about 650 business volunteers.

The aim of the project is to:

- close the skills gap between business and education
- equip young people with the skills they need to succeed in a global economy
- inspire young people to be more entrepreneurial and enterprising to start companies, bring entrepreneurial skills and thinking into large companies and public institutions and manage their careers

It was initiated by the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT) and JA-YE Europe.

More information on: www.globalenterpriseproject.eu

Entrepreneurial Skills Pass: recognition of acquired skills

The Entrepreneurial Skills Pass (ESP) is an international qualification certifying that students (15-19 years old) with practical entrepreneurship experience have the necessary knowledge, competences and skills to start a venture of their own or be successfully employed.

The ESP consists of the following key elements:

- a real entrepreneurial experience that takes place in school during the year and includes mentoring by business people and through competitions
- a self-assessment where students involved in the entrepreneurial experience reflect on their competencies as they progress through the year
- an online examination of business skills
- economic knowledge

More information on: www.entrepreneurialskillspass.eu

Testimonial Solvay: Building skills by means of the “Foundations for the future” programme

At worldwide level, Solvay launched the “Foundations for the Future” programme. The programme offers young graduates, in particular engineers, an intensive rotational experience within the company. The programme combines training and work and allows participants to experience project management, hands-on field work and advanced analytical problem solving in different locations and countries. After a period of 2-3 years, candidates are offered a fixed contract in the Solvay Group.

As a CSR actor, Solvay wants to recognise the effort made by the young graduates to obtain their degrees and to give them the basis for a brighter future.

ERT Recommendations

- **Entrepreneurship should be part of the school curriculum**

Initiatives promoting youngsters’ entrepreneurship have to be encouraged and integrated in the curriculum so that all students get the opportunity to experience entrepreneurship and so that teachers are well-recognised for their efforts.

- **Establish “Entrepreneurship Education Flagship Schools” at secondary level to accelerate the integration of entrepreneurship education into school curricula**

Schools that volunteer and that are selected to be Flagships should be open to adopting existing best practices and be innovative in their approach to leadership, teaching and the learning experience.

- **Promote the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass (ESP)**

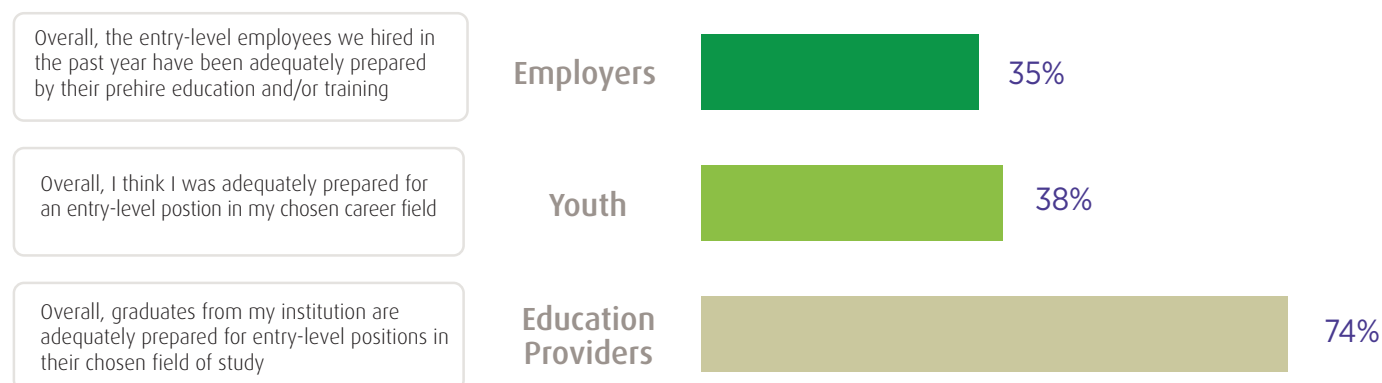
Students should be encouraged to sharpen their entrepreneurial skills. A recognition and certification of entrepreneurial skills is an important first step.

2 EDUCATION AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Update the School Curricula

Young people need to be equipped with the right skills so that they have better chances to find a job. At the same time, students are often interested in the practical implementation of what they are being taught. By bringing education and business closer together, the permeability between these two worlds will increase to the benefit of learners, employers and society.

Respondents who agree that graduates/new hires are adequately prepared %



Source: McKinsey (2014) Education to Employment: Getting Europe's Youth into Work

Telefónica's "Talentum Schools" turn kids and teens in technology creators

Telefónica has set up "Talentum Schools", which are "learning by doing" technology workshops for kids and teens. These free workshops take place at Movistar stores so that they are easily accessible. They are led by Talentum Startups "hackers". In 2014 more than 30,000 "Talentum School" sessions were organised in 25 Movistar stores. The participants were highly satisfied and gave a score of 9.5 out of 10.

A parent: "We have always had computers at home and our daughter is used to them but she sees this as something different to what she can do at home. She wouldn't have started working with this on her own. It is motivating and gets her closer to technology".

More information on: www.talentumschools.com

ERT Recommendations

- **Interaction with business and other parts of the society (e.g. public sector) has to be part of the school curriculum in each EU Member State and at all levels of education: primary, secondary and tertiary**

This is beneficial for all:

For children, youngsters and students:

- experience how what they are taught in school is applied in reality.
- get a better idea of the opportunities and careers available in industry.
- develop a more entrepreneurial spirit which may inspire them to set up their own business or to come up with new ideas which enrich both their personal and professional lives.

For schools:

- more successful teaching and training.
- easier access to the latest technologies, know-how and expertise.
- a more attractive curriculum.

For business:

- enlarge the talent pool of youngsters with the right hard and soft skills.
- engagement opportunity to interact with the outside world, for a company and its employees.

- **Introduce a business component in teachers' trainings so that they are better aware of how a business works and which options companies offer to their future students**

This initiative would also improve the quality of career counselling in secondary schools.

Promote Embedded ("Dual") Learning

Apprenticeships, even more than traineeships, enable students to acquire knowledge and skills that are directly relevant for their later professional life. Students work together on practical projects and this way develop much desired hard and soft skills. They become familiar with a business environment which reduces the time they need to become fully operational either within a company or self-employed. This gives them employability and thus a clear competitive edge.

Traineeships and apprenticeships foster the relationship between schools and business. A traineeship or internship is however not the same as an apprenticeship. The European Commission describes them as follows:

- » **Apprenticeship:** Vocational Education and Training (VET) that formally combines and alternates company based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school-based education (periods of theoretical/practical education followed in a school or training centre), and whose successful completion leads to nationally recognised VET certification degrees.

- » **Traineeship / Internship:** a work practice (either as part of a study curriculum or not) including an educational/training component which is limited in time. They are predominantly short to middle-term (a few weeks up to 6 months, in certain cases one year).

Many leading companies operating throughout Europe, including ERT Member companies, have considerable knowledge and practical experience in establishing and operating high-quality, cost-effective training programmes, combining both theoretical learning with on-the-job-training. For example, some 15 ERT Member companies offer in total about 15,000 traineeship positions and 20,000 apprenticeship positions in the EU-28.

Of particular note, the Member States with the lowest rates of youth unemployment all have work-based vocational training systems in which governments and companies share the training and investment load, and where students “earn while they learn” rather than accumulate debts.

Learning by doing at Siemens: one example of “embedded” learning

Siemens is one of the largest companies offering vocational training in Germany. In its 35 training centres, Siemens combines theory, practice and its international programmes under one roof:

- 10,000 apprentices and students including 2,800 from external partners
- 20 technical and business occupations
- international and dual bachelor programmes
- co-operation with around 30 local universities
- at its Berlin training centre, Siemens offers two occupations for around 90 learners from 18 EU Member States – graduates will be employed by the Siemens regional company in their home countries

In Europe (excluding Germany), Siemens trains around 1,000 apprentices in Austria, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. None of these “foreign” implementations are particularly “German” – they are embedded in the local education system and only replicate the principle of duality (the combination of classroom and work-place learning).

Siemens is currently investigating new apprenticeship schemes in the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Slovakia, Sweden and Turkey. The main obstacles are often the same: a wrong image of VET models, lack of institutions or legal framework, limited or bureaucratic access to public funds to support ramp-up costs.

ERT Recommendations

- **Member States should further explore the potential of embedded (“dual”) learning and both introduce and co-finance it as part of their education system with full recognition in the curricula**

The combination of practical training on the work floor and school-based courses has been very successful in several EU Member States, but is non-existent in others.

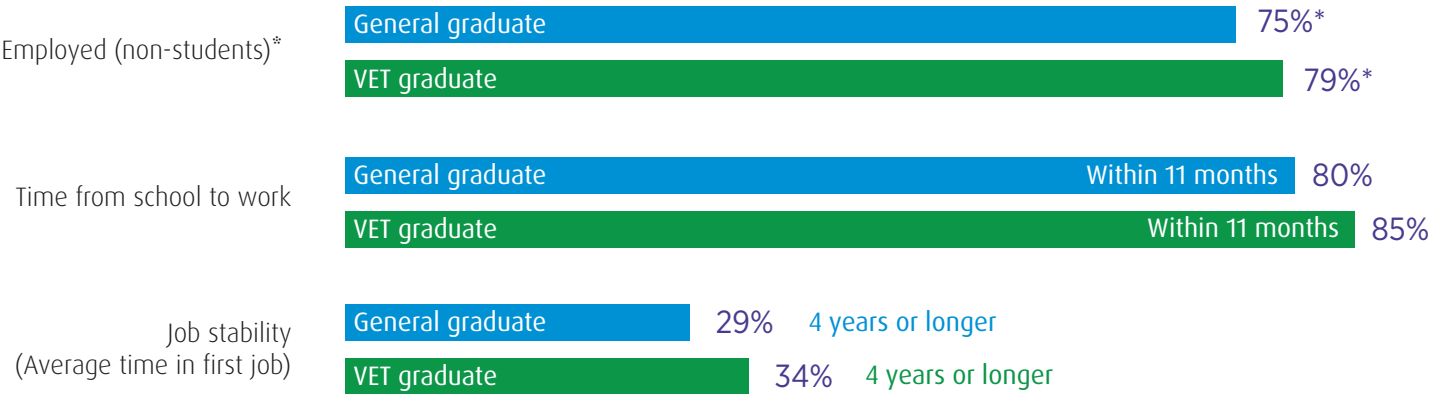
- **Expand the practice of quality apprenticeships beyond VET**

Support projects that introduce apprenticeships and the principle of embedded learning in different sectors of the economy (e.g. industrial services, ICT) or in different kinds of education (e.g. university).

Unleash the full potential of Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Several EU Member States face shortages of well-trained professionals like technicians of all sorts (construction, ICT, maintenance, electro-mechanics, etc.). When guiding young people towards their future careers, both VET and other forms of upper secondary training should be put on an equal footing. Youngsters should not automatically be on track towards university training, while many vacancies for VET profiles remain unfilled. Moreover, in several EU Member States, the perception of VET as less attractive both financially and from a personal development perspective impacts the number of students choosing this route.

In 2013 the Commission launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships which aims to increase the quality, supply and attractiveness of apprenticeships across Europe and to change mindsets towards this type of learning. Several ERT Member companies have made a pledge on how they want to contribute to this aim.



* The difference between general graduates and VET graduates is twice as much for 20-24 year old non-students (i.e. 8.2%).

Source: CEDEFOP (2012)

Nestlé's Youth Employment Initiative: a company taking the lead in promoting apprenticeships

Nestlé has a long tradition of recruiting young people directly from schools or universities. We invest in them, build their capabilities and develop their professional career whilst embracing diversity of cultures, traditions and opinions. In the current economic context in Europe with one in four young Europeans (about 5.6 million people) out of work, we felt like we could do even more to help address youth unemployment. This is why in 2014, we launched the 3-year programme "Nestlé needs YOUTH" based on the following four pillars:

- direct recruitment: to hire 10,000 young people below the age of 30 over a 3-year period.
- apprenticeships and traineeships: to strengthen our apprenticeship and traineeship programmes to reach 10,000 young people.
- employability: to deploy readiness for work activities, mobilising our employees to help young people improve their employability in their entry to professional life.
- engage our suppliers: we encouraged our business partners and European suppliers to participate in this initiative to achieve an even greater impact leading to the creation of the "Alliance for YOUTH".

The 2014 results demonstrated the high relevance of our initiative for the young people as well as for Nestlé's business. In total, 11,832 young people found a job or apprenticeship/traineeship opportunity and 1,677 readiness for work initiatives were organised across Europe mobilising more than 5,600 Nestlé employees.

In parallel, we are implementing VET/apprenticeship schemes in EU countries without such a tradition (notably southern Europe) or where they have disappeared (eastern Europe).

ERT Recommendations

- **Sharpen the system of career and educational counselling to have vocational training valued as an equitable choice**
Youngsters should be correctly informed about the different job options available to them when choosing VET or any other kind of training.
- **Launch a campaign to improve the image of Vocational Education and Training (VET)**
A boost to the image of VET may reposition VET and help to put in place the right mindset for long-term impact, aiming at secondary school students, their parents and society as a whole.
- **Empower the European Alliance for Apprenticeships so that it becomes a real platform to promote apprenticeships in VET**
The European Alliance for Apprenticeships should be turned into an effective structure liaising business and other stakeholders and be a point of reference for Member State government bodies. Also involve CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training).

3 A MORE DYNAMIC LABOUR MARKET

A more dynamic labour market will not only enable more young people to find a job, but also to keep it. Flexible and productive labour markets combined with responsive education systems must be put into place to achieve employment security and job-to-job transitions for individuals. This must be underpinned with modern social security systems that promote active labour market participation while still providing an appropriate social safety net.

Structural reforms

Quick action is needed to move towards flexible and proactive labour policies that allow companies to adapt to changing market conditions while at the same time supporting employment security. A more flexible labour market design will encourage companies to hire.

Belgium: Financial support for temporary unemployment

In Belgium, an employer can obtain permission, under certain conditions, to put his employee on temporary unemployment when an employment contract is partly or wholly suspended on a temporary basis for various reasons, such as bad weather, strikes, or other economic reasons. Economic unemployment had already existed for some time, but this arrangement has also been made possible for administrative grade employees since June 2009. Temporarily unemployed are granted unemployment benefits without having to prove that they have worked a minimum number of days. This can be an important source of support for employers, as it relieves them of the obligation to bear all costs of the temporary unemployment benefit conferred. Source: <http://ib.fgov.be/en/>

ERT Recommendations

- **Review wage taxation to encourage people to work and promote labour productivity**

This includes:

- Linking wage evolution to productivity improvements, international competitiveness and individual performance
- In some Member States, reducing the employers' social contributions is an important factor

- **Update policies on working hours to protect viable jobs during economic downturns**

Not only turbulent economic conditions but also variable demand for products and services increasingly require companies to make short- and medium term adjustments of their workforce without losing the know-how and skills of their employees.

- **Job protection measures must be eased and modernised in most Member States**

Reduce redundancy notice periods in exchange for training for new jobs and job transition support which are more effective in getting individuals back to work.

- **Lifelong learning is the best employment protection**

Enable individuals to prepare for job and career transitions in addition to up-skilling for their current job.

4 THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (YEI)

The Commission's "Bazooka"

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) was launched in 2013 and provides € 6.4 billion support to initiatives aimed at young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) located in EU-28 regions with a youth unemployment rate above 25%.

The YEI resources are also used to finance the Youth Guarantee, which is another EU initiative aiming to ensure that every young person up to 25 years is presented with a quality offer of employment, education or training within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

ERT Recommendations

- **Full transparency is required on which projects are financed with funds coming from the Youth Employment Initiative**

The impact of both the Youth Employment Initiative and the Youth Guarantee needs to be assessed. The European Court of Auditors has raised concerns on the absence of an impact assessment in March 2015.

- **Projects that receive funds from the YEI should be assessed, at least according to the following criteria:**

- Additionality:

The YEI funds should not replace national funds but should go to new projects or projects that would not have been possible without YEI support.

- Structural long-term impact:

Some projects may have proven to be more successful than others. Identifying the projects with the most significant impact may provide other Member States with best practice examples.

- **YEI funds may be further leveraged by company co-financing to boost joint business/education projects**

Member States may favour projects involving companies as a means to sharpen youngsters' readiness for the job market and to boost available resources.

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