

## **OBESSU Reaction to the adopted recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships**

OBESSU is happy to see that the EU Ministers for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs adopted the Commission proposal to create quality apprenticeships, and we are very happy with the different recommendations proposed, specially focusing on legal contracts, learning outcomes and pedagogical support and involvement of social partners.

### **Apprenticeships are first and foremost an educational opportunity**

We do, however, see that apprenticeships are portrayed merely as a tool to cater for labor market needs. We do not believe that this should be the main purpose of apprenticeships. In our opinion, apprenticeships should be a quality educational opportunity for young people with a specific interest in a certain professional field. As much as providing profession specific skills training, apprenticeships should focus on the personal and educational development of young people, forming us to become active, democratic and critical citizens.

### **Apprentices needs to be paid fairly**

We welcome the Ministers' focus on securing pay for apprentices, but we believe that the Framework should be more ambitious. It is stated that apprentices should be either paid or compensated. Compensation is too vague a term, which can be interpreted as being compensated in either material objects, the working experience itself or simply just recognizing their work. We do not believe that this is enough. Apprentices are doing a valuable job, which should be paid.

### **Support for representative structures**

Furthermore, we want to highlight that supporting representative structures for apprentices is a key tool to secure the quality of apprenticeships. National governments should support existing structures, such as organisations representing apprentices, and involve them in decision-making processes regarding apprenticeships policies, or support the creation of such structures in case they do not exist. Representative structures are crucial means to get in contact with the apprentices that his is all about, and it furthermore increases the democratic development of apprentices themselves. We are glad to see that the proposal encourages cooperation with youth organisations but believe that such organisations should be supported as well and created where they do not exist.

OBESSU welcomes the adopted framework and are happy to see a lot of improvements in the field of apprenticeships, however we do believe that the framework could and should be more ambitious.