



24 May 2013

JOINT SOCIAL PARTNER SEMINAR ON TRANSITION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

**MAXIME CERUTTI, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS,
BUSINESSEUROPE**

- Dual-learning apprenticeship systems can play a key role in providing young people with the skills and competences that will help them into employment and which will contribute to increasing Europe's global competitiveness.
- This conference builds on work that the European social partners are doing in the area of apprenticeships and youth employment more broadly. We recently concluded a framework of actions on youth employment which is now being approved by our respective organisations and which will be publically promoted next month.
- Last year BUSINESSEUROPE set up an ad-hoc task force that explored the value of apprenticeships for young people and employers and identified a series of recommendations for further action at the EU and Member State level as well as for employers' organisations and companies.
- These recommendations included the need to improve the perception of apprenticeships and to make the business case for them. In doing so we also need to know what benefits young people take from doing an apprenticeship and we look forward to hearing later this morning from some of the apprentices here at Siemens about their experiences of doing an apprenticeship and what it means to them for their future careers.
- The respective workshops this afternoon will elaborate on the cost-benefit analysis of apprenticeships for employers and apprentices. To countries that do not have well-established apprenticeship systems, or no system at all, exploring the costs involved in developing such systems and the trade off with the benefits that employers will get is essential.
- It can be the mindset that the cost of training someone outweighs the benefits by being a burden on a company's financial and human resources. This view needs to be challenged.
- This includes looking at apprenticeships as an investment in the workforce. On the spot training teaches someone how to work in a specific area, as well as in a specific company. It builds a bond between the company and apprentice that can lead to them staying on after the completion of their training. This can be far more cost and time efficient than looking to bring in new recruits from elsewhere.
- The other main issue that will be addressed in the separate workshops is improving the attractiveness of apprenticeships – both to employers in terms of encouraging their involvement in apprenticeship schemes and to young people to enhance their perception of apprenticeships and the skills they can learn and the opportunities that this can bring.



SPEAKING NOTES

- At the European level we can help to identify the principles that characterise well-functioning apprenticeship systems and which can be promoted as broader European principles for successful schemes.
- On the employers' side, we have initiated a project proposal together with EUROCHAMBRES, the European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT) and providers of vocational education and training in order to mobilise the business community by showing the business case for apprenticeships in well-functioning apprenticeship systems.
- Trade unions also have a role to play to promote apprenticeships with young people and their parents. It is a fact that apprenticeships often reach better outcomes than other educational paths in terms of employment access and integration.
- It is in this direction that the proposed European Alliance for Apprenticeships needs to head in order to bring real added value and we will hear from Wilhelm Vukovich from the European Commission about that this morning.
- Through the pooling of knowledge and experience and building partnerships between all relevant actors such as employers, trade unions, youth organisations, craft and commerce chambers, and education providers, we can help to make the business case for apprenticeships and improve their attractiveness among young people and throughout society.
