

An analysis of current apprenticeship activity in the G20 countries

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Introduction

A research project carried out for the International Labour Organization.

- *'ILO Survey Report on the National Initiatives to Promote Quality Apprenticeships in G20 Countries.'*
- We analysed data in late 2017-early 2018 from a survey sent by the ILO's Geneva office to three respondent groups in each country, representing government, labour unions and employer bodies.
- One of six research projects I have undertaken for the ILO since 2015. Details on Fed Uni's *Researching Adult and Vocational Education* (RAVE) web site <https://federation.edu.au/schools/school-of-education/research/research-groups/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education/current-research>

The background

- The Initiative to promote Quality Apprenticeships was adopted at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers' meeting in Beijing 2016 and endorsed at the G20 leaders' summit in Hangzhou in September 2016.
- See communique (item 40) at [http://Europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-16-2967 en.htm](http://Europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-16-2967_en.htm).
- The ILO survey was designed to document initiatives and promote sharing of good practice (not to evaluate or compare).
- It is part of a range of ILO projects on Quality Apprenticeships.

Economic expectations of apprenticeships



**Companies:
Develop future
managers**



Countries: International Competitiveness

Apprentices



**Companies: A well
trained workforce**



**Companies: Improve
productivity and profits**

Societal expectations



Countries: Solve youth unemployment



Trade unions: Improve working conditions through apprenticeships

Apprentices



Countries: Address youth disengagement



Help women and workers in the informal economy



Parents: Get children into a secure job.

Beware of comparisons....

Recent comparative studies include

- Smith & Brennan Kemmis (2013) which covered eleven countries and was produced for the ILO and World Bank in India;
- Chankseliani, Keep & Wilde (2017) covered a range of countries work-wide and was produced for the Qatar Foundations;
- Fazio, Fernández-Coto & Ripani (2016) covering Latin American countries and produced for the Inter-American Development Bank.

These all show great differences among countries:

Apprenticeships are rooted in cultural and societal contexts and are industrial relations as well as educational artefacts. In most countries they are managed by both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour.

The G20 countries (*EU is one - not involved*)

Less developed

- India, Indonesia
- South Africa
- Argentina, Mexico
- Turkey, Russian Federation

More developed

- Italy, France, Germany
- Saudi Arabia,
- UK, Australia, Canada
- China, Japan, South Korea
- United States

Note: Brazil sent no responses at all

The Ten Actions

1	Establish national goals to expand & improve apprenticeships	6	Raise awareness of apprenticeships among all parties and the public
2	Raise quality of apprenticeships by engaging social partners in a [listed] range of activities	7	Improve access to apprenticeships for disadvantaged people
3	Provide apprenticeships in more occupations, emerging sectors and skill shortage areas	8	Strengthen partnerships between employers & vocational schools
4	Foster businesses' engagement in apprenticeships, esp. SMEs	9	Measures to upgrade and convert informal apprenticeships
5	Safeguard worker labour rights and occupational safety	10	Expand apprenticeships globally through co-operation

The method

ILO sent surveys to the 19 member countries of the G20 (word documents): qualitative and quantitative questions.

72% response rate overall; least from employers.



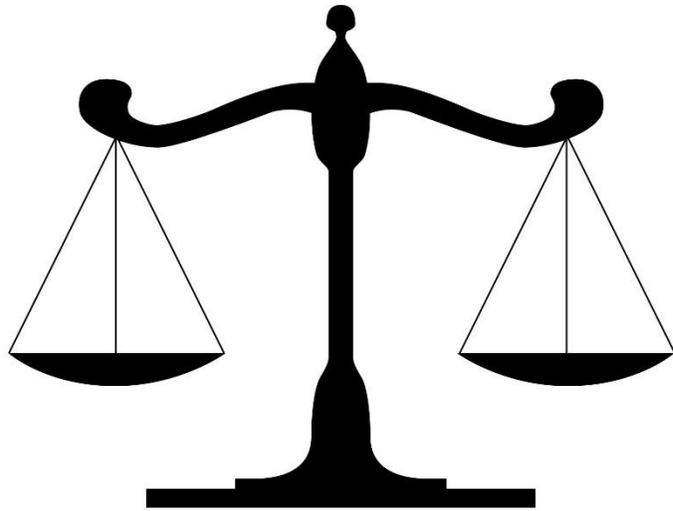
We were provided with the raw data.

- **Governments** were asked questions relating to each of the Ten Actions
- **Trade union and employer organisations** were asked questions around five themes relating to apprenticeship systems: awareness raising; social dialogue; their roles and responsibilities; financing of apprenticeships; and inclusiveness.
- **We analysed the data** and the ILO sent our draft report back to the governments for validation.

The limitations and the challenges

- Some countries submitted multiple (2 or 3) responses from one or more categories of respondent.
- Sometimes the respondent was not fully representative e.g. a trade union or employer that was from one sector, not a confederation or peak body.
- Some questions were unclear; and some countries' responses were inconsistent from one question to the next.
- We developed protocols to deal with each of these matters to represent responses as accurately as possible. The financing data had to be excluded because of the problems with the questions.
- The translations were not accurate, so we had to verify some ourselves.
- Some responses were late and we had to continually update our database.

The politics



- We needed to report on good practice examples from all of the countries.
- We needed to ensure we didn't favour more developed countries over less developed countries, but also not offend those countries who are very proud of their systems.
- We needed to ensure that all Figures and tables had sufficient explanatory statements so that countries didn't look bad.
- ... *so, not that different from writing reports for governments in Australia!*

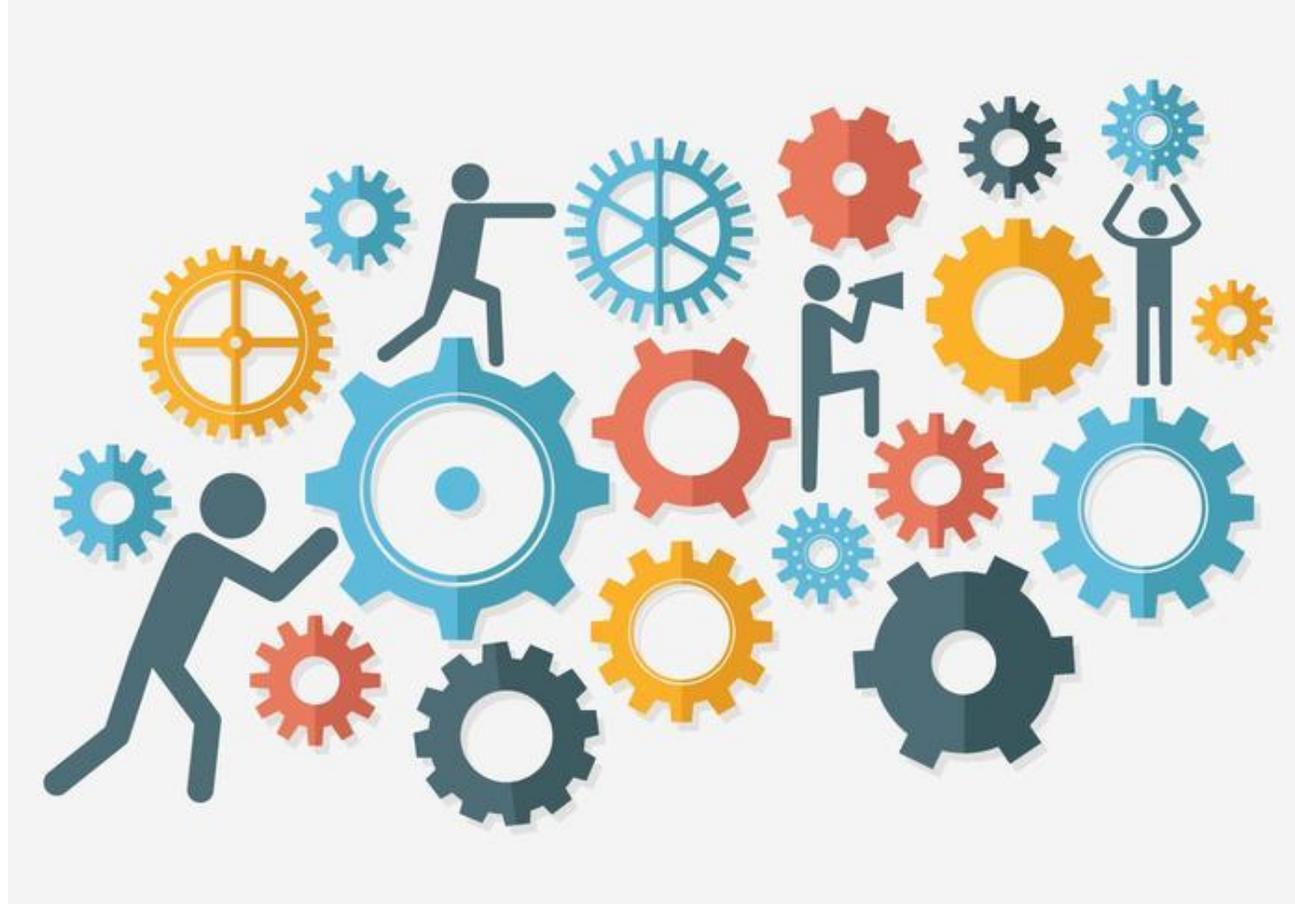
Which Actions were most often undertaken by governments (across the G20)?

Ten Actions on quality apprenticeship	Level of activity across G20 (governments only)
<p>Action 1. Establish national goals</p> <p>Action 6. Raise awareness of apprenticeships</p> <p>Action 4. Foster businesses' engagement</p>	High
<p>Action 2. Raise quality of apprenticeships</p> <p>Action 5. Safeguard worker labour rights</p> <p>Action 7. Improve access to apprenticeships for the disadvantaged</p> <p>Action 8. Strengthen p/ships between employers & vocational schools.</p>	Medium to high
<p>Action 3. Provide apprenticeships in more occupations, emerging sectors and skill shortage areas.</p> <p>Action 10. Expand apprenticeships globally through co-operation.</p>	Medium
<p>Action 9. Measures to upgrade and convert informal app/ships.</p>	Medium amongst relevant countries

What about the workers? (& the employers?)

- Over 80% of both were very active in promoting apprenticeships to employers and the public.
- Three-quarters were involved in national bodies relating to apprenticeships e.g. policy making and national occupational standards.
- Employers have more dialogue with governments than do unions.
- Unions are more involved in actions on inclusiveness than employers.
- Employer bodies are active in advising their member companies.
Trade unions are more involved at an operational level.

Working together in tripartite discussions



Some (random) great ideas

- Korea- Hyundai (which responded on behalf of employers) provides dormitories for young apprentices from rural areas;
- Canada- trade unions have a range of programs for involving indigenous people;
- South Africa – trade unions strongly promote female participation;
- UK – government has introduced an apprenticeship levy;
- Australia -the CFMEU (which responded on behalf of the union movement) negotiates provisions for proportions of apprenticeships in industrial agreements;
- Mexico – employers and apprentices visit schools; unions promote apprenticeships through parents who are union members;
- Indonesia- Unions lobby for role in monitoring apprenticeships.

Welcoming migrants and refugees to apprenticeships

- **Germany:** “ ‘Welcome mentors’ programme pursues the economic policy goal of supporting SMEs in securing a supply of skilled workers. At the same time, welcome mentors support the wider social task of integrating refugees into the German employment market.”
- ‘Integration law’: apprentices on temporary residence permits can’t be deported during, or for two years after, their term.
- **Mexico:** A special scheme for ‘Dreamers’ – ‘un-documented’ young people returning from USA.



Major policy directions and gaps

Policy directions

- A new 'gearing up' for apprenticeship systems.
- Social partners active in promoting and marketing app/ships to all relevant parties.
- Efforts to rectify the poor image of VET.
- Effort to widening apprenticeships' reach including higher apprenticeships.
- More financial incentives for apprentices
- More programs to incorporate disadvantaged groups, rural inclusion is still a problem.
- **Main policy thrust is around employment rather than training matters – app/ship as a major labour market instrument.**

Gaps

- Little mention of monitoring systems for the quality of apprenticeships, either on or off the job.
- Not a great deal of linkage to formal education systems at a policy level.
- Still an uneven spread across industry areas
- Uneven involvement of social partners

Facilitators and barriers to apprenticeship development

Facilitators

- Strong social dialogue;
- Structures such as Skills Councils, or specific sections or committees;
- Trust among the social partners.

Barriers

- Difficulties in monitoring systems;
- Nervousness from employers;
- Low status of apprenticeships;
- Narrow occupational coverage;
- 'Graduation bottlenecks' into permanent employment;
- Low quality training by private training providers.

Four areas for policy actions

We recommended:

1. Stronger vertical co-ordination between layers of government;
2. More consistency in the involvement of social partners;
3. More attention to operational matters;
4. More systematic procedures for adding occupations to the apprenticeship 'list'.

As well as:

- A. Better base data about apprenticeships in different countries e.g. size of set, remuneration practices, whether off the job training is required; and
- B. New Actions relating to developments in the nature of work, e.g. 'gig economy' and 'Industry 4.0'

The outputs

- The final report

https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_633677/lang--en/index.htm

Was launched at International Conference on Innovations in Apprenticeships: A skilled workforce for the Future in July in Geneva https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/stwp/WCMS_630379/lang--en/index.htm, also involving the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, the OECD and the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN)

- .. where I also gave a keynote speech on ‘Opportunities and challenges for apprenticeship: What’s next for this model of learning?’

Thanks to Kazu Chatani and Marcelo Segovia of the ILO who managed the survey administration, and advised on the report.

What's next?

- My current apprenticeship research project for ILO Geneva is on intermediary organisations in apprenticeships across the world.
- OctoberVET in Ballarat: November 7th 2018, 12.30-4.30. The theme of the event is '*Apprenticeships and Traineeships: Research, Policy and Practice*'. Email vet.research@federation.edu.au
- Next conference of the *International Network on Innovative Apprenticeship* (INAP), is in Konstanz, Germany, March 21-22 2019 [.http://www.inap.uni-bremen.de/](http://www.inap.uni-bremen.de/)

