With Dual Training in the World of Work

Learning by working

Work-based learning system
Practical training with apprenticeship contract
With Dual Training in the World of Work
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For the past 25 years, vocational education and training in Hungary has undergone significant changes. Following the initial period of discovering the right development path after the transition, events took up speed in the past five-six years and resulted in a modern, dual VET system. It is based on the German model and has been established in accordance with Hungarian demands. The reform-like transformation process started in 2010. The peak of this period was in 2012-2013, when following the preparatory work of the previous years the new system was launched and prevailed.

The Hungarian government, in its 2010 programme emphasized the introduction of dual training. This intent was confirmed in its VET concept. The reform measures of this concept included the generalization of dual training, as well as the enhanced development and support of practical training.

In order to extend dual training system and for the realization of related tasks the government concluded a framework agreement with the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in November, 2010. As a result, the public law tasks of the Chamber related to VET extended significantly. By this, the Chamber has taken up a role unique in Europe in forming and operating dual VET system.

In our publication we are reviewing and summarizing the development process and the milestones of establishing of the system, as well as present its operation and peculiarities.
Characteristics of dual vocational education and training
Today all over Europe and in the world vocational education and training (VET) led by the labour market is in transition. Circumstances, conditions and measures affecting VET are varied according to continent and countries. However, one thing is certain: for the past few years, dual training has been in focus in Europe. Conclusions approved by the European Commission1 and the Council Europe about the fight against youth unemployment² convey unambiguous messages, which are the following, in brief:

- Dual training has to be made a central pillar of European VET systems, the promotion of world class dual VET systems is needed.
- The goal is to strengthen work-based learning and cooperation between education and the world of business.
- It is necessary to promote high quality practical training based on apprenticeship contracts.
- The expected skills on the labour market can be ensured effectively by the improvement of learning outcomes and the standard of education.

Dual training is a system in VET where the responsibilities and costs are shared by the state and the economy, by acknowledging joint interests. Implementation of dual training is done on the level of the school and the enterprise. Schools and businesses or so called other organisations (e.g. hospitals, foundations, associations) jointly contribute to the vocational training of students. The vocational school provides for the vocational theoretical training of youths, while practical training is done by enterprises or other organizations (enterprises, entrepreneurs, budgetary bodies, cooperatives, craftsmen, merchants, etc.).

An important feature of dual training is that it socializes the student in a real working environment, therefore in its essence it means training at the enterprise/factory as a supplementation of school training.

The state provides for the vocational theoretical training obligation and the legislative conditions of the system. The primary aim of the training is to allow youths the comprehensive acquisition of necessary skills, by which they would be able to perform their tasks at work effectively and innovatively, independently and in cooperation with others as well.

What are the characteristics of the system in countries operating dual vocational education and training systems?

- Vocational education and training functions as a service, the aim of which is to fulfil the labour market needs of a successful economy, and to provide career opportunities for a young, skilled workforce.
- The aim of training skilled workers is not the acquisition of lexical knowledge, but to train successful and efficient employees.
- As for enterprises the main motivating force is not short-time profit-making, but high level training of the future employee, which is considered an investment with a long-term return.
- As the vocation is being learnt in the course of work, the chances of an employee to find a job increase significantly, while the employer can minimize the costs of training and wrong employment.
- Training in the school workshop prepares for practice at the firm, however everybody has to take part in external practice in a life-like situation.

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1 Communication November 20th, 2012 – "Rethinking education"
2 June 27th-28th, 2013
The history of dual vocational education and training in Hungary
In 2010 a government decision was made on the establishment of a dual vocational educational and training system in Hungary. This was a turn in policy-making, which increased the role of the economy significantly. As a continuation, in November 2010 a framework agreement concerning vocational education and training was signed by the government and the economic chamber, based on which the Ministry for National Economy put the comprehensive vocational regulation of 99 qualifications into the hands of the economy. With respect to these qualifications, the economic chamber was given the task of delegating examination board chairs, organizing level examinations, organizing the tasks related to the Excellent Student of the Trade (Szakma Kiváló Tanulója Verseny, SZKTV) and the National Secondary Vocational School Student Competition (Országos Szakmai Tanulmányi Verseny, OSZTV), as well as the tasks related to the EuroSkills and WorldSkills competitions. The public policy tasks delegated to the chamber included the operation of regional development and training committees (Regionális Fejlesztési és Képzési Bizottság, RFKB) and making propositions to influence the trends of vocational education and training within the school system and enrolment ratios.

The document “Concept for the transformation of the vocational education system, harmonizing it with the needs of the economy” was compiled and published in 2011, in which the most important reform measures were specified. The achievement of these goals was helped by the active involvement of economic chambers in vocational education and training. This started a series of changes, which outlined the establishment of a labour market-oriented VET system.
The history of dual vocational education and training in Hungary

As the introduction of dual training in Hungary was also given green light in legislation, implementation was put into the forefront in a manner that the system could be transformed from a theory-based, virtual vocational learning model into work-based learning system in firms with minimum losses. As this also meant changes in trends of vocational content and proportions, the economic chamber was commissioned to coordinate this work in cooperation with the ministries responsible for qualifications, supervised by the Ministry for National Economy.

Milestone nr. 1: conclusion of the framework agreement laying the groundwork

In November 2010, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, in the name of the Government of Hungary and President László Parragh, in the name of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry concluded a framework agreement for cooperation in VET. After that a detailed agreement was concluded with the Ministry for National Economy about the transfer of further tasks related to VET.

An important goal of the agreement concluded with the government is to put the focus of vocational education and training to practice, thus the system had to return to practical training with a duration of two thousand hours. The economic chamber supported that in qualifications where extensive practice needed a three-year training model built on accomplished elementary school studies should be launched. It was an important aspect that when vocational training starts early enough it shows a personality forming power, and by this compulsory school training can be finished by the age of 17, and young skilled workers can start making a living one or two years earlier. By this, the 30-35 per cent dropout rate in VET can also be diminished.

Milestone nr. 2: revision of the vocational and examination requirements of the complete National Qualification Register (NQR)

In the 2011 concept of the government, with special regard to the economic crisis, the establishment of well-convertible qualifications with ample basis was a primary task. As a result of the government’s decree, from 2011 the complete National Qualification Register (NQR) was revised. The Ministry of National Economy commissioned the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to perform the revision and the coordination of the development.

In January 2011, the elaboration of vocational documentation was started with respect to 48 three-year-long qualifications based on elementary school completion. The vocational and examination requirements and the central programmes of these 48 qualifications were revised and then developed. Central programmes were compiled which focused on skilled worker training embedded in working activities. In September 2011 about 10 thousand students started learning in a pilot programme optionally, based on the educational documents developed by the working committee of the chamber.

The new National Qualification Register (NQR) was compiled with the professional coordination of the chamber, and was published in a government decree in 2012. The qualifications in the register allowed qualified skilled workers to orientate towards the area where there was skills demand at that moment. Built-on qualifications ensured the opportunity for young skilled workers to acquire the skills of their vocation on a higher level in a specified manner, yet still on a secondary level.
Instead of the vague NQR system, which was difficult to use, a transparent vocational framework system was established with more extensive grounding, as a result the number of vocational outputs decreased by half. A new element of the NQR structure is the definition of secondary vocational school sectors, the categorization of qualifications, and the allocation of FEOR (national statistical number for qualifications) numbers to jobs, which can be fulfilled by holders of a baccalaureate in the case of qualifications starting with figure 5. Vocational training could start in the 9th grade already in secondary vocational schools, and following the vocational baccalaureate examination young people can immediately fill a given job.

The comprehensive revision of vocational and examination requirements (VERs) with respect to the qualifications of the new NQR also took place with the coordination of the chamber. In the course of the development the VERs of 638 qualifications were completed and submitted to the Ministry for National Economy to be published in a decree. Approximately 14 state under-secretariats from 7 ministries with 1000 experts participated in the development work, representing stakeholders from the economy and training institutions as well.

**Milestone nr. 3: elaboration of vocational education and framework curricula**

Following the compilation of vocational and examination requirements concerning the qualifications of the new NQR, the next step was to elaborate framework curricula for the qualifications.

In the framework of the Social Renewal Operative Programme (SROP), within the special project "Quality and Content Development of VET", with the coordination of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry framework curricula for new NQR qualifications taught within the school system were compiled.

The concept of the development was defined by the Ministry for National Economy, the formal requirements, samples and guidelines for filling in were prepared by the VET Directorate of the National Labour Office (today National Office of Vocational Education and Adult Learning Nemzeti Szakképzési és Felnőttképzési Hivatal, NSZFH). When lesson plans were prepared, relevant paragraphs of the Act on Vocational Education and Training and the Act on General Education had to be taken into consideration. About 450 experts delegated by 10 under-secretaries of 6 ministries responsible for qualifications took part in the development process.

Framework curricula were compiled for the three years of vocational school and for the two-year training after the completion of tenth grades, so that students who acquired basic general knowledge can join practice-oriented dual vocational education and training, as well as for qualifications built on baccalaureate. In case of qualifications built on baccalaureate different lesson plans were prepared for the four-year general education training and parallel vocational training on which the one-year vocational training is built, as well as for the two year, purely vocational training.

The common material content of qualifications in one sector has to be defined in a manner so that it covers one school year. This was important because within the framework of secondary vocational school education this one...
The history of dual vocational education and training in Hungary

year had to be brought down to grades 9-12. Thus vocational training duration in case of qualifications built on baccalaureate decreased by one year. By attaining a vocational baccalaureate the young person will be able to fill a job with the dedicated FEOR number, and after the baccalaureate can also choose from qualifications within the sector.

For the first time in vocational education and training, syllabuses with vocational content were published as a decree in the form of vocational education framework curricula, and this meant their compulsory use.

Milestone nr. 4: launching the trainings

As a result of the complex development documentation necessary to launch trainings within the school system was available.
Dual VET could start in Hungary without problems according to the following:

- Pilot phase: from September 1st, 2011 the introduction of educational documents in accordance with the dual training in 48 qualifications as a pilot, in the framework of the three-year vocational training based on accomplished elementary school studies.
- Introduction of a dual-based framework curricula system in 77 qualifications from September 1st, 2012 as a pilot.
- The comprehensive introduction of dual training based on accomplished elementary school studies, and on the 95 new vocational school framework curricula available from September 1st, 2013.

Of course, for these it was necessary that all the schools compile their own teaching programmes and local vocational syllabuses.

The features of the VET system, which was constructed and launched as a result of a comprehensive professional development process can be summarized in the following:

- After the completion of eight years of elementary school education it was immediately possible to join vocational education and training.
- Practice-oriented training was strengthened.
- The number of practical training hours increased by 50%.
- The acquisition of learning a vocation was put into focus (2/3 vocational hours, 1/3 hours of general education).
- A new, user friendly NQR was set up, which is transparent, has wide foundations and contains skills easy to convert.
- A clean vocational education system was established, adjusted to real jobs.
- Using the framework curricula system focusing on work-based learning is compulsory.
- The introduction of the complex examination with the reflection of job profiles, decreased the duration of the examination significantly.
- By the establishment of the sector-based vocational secondary school system, preparation for the baccalaureate and the vocation is also implemented on a technician level (secondary vocational schools operating in 38 sectors).
- The duration of training for technicians has decreased (4+1 years).
The role of vocational training and the accreditation of training have increased in technician training.

A technician certificate can be obtained by skilled worker certificate + practice + master craftsman examination.

The modular system and subject approach were harmonized.

The attractiveness of vocational education and training has increased, giving way to a smoother transition to the world of work.

It can be stated that the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry had a principal role in this grandiose development process.

The most significant changes concerning legal regulation and financing took place in 2012. On January 1st 2012, Act nr. CLV/2011 on vocational training contribution and the subsidization of training development became effective, along with the related decree about normative subsidies. Its aim was, by taking the opportunities offered by the economic situation into consideration, to increase the willingness of entrepreneurs to train and to support enterprises which take on practical training, and to encourage others not participating in practical training to either take up this activity, or to contribute to the costs of training. By the flat rate subsidy replacing itemized subsidies, administration and related costs have decreased significantly. By introducing a monthly settlement of subsidies advance financing, which used to take even 13-14 months earlier, could be eliminated. The average level of normative subsidies, increased in the meantime, and its allocation according to qualifications sufficiently follows the actual cost level.

Act nr. CLXXXVII./2011 on vocational training came into force also on January 1st 2012. Many elements objected by enterprises earlier were amended in accordance with the needs of the economy. By extending apprenticeship contracts the dual character of training was strengthened and this encouraged both students and entrepreneurs to participate.
For the further development of the vocational education and training system and its harmonization with the needs of the economy, a government concept was drafted in 2015 with the title “Vocational education and training serving the economy”, which was a conscious choice.

As part of general education, the concept summarized the goals of the vocational institutional system, by improving the quality, efficiency of education and training, and creating more equal opportunities. It was found that the reforms have to be extended so that the vocational education and training system can provide long-term responses to the continuous changes of the economy and the labour market. One of the biggest challenges was to tackle problems related to the decreasing demographic trend. When we examine demographic indicators, we can see that the number of persons of schooling age has decreased steadily. Another significant problem is the disadvantageous enrolment structure of secondary educational institutions. The efficiency of education in elementary schools also has to be improved, as the vocational training system in itself cannot make up for the fallacies in core competences. By the extension of the reforms the aim is to enhance that in the future and encourage more and more people to study in dual vocational education and training, as an organic continuation of elementary education.

In reaching the goals set forth in the concept, strengthening and extending the dual character of vocational education and training the years 2014 and 2015 were of utmost importance, as further important legislative amendments were approved:

- Introduction of the chamber guarantee and setting forth the main points.
- Regulations concerning master craftsman obligation of instructors at practical training places were supplemented, which means waivers from the obligation of a master craftsman examination were extended, and the period to obtain the master craftsman certificate was extended.
- Developing and introducing a new structure to perform tasks related to vocational education and training:
  - For the more efficient joint exploitation of resources, VET centres were set up.
  - From the school year 2016/2017 schools pursuing vocational training will transform: secondary vocational schools will transform into vocational grammar schools, while vocational schools will transform into secondary vocational schools. Vocational schools for students with special needs will be operating as vocational schools.
- Acquiring the first two vocational qualifications in the state-subsidized vocational education and training system is free, the second vocational qualification can only be obtained in adult education. In adult education, an apprenticeship contract can be concluded in any working arrangement.

3 See Chapter 3.3 in detail.
In order to strengthen dual training, for the sake of a high quality and harmonized practical training the job of the head practical training instructor’s position was restored in vocational training schools maintained by the state, which promotes better cooperation between the school and stakeholders of the economy.

- Boosting training via vocational training contribution through legislation, promoting training by increasing financial subsidies, mostly for the SME sector, and by simplifying access to the subsidy in the case of other organizations.

The approval of the legal amendments was a huge leap for the strengthening and extension of the dual vocational education and training system in Hungary. Concerning the future, the most important question is the consolidation and extension of the results achieved.

Introduction and extension of dual vocational education and training is a way to offer more opportunities for disadvantaged youths to acquire a first and a second qualification, thus ensuring them a place in the world of work. In the meantime, the number of those choosing a technician qualification built on baccalaureate or vocational secondary school certificate is increasing, opening up the way for them to obtain a degree in higher education in the given sector.
Models and stakeholders in dual vocational education and training
In Hungary, practical training has always had long traditions, as on the turn of the 19th-20th centuries vocational education and training was acknowledged all over Europe. At the World Expo in Paris citizens of the world were amazed by the masterpieces of Hungarian craftsmen. It is worth mentioning the 88 statues of craftsmen on the first floor of the Parliament, which reminds us that being a real craftsman deserves similar respect as being a professional in science or arts. Before the transition, there was practical training based on the big firms at the time, which of course was completely different from what we have today.

At present, dual vocational training has two pillars: education in schools and practical training organized by enterprises and other organizations. The construction of the third pillar, a systematic development of a special training centers over firms is a future task. The chamber has a significant role in mediating between the two pillars and promoting the processes.

As a result of the reforms, a vocational education and training system was established, which is close to life, yet adapts to Hungarian peculiarities, and which is focusing on creating a teaching model for learning a trade embedded in the working activity. In the process of acquiring a vocation instead of virtual knowledge elements those competences and work operations were emphasized, which can be used well on the labour market.
Peculiarities of the Hungarian dual vocational training system

It is worth comparing the characteristics of the Hungarian system to the features of the German dual vocational training, as the Hungarian system was established based on the German example, meeting Hungarian expectations. The difference on one hand is in the solutions and the number of practical-theoretical hours. Furthermore, the participation of enterprises in dual training also varies, as in Hungary at present approximately 2 per cent of the companies deal with practical training, while in Austria and Germany this proportion is 20-25 per cent.

In Germany, based on the central sample framework curriculum, the 16 provinces issue independent, yet compulsory framework syllabuses. In Hungary the framework curricula are published as compulsory legislation, and contain a local specialization option, about 10 per cent on a school level.

3 Comparing the proportion of practice and theory

In the German system, the qualifications which are recognized by the state and can be taught at enterprises with a work contract have a uniformed regulation, those which can be taught at schools have a province-level regulation, and can differ in, for instance, the duration of training. In the Hungarian school system and dual training the qualifications which can be taught operate in a common system, there are no problems of adjustment.

The main difference between the two systems is that while in Germany training is dominated by the employer, in Hungary the student legal status prevails. By strengthening dual training in Hungary, due to positive legislative changes, including the guarantee provided by the chamber, significant steps were taken to improve the domination of employers. The student learning the trade first enrolls in a vocational school, and then is placed at a practical training firm outside the school. By organizing practical training via apprenticeship contracts, with its activities related to the guarantee, the chamber has an invaluable role.

In the German system, the student as a first step sets up a work contract with an enterprise, which organizes the practical training for them. After that, they enrol in a vocational school where theory is taught.

Source: Dr János Szilágyi, 2015
The difference is also significant in the remuneration of the student. In the German system the remuneration of the student depends on the market, and can differ significantly by sector, it can even be twice as much, and practical training is 8 hours a day. In Hungary, remuneration can also be differentiated, the law only provides for the minimum amount. In the meantime, when the sum is raised, learning results, performance in practical training and the diligence of the student are all taken into consideration.

An element of the Hungarian system, not only different from the German system but also unique in Europe, is the institution of chamber guarantee, which will be explained in detail later.
In Hungary, practical training can be pursued in the school workshop, or at the enterprise or other organization entitled to pursue practical training. Practical training is an apprenticeship necessary to obtain a certificate in a defined work area, in a defined job, the duration of which is specified in the base document of the training. In order to strengthen the dual character of vocational education and training, a basic principle is to learn a trade embedded in work activities.

Vocational education and training within the school system besides the provisions of the vocational and examination requirements is based on the vocational training framework syllabus issued for the given school type and qualification. The enterprise has to organize practical training by taking the aforementioned documents into consideration. In the school system students cannot enrol to partial qualifications, except the students who learn the partial qualification in the “Híd” [Bridge] II. programme (from September 1st “Híd” programme for VET) or in a school for students with special needs.

Practical training consists of the practical training to be performed during the school year and an uninterrupted practical training outside of the school year, i.e. in vocational training within the school system practical training – except for the uninterrupted practical training and the makeup for the missed uninterrupted practical training – can be organized only during the months of the school year. During the autumn, winter and spring break no practical training can be organized, except for making up for missed practical training sessions without substantiate reason.

Therefore the student can participate in practical training in the following forms:
- based on an apprenticeship contract, or
- based on an agreement for cooperation, or
- in the training workshop of the school.

The institutional system of the apprenticeship contracts was regulated in such details in the Act on vocational education and training in 1993, which was unseen before. Since then, the conditions and contents, its operation has changed several times, in accordance with the needs indicated by the chamber. Due to these changes, it has become one of the core elements of dual vocational training by 2012. In the past 20 years the number of apprenticeship contracts signifying the essence of dual vocational training increased by 8 times, which can be regarded as a success story in the process of Hungarian VET development.
Apprenticeship contract

An apprenticeship contract can be concluded with an enterprise or other organization from the start of the first vocational training year for the sake of preparation for a qualification recognized by the state. The concluded contract is valid when it is countersigned by the chamber, and enters into effect on the date provided. Apprenticeship contracts countersigned by the chamber are registered by the chamber in charge of the given geographical area. The work of the chamber is assisted by a national online IT system (the Internet-based Integrated VET Information System, ISZIIR).

In case the enterprise or other organization concluding the contract does not have all the necessary requirements concerning personnel and assets, they have the right to involve another organization entitled to pursue practical training.

An apprenticeship contract can be concluded with a student, who:

- participates in school-based vocational education in an institution of general education with a registered seat in Hungary, within the framework of school education, for the purpose of preparation for a first or second qualification recognized by the state, entitled to state budget subsidization,
- meets the health care and vocational aptitude requirements set forth for the given qualification in legislation.

During the school year, in vocational school training the student in 9th grade can perform practical training either in the school workshop, or may conclude an apprenticeship contract with a practical training provider, which is registered by the chamber as a training workshop pursuing practical training only. In the 10th and 11th grades an apprenticeship contract can only be concluded with a training provider specified above until the student has passed the level examination, unless he/she has a baccalaureate.

An apprenticeship contract can be concluded effective from the start of the first vocational year of the given training with the organization, which is in the certified public records of organizations entitled to pursue practical training. The records are maintained by the economic chamber. Those enterprises or other organizations can be included in the records, which meet the personnel and asset requirements set forth in legislation and apply the compulsory vocational training framework curricula issued for the given qualification. The apprenticeship contract can be concluded for the total remaining time of the training, and it is terminated in cases specified by the Act of vocational education and training. The most frequent cause is when the student successfully completes the final vocational year and passes the vocational examination.

In case of other organizations, the precondition of concluding an apprenticeship contract is that the qualification must belong to the circle of qualifications specified in the Act on vocational education and training (Health care, Health care technology, Welfare, Teaching, Arts and applied arts, Voice, film and theatre technique, or in the scope of the Minister of Defence).
An apprenticeship contract can be concluded in vocational training within the framework of adult education following the amendment of the Act on vocational education in 2015. However, in this circle the financing of schools and practical training providers is harmonized (normative subsidies), and in accordance with this and the number of hours of the various working orders the remuneration of students is also differentiated (day courses: 100 per cent, evening courses: 60 per cent, correspondent courses: 20 per cent).

Practical training with apprenticeship contract is a dominant form of Hungarian vocational education and training, it is a sensitive indicator, and the essence of training meeting requirements of the economy. In the long run, dual training can only be successful in Hungary, if the number of enterprises and students joining the system increases. On the figure below it is apparent that small and micro enterprises conclude contracts with the highest number of students.

In accordance with the government’s concept in 2015, the objectives of the chamber include the increase of the number of apprenticeship contracts to 70 thousand by 2018. This helps economic improvement via VET, and decreases unemployment rate among people starting their careers.
The almost 700 thousand enterprises are a huge reserve for the increase of apprenticeship contracts.

**Cooperation agreement**

In case of practical training within the framework of a cooperation agreement, the organizer of the practical training is the school, which is responsible for the appropriate preparation of the student. The conclusion of the cooperation agreement, compared to the apprenticeship contract, is less likely. This is mainly due to the fact that the legal status of the apprenticeship is a lot more favourable for the student, the organization and the whole economy. An agreement can be concluded in the following cases:

- in case the duration of the practical training is less than 40 per cent in the vocational and examination requirements,
- in case the practice is supplementary, for maximum 40 per cent of the training duration set forth in the framework curriculum,
- in case the practice is performed at a budgetary organ,
- in case it is concluded for an uninterrupted practical training,
- in case no apprenticeship contract can be concluded.

A cooperation agreement, unlike the apprenticeship contract, can be concluded in grades 9–12 of secondary vocational schools. A significant element of the law amendment in 2015 was that remuneration has to be paid not only for the uninterrupted apprenticeship period of the 13th grade, but for similar periods of the 9–12th grades as well.
The chamber system in dual training

The chamber guarantee

In order to strengthen and extend dual vocational education and training, the aim of the government is to increase the proportion of vocational students participating in dual training to 70 per cent by 2018. One of the tools to achieve this is the guarantee taken up by the chamber. In the strengthening of the reforms described earlier this internationally unique solution has a dominant role, and it may serve as an example for other European countries as well.

The amendment approved in December 2014 provided for the introduction of the guarantee, initiated by the chamber, and it has become effective on July 1st, 2015.

This construction offers a balanced operation for all stakeholders. The aim of the chamber is to guarantee an appropriate apprenticeship for students. It is likely that the increasing number of apprenticeship contracts will bring about an increase of the number of training providers, however the extent of this growth can only be predicted according to our knowledge today.

A close and efficient cooperation between the chambers and the schools is of utmost importance concerning the success of the guarantee. The chamber attempts to take the interests of schools into consideration, within the legal boundaries. For instance, the chamber initiated the placement of the apprenticeship contract dumping period from September and October to May. Thus schools have enough time to prepare for next year and to plan and ensure necessary capacities.

Altogether it can be said that the guarantee provided by the chamber helps the implementation of the basic aims of dual training, so that students can acquire the chosen qualification in a work-based environment, embedded into work processes as soon as possible. This strengthens predictability within the dual system, and gives an opportunity for all stakeholders for appropriate preparation.

Supporting career orientation

A special activity of the chamber is career orientation, and the target group is students in the upper grades of elementary school. The method of career orientation depends on the individual, their knowledge, social background, family environment and the school environment. Methods include a personal interview,
group dialogue, distribution of leaflets, screening films about trades, presenting role models in various trades, providing information about skills shortage, filling out and evaluation of tests, lectures, organizing firm visits, forums, exhibitions and competitions.

The chamber has an important public law role in career orientation as well. Its aim is to help youths with up-to-date information. In the framework of a career orientation working programme a comprehensive action plan has been prepared to launch a career orientation programme comprising the whole country. The project draw the attention of parents, students choosing a career and teachers in elementary schools to the actual opportunities offered by vocational education and training.

The chamber had the opportunity from 2013 to employ one person per area with the support of the Ministry for National Economy to enhance career orientation activities and thus help students, parents, and teachers in the career orientation process. By extending their human resources, chambers with regional scope can extent their career orientation activities and can perform this complex duty involving various stakeholders more effectively.

The subsidy allows the following:

- Chambers organize presentations and information days in elementary schools with the representatives and professionals of enterprises about trades and expected job opportunities. These forums also offer the opportunity for those interested to get to know the positive features of the given trade and the career path of successful professionals.
- Staff involved in career guidance organizes visits at firms and factories for elementary school students.
- In the school workshops of firms and schools those interested can try out their skills.
- At the career orientation events or even headmaster classes successful contenders of vocational competitions in Hungary (SZKTV, OSZTV) and abroad (WorldSkills and EuroSkills) talk about their experiences, their work and career so far. (WorldSkills is the world skills championship for young skilled workers, EuroSkills is the European championship for young skilled workers.)

Partners of the chamber in career orientation activities:

- the National Office of Vocational Education and Adult Learning (NSZFH),
- job centres of government offices,
- the Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre (Klebelsberg Intézményfenntartó Központ, KLIK)
- and its regional offices,
- the Teaching Education Centres,
- enterprises, firms
- employer and employee organizations,
- vocational trade centres, vocational schools, elementary schools.
Enterprises in dual vocational education and training

The successful operation of dual vocational education and training depends on the economic background and the suitable environment (the GDP of the country, state debt, positive trend in budgetary balance, employment rate, unemployment rate and other, similar indicators).

A competitive economy is based on the competitiveness of enterprises, firms, companies. For this, an indispensable ingredient is competitive vocational education and training. The economy and vocational education and training cannot be separated, their performance affects the results of the other sector interactively. This inseparableness and reliance on each other can be seen in dual vocational education and training as well. Dual training can only work through the close cooperation of a productive economy, a regulatory state and the school system. Therefore it is essential that vocational schools train their students in accordance with labour market needs, and to involve enterprises in vocational education and training even more.

The aim of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is to involve as many enterprises in dual training as possible, both SMEs and corporations. On this training path students can learn in life-like working conditions, applying the most cutting edge techniques and technologies, acquiring knowledge from the best tradesmen.

An apprenticeship contract is concluded between the student and an organization entitled to conclude an apprenticeship contract. An apprenticeship contract can be concluded by an enterprise (company, firm, plant), which is in the register of organizations entitled to pursue practical training maintained by the economic chamber. Admission to the register must precede the conclusion of the apprenticeship contract. The organization planning to conclude an apprenticeship contract has to meet all the relevant regulations of the Act on vocational education and training, and the requirements on the conditions of starting and continuing vocational education and training. Registration can only take place if the organization shall apply the vocational education and training framework curriculum issued for the given qualification during apprenticeship training.

From the beginning of 2013 other organizations (organizations training students in certain sectors, e.g. health care, art, community culture, education and welfare, and within this operate in a certain organizational form, e.g. budgetary organ, foundation, association, ecclesiastical legal entity) have become entitled to conclude apprenticeship contracts. The chamber network makes special efforts to persuade hospitals and other organizations about the advantages of joining the apprenticeship system. The success is marked by the fact that the contract conclusion process has started, and since September 2013 many organizations in this category have joined the apprenticeship system.

Motivation of enterprises, strengthening their willingness to train is indispensable to operate dual vocational training. The persuasion of enterprises in this respect was started by the chamber years ago, and it has enriched its tools gradually in order to achieve results. Legislative changes mentioned earlier...
(decreasing administrative burdens in financing, monthly reporting, introducing weighing formula according to qualification) have been encouraging to join the training system.

The chamber sees further resources concerning training in the structure, operation, results and prosperity of enterprises. Hungary is characterized by a higher number of SMEs than the EU average. This special situation can strengthen the promotion of dual vocational training.

The quality of apprenticeship

Besides the guarantee of the chamber, the quality assurance of practical training was ensured by the tightening of requirements towards organizations pursuing practical training. Acquisition of a vocational knowledge which can be used well on the labour market is only possible in business circumstances, helped by experts who do not only own but can also transfer their knowledge to junior tradesmen. It is unimaginable that experts pursuing vocational training at enterprises lack basic teaching skills, as it is a precondition of conscious teaching work. Therefore for instructors at external vocational training providers obtaining a master craftsman title is compulsory, as it is regarded as a security that well-prepared experts with practical experience and teaching skills are able to train apprentices.

In Hungary, most of all in the catering sector the title of master craftsman donated by professional organizations is quite popular, which means excellence in the given trade, yet it is not identical with the master craftsman certificate, which can be acquired in the chamber system. In certain cases the owner of this master craftsman certificate can be given waiver from the fulfilment of vocational requirements, however they have to demonstrate their skills in teaching and entrepreneurship in front of the master craftsman examination board.

The obligation to acquire a master craftsman title is only relevant in the case of instructors who teach in trades where there is a master craftsman training. So far, master craftsman examination vocational requirements have been elaborated for 77 master craftsman trades.\footnote{Their list and the description of the vocational requirements and the regulatory system relevant to examinations [Master Craftsman Training and Examination Regulations of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry] are available on the website of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (www.mkik.hu).}

In accordance with the relevant legislation, each tradesman pursuing practical training at an external organization has to own a master craftsman certificate from September 1st, 2015. A waiver of this obligation can be given when the instructor has sector-relevant higher education degree and 2 years of experience, or non-sector-relevant higher education degree and 5 years of experience, or is over 60 years of age. For the instructors who have not acquired the master craftsman certificate, the law allows that if they made a declaration until August 31st, 2015 that they start the master craftsman training until September 2016, they can still pursue their instructor activities after the deadline on September 1st.
Preparation to the examination is helped by preparatory courses. Participation at the preparatory course is not compulsory, the candidate can register at the examination following individual preparation, however 90% of applicants demand the training. Vocational knowledge of the master craftsman training primarily includes the acquisition of modern technical, technology skills. Candidates working in real life have extensive practical experience through their work, however, they develop their theoretical knowledge to less extent, therefore in training usually theoretical education is more dominant, yet during the examination the emphasis is rather on practical skills.

Prescribing a higher qualification level can only have a positive impact on the quality of vocational education and training, if behind the master craftsman certificate there is guarantee of modern vocational content, high level of teaching and entrepreneurial skills. Master craftsman training and examinations are mostly relevant in blue collar jobs, and focus on the high level of acquisition of practical skills in the given trade. There is an opportunity to obtain a master craftsman certificate in several qualifications where there is no higher education level, therefore this title means the highest level of acknowledgement in the given trade.
Students in dual vocational education and training

Students in dual training can acquire vocational theoretical and practical basic skills in the vocational school, while their practical training is pursued at the enterprises in the framework of an apprenticeship contract from the uninterrupted practice of the ninth grade, and from the tenth grade.

The practical training of vocational school students during the school year in the first vocational training year takes place exclusively in the school training workshop. Following the successful level examination (which is compulsory for students specified in the legal regulation) from the uninterrupted practice of the ninth grade (for the complete remaining period of the training) can study at the external practical training providers in the framework of apprenticeship contracts. In case the student fails at the level examination they can do their practice in the school training workshop, or in the training workshop of the enterprise which is used solely for practical training purposes.

The apprenticeship contract provides the following advantages for the student:

- they can gain practical experience in life-like working circumstances,
- they can learn the use of tools, devices, technologies applied at the organization, learn to socialize in a workplace environment, get familiar with the requirements they have to meet,
- after finishing their studies, their job prospects are better,
- they receive regular monthly remuneration,
- they get into the social security system, have insurance, are entitled to receive sick leave benefit and the period of apprenticeship is counted into the service time when pension is calculated.

In case of an apprenticeship contract, the organization responsible for practical training has to pay remuneration for the full period of the training.

The remuneration of the student depends on the following:

- the proportion of theoretical and practical training set forth in the vocational and examination requirements for the given qualification,
- the smallest compulsory monthly salary valid on the first day of the month,
- the year of vocational school,
- the study results of the student,
- performance and diligence of the student during apprenticeship.

Skill shortages are defined in each school year based on the estimated needs of the enterprises interested in employment for skilled workforce. Skills shortage varies from county to county, and is published each year in a government decree. As there is a labour market need for these qualifications, students have greater chance to find employment.
Students can be given vocational school stipends in daytime education within the school system if they are to obtain a first vocational qualification registered as skills shortage\(^5\).

Stipends are given to students who learn on the vocational training year of the vocational school preparing for a first qualification, daytime within the school system, to obtain a qualification registered as skills shortage.

The extent of the stipend (besides the remuneration of apprenticeship) is 10 000 HUF/month/student in the first semester of the first year of vocational training. This sum is paid only if the average learning result of the student is over 2.51. From the second semester of the first vocational training year and in further semesters when the average study result is increasing, the stipend is also increasing. The sum of the stipend is paid monthly by the vocational school.

Students pursuing studies to obtain a partial qualification can also receive stipend.

\(^5\) From January 1st, 2016 Szabóky Adolf VET Stipend
The basic pillar of dual training on the side of schools is the three-year vocational school. A vocational school has to prepare students for the vocational examination and to be able to find a job as trained employees. Students accomplishing vocational schools can continue their studies in vocational secondary schools providing baccalaureate, in the framework of a two-year programme.

A vocational school is three years long, providing general education and vocational theoretical and practical training necessary to acquire the given qualification. In the vocational schools training can be pursued for the qualifications specified in the NQR, according to the vocational training framework curriculum. After passing the vocational examination, the student can prepare for the baccalaureate in two years.

Besides vocational schools, vocational secondary schools also provide an opportunity to learn a trade in the so-called sector vocational secondary school training. In the secondary vocational school, in grades 9-12 preparation for the qualifications of the given sectors takes place in parallel with general education. In the 13th grade (vocational training year) only vocational theory and practice is being taught. This year has the most dual character of all.

Transformation of the school system

From September 2015 vocational education and training was centralized in one hand, as the Ministry for National Economy, responsible for vocational education and training, took over the uniformed professional management of about 500 vocational schools and vocational secondary schools.

Thus a one-level vocational education and training management model was established on the level of legislation, content, organization and operation, and this allows vocational training to meet the needs of the economy. In the meantime, the organization was also transformed and new vocational education and training centres were set up, which are more independent than earlier and have a greater opportunity to provide necessary resources to create the necessary conditions of vocational training.

This change puts school-based vocational training on a totally new basis.

Vocational education and training centres

The institutional system of general education at present serving several purposes was extended by a new type of institution, the vocational education and training centre. This institutional form integrates vocational schools as organizational units of the vocational training centres which operate as a budgetary organ.

The aim of setting up vocational training centres was the more efficient and harmonized operation of vocational training schools in the maintenance of the minister responsible for vocational and adult education and training.
The number of centres is maximum 3 per county, and 10 in the capital. Previous vocational schools will operate in the future as the member institutions of the vocational training centres.

**Change of institutional types**

By September 1st, 2016 vocational schools are to be transformed, new vocational grammar schools and secondary vocational schools are introduced. From the school year 2016/2017 vocational training can only be pursued in

- vocational grammar schools (earlier vocational secondary schools),
- secondary vocational schools (earlier vocational schools) and
- vocational schools (earlier vocational schools for students with special needs).

These changes also provide an opportunity for young people in the future to study in the reformed secondary school system, and prepare for the baccalaureate within these circumstances, not only in case of students from the vocational grammar schools, but also those studying in the new secondary vocational schools replacing the present three-year vocational school system. The latter could prepare for the baccalaureate after three years of vocational training and the acquisition of the qualification in two years. Vocational training starts after the phase of basic education, and finishes in vocational grammar schools in grades 13 or 14, in vocational secondary schools in the 11th grade, while in vocational schools in the grade specified by the framework curriculum. In all three school types training is pursued according to sectors and qualifications registered in the National Qualification Register.

The present secondary vocational school is transformed into a vocational grammar school where training still takes place in grades 9-12 in the given sector and the vocational training years following the baccalaureate. However, it is a significant change that in the phase during the first four years the period of vocational training is increasing, including the proportion of practical training, which allows students to obtain a qualification besides the baccalaureate. Following the baccalaureate an advanced level qualification can be obtained built on the baccalaureate. In this school type therefore training is 4+1 years, with a baccalaureate according to the 2 year framework curriculum.

The present vocational school turns into a secondary vocational school, and a significant novelty in content is that following the three-year vocational training and the complex vocational training examination the student can automatically proceed to obtain the baccalaureate in the framework of a two-year training preparing for the baccalaureate. Thus in this school type there is 3+2 years of training.

The present vocational school for students with special needs will turn into a vocational school.
Financing dual vocational training
The funds of dual vocational training within the school system are the following:

- Central budget,
- The vocational training contribution, a part of which is transformed into the National Employment Fund,
- The individual direct contribution of practical training enterprises or other organizations,
- Individual funds of training institutions pursuing vocational training activities,
- Financial subsidy of the training institution maintainer,
- Contribution of the student or their legal representative.

In accordance with the funding model of the school side, based on the Act on the budget, an average wage-based subsidy and operational funding is paid after students participating in vocational education and training within the school system. It can be claimed in each school year based on the compulsory number of hours spent at the vocational school training place by the student and the calculated number of students.

The most important of the resources in the funding of enterprises are their vocational training contribution and the National Employment Fund (Nemzeti Foglalkoztatási Alap, NFA).

The training section of the National Employment Fund is constituted of the vocational training contribution paid by enterprises. The aim of the vocational training contribution is to involve enterprises in vocational training besides state stakeholders.

The basis of the vocational training contribution is the base of the social contribution tax imposed on the entity obliged to pay a contribution, and its extent is 1.5 per cent of the basis of the vocational training contribution. The contribution can be settled by organizing practical training. In this case, the extent of the contribution can be decreased by a normative subsidy set forth in advance.

In case the sum of the normative subsidy exceeds the extent of the contribution duty, the difference can be reclaimed by training providers with apprenticeship contracts. Another incentive for an extensive circle of practical training providers is that their funding is supplemented by a further subsidy: from January 1st, 2016 they will receive extra normative subsidies (investment, instructor, workshop maintenance decreasing items), by which the sum to be reclaimed can increase. The subsidy is mostly available for SMEs.

Since January 1st, 2013 other organizations have joined the circle of training providers with apprenticeship contracts, which were not obliged to pay vocational training contribution originally. By the end of the tax year 2015 other organizations pursuing practical training based on apprenticeship contracts, could reclaim subsidy based on application in the framework of a grant process.
These other organizations can also decide that they do not wish to join the circle of enterprises bound to pay the contribution. However, the aforementioned procedure, based on a reclaim request (grant) and paid from the partial fund of the National Employment Fund stays in place only until December 31st, 2015. In case of a cooperation agreement these organizations have the option that the maintainer of the vocational training school refunds in part or fully the costs of the student taking part in practical training to the organization pursuing practical training in part or fully, on the expense of their budgetary subsidization. The manner of bearing, sharing and transferring costs is regulated by the provisions of the cooperation agreement.
What are the responsibilities of the Chamber? – Operating the Hungarian dual vocational training system
In case of national-scale tasks where getting information, information flow and exchange requires a complex system, results can be achieved most efficiently by cooperation. The structural units of the economic chamber (the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and regional economic chambers) in connection with each other can perform their tasks most efficiently by operating a network.

With the coordination of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the aim of the chamber network is to promote the harmonious and homogenous development of vocational education and training and the operation of the system. This network cohesion lays the groundwork for the quality improvement of the whole system, the efficient use of resources and the creation of a common future vision.

The strengthening of the role of the chamber can be seen in the variety of tasks below.

### 6 State delegated VET tasks of the Chamber

- Carrier orientation
- Primary school
- Enrolment conditions
- Level exam
- Competitions
- Vocational training
  - Managing apprenticeship
  - Supervising training conditions
  - Forming of VET enrolment structure
  - Master craftsman training and exams
  - Content of the training and structure of qualifications
- Work
  - Adult training
  - Surveys
- Final exam
- Lobby

Source: Presentation by Dr János Szilágyi, 2015
The activities of the vocational training consultant network

The national vocational training consultant network, which has been developed since 2001 and has been operating successfully ever since, created the opportunity for keeping continuous contact with the stakeholders of the economy and direct information flow. The consultant network is an important part of regional chambers and connects stakeholders, i.e. enterprises, students, parents and schools.

Duties of the national vocational training consultant network:

- Operating the system of the chamber guarantee is primarily done by the consultants, who keep contact with the organizations suitable to pursue practical training, the students and the schools (and if necessary, with the maintainer as well). They promote the conclusion of apprenticeship contracts, counter-sign the already concluded apprenticeship contracts, and make out the chamber certificate for the students who stay in the school training workshop.

- The consultants provide information on legislation, financing, the conditions of concluding an apprenticeship contract and the necessary documents.

- An important task is to find potential training providers and involve them in apprenticeship. Newly involved organizations extend the circle of organizations entitled to pursue practical training. Consultants also seek out organizations which used to have apprentices, but gave up this activity. They are informed about the changed legislation and legal conditions. Easier administration, the settlement of expenses and more favourable funding are usually efficient arguments to persuade enterprises or organizations.

- Consultants also follow up the cooperation agreements, which they also have to counter-sign.

The introduction of the chamber guarantee in 2015 also extended the tasks and activities of the chamber consultant network. This task had already been known, however its organization is done among new circumstances and in a different period by the introduction of the chamber guarantee. The chamber guarantee requires a personalized, student-centred working style and working method, which also means the consultant has to have a personal, direct work contact with every single student. To implement the task of the chamber guarantee, the data is provided by the vocational schools, as it is specified in the law.

For the uniformed work of regional chambers nationwide and for the consultancy work the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry prepares professional informational publication. In 2013 the brochure “With apprenticeship contract in the world of work – all there is to know about apprenticeship contracts” was first published in 2013, then its revised editions were issued in 2014 and 2015 (with the title “Apprenticeship – with apprenticeship contract and cooperation agreement in the world of work”).

In 2014 a leaflet was compiled which summarizes briefly the key concepts and benefits which can raise the interest of students and practical training providers.
The seven Regional Development and Training Committees (RFKB) were significant bodies of Hungarian vocational education and training, which from 2008 had an extended scope of action and composition. The committees had 26 members, delegated by the economic chambers, representative organizations of employers and employees, the minister responsible for education, the minister responsible for vocational education and training, the state public employment service, the regional development council, the Office of Education and the maintainers of vocational schools. The chambers were also co-chairs of the committee. The main goal of the RFKB was to ensure the foundations for a demand-driven vocational education and training.

An important element of the vocational education and training reform was the transformation of regional bodies (RFKB) into County Development and Training Committees (Megyei Fejlesztési és Képzési Bizottság, MFKB) in 2012.

The proposition is a process based on labour market data, an important element of which is the targeted research carried out by the Institute of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Economic and Entrepreneurial Research (GVI), which is one element of this proposition. The final qualification structure decision [in other words: “trend direction”] is made by the government. This entitlement of proposition concerning the trends and proportion of enrolment in vocational education affects vocational education and training both within and outside the school system.

The “trend-direction” proposition with respect to vocational training within the school system, besides daytime education, also comprises evening and correspondence courses. Propositions for the qualification structure define the framework of enrolment for the given county. The proposition of the committee can be basically of three options. In case of qualifications where the labour market demand is expected to be high, there is an opportunity for unlimited enrolment. There are qualifications, the training of which is necessary and substantiated, however in smaller numbers and taking the job finding opportunities into consideration, there is an opportunity for limited enrolment. The third, not subsidized category contains the qualifications where no budgetary contribution (normative subsidization) can be used. The committee proposition is relevant not only for vocational schools, but for vocational secondary schools and vocational secondary school sectors.

The scope of the MFKB includes any issue which may affect the promotion of the vocational training development in the given county. The first step of planning is the proposition of the MFKB to the so-called qualification structure decision, which defines training courses which can be subsidized or cannot be subsidized, or subsidized to a limited number of places by the state within the school system.
Supervision of the quality of practical training

For the chamber, the provision of quality in practical training is a priority, which is assured by supervision involving experts and the representatives of the school. Auditing the organization pursuing practical training includes the examination of the apprenticeship contract and the cooperation agreement, and also involves whether the practical training provider completely fulfils their obligations stipulated in the apprenticeship contract.

The basic conditions of practical training pursued in the framework of an apprenticeship contract are the following:

- announcing the intent to the regional chamber (after that the vocational training consultants of the chamber provide information about the training),
- the training provider has the appropriate technical facilities,
- providing a trained tradesman who is, besides meeting the requirements provisioned in the decree, also has the free capacity necessary for teaching, and also has a teaching aptitude. In the qualifications where master craftsman examination requirements were issued, the practical instructors also need to have a master craftsman certificate.

A priority task for the chamber is the professional preparation of practical training provider companies, giving them methodology advice and also checking whether they meet the necessary requirements in terms of personnel and assets.

Forms of supervision

- initial audit and
- mid-term audit.

The audit is performed in the framework of a public administration authority procedure, and ends with a decision. The result of the decision can be: requirements met, requirements not met, and corrections must be provided.

Following the on-site audit, the data are recorded in the ISZIIR system online. The recorded data are connected to other data and information gained and processed from other vocational training tasks of the chamber.

A main goal of the audit is the transfer of information related to the registration of organizations entitled to practical training.
Level examinations and complex vocational examinations

Level examinations

The regulations of level examinations were provisioned on the level of an Act in July 2003.

The level examination serves as a bridge between practical training in the school and at the company, and is a tool for the better acquisition of qualifications, where a greater percentage of practical training is needed. The level examination must be interpreted as an assessment by which in the teaching-learning process it can be clearly defined when the student can start working in a “live” environment. This means the level examination assesses core competences necessary for guided work.

Practical training without level examination can only be pursued in the school training workshop or the so-called training workshop solely for practical training purposes (an exception is the uninterrupted practical training).

A level examination must be taken by each student participating in daytime education or adult education organized in the order of daytime education, who do not have a baccalaureate.

Therefore level examination is not compulsory for students learning in secondary vocational schools, and due to legal changes from June 12th, 2015, for students learning to attain a second or third qualification.

Functions and impacts of a level examination:

- in vocational training, the level examination guarantees quality, which is an evaluation and assessment point in the process of practical training,
- the level examination improves adherence to the framework curriculum and local syllabuses,
- the student, the practical training provider and the parents have a realistic picture about where the student stands in the acquisition of skills,
- level examinations encourage students and instructors for better work, students will have more success during skills demonstration, which only contains practical working activities,
- cooperation is strengthened between the school, the enterprise and the economic chamber,
- the standard of practical training is improving.

The requirements of the level examination are elaborated by the economic chamber based on the vocational training framework curriculum, with the involvement of professional organizations and professional chambers.
Complex vocational examinations

In vocational training, at the end of vocational studies testing is done at a vocational examination. The form of vocational examination has changed several times in the history of vocational education and training. In 2010 the chamber considered the introduction of the complex vocational examination very important in order to assess vocational skills in a more complex manner. The complex vocational examination is a state examination, a comprehensive, uniformed assessment procedure, which is performed in front of an independent vocational examination board.

The chamber has an extra role at the vocational examination, because the chamber proposes the person of the chair and the members in qualifications concerned, where the economic chamber, based on the agreement concluded with the minister responsible for vocational education and training, elaborates and maintains the vocational and examination requirements. During the evaluation process it can be seen how experienced the students are in performing their tasks in production and employment.

The main features of the complex VET, introduced in the dual system:

- the complex vocational examination is a state examination, which can be organized in the area of Hungary, and which has to be taken in front of an independent examination board,
- it is uniformed for each sector, and is regulated by a government decree,
- a basic principle is that the examination is independent of the training provider, which aims to certify uniformed requirements all over the country,
- the chair and the members of the examination boards are responsible for the regular and undisturbed proceeding of the examination together and also individually concerning the examination processes supervised by them,
- the examination system is competence-based and standardized,
- it is practice-oriented, yet it is based on unity of the appropriate proportion of theoretical education and practical training,
- testing is based on the examination topics prepared with respect to the vocational and examination requirements developed for dual training,
- it provides an opportunity for the work activities specific in certain sector qualifications to appear more emphatically and in cohesion at the examination,
- assessment of knowledge in a complex procedure provides a more realistic and comprehensive picture about the preparedness of the student,
- the examination board has 4 members, and compared to the previous arrangement the roles of the cross-examiner and the evaluating teacher have been modified,
- the duration of the complex examination is more realistic, yet shorter than modular examinations,
- practical examination performance has a more dominant, 55-60 per cent proportion in the final result,
- administrative tasks have diminished significantly,
the new examination system requires more responsibility and vocational preparedness from the student, the school and the examination board, in vocational examination and training within the school system, vocational examination can be held in the examination periods set forth in the school year protocol, namely in February-March, May-June and October-November.

Chambers with regional scope appoint a chair or member to the vocational examination. They continuously receive and check examination announcements.

The vocational examination is especially important, because employers would like to hire personnel who, based on their competences are able to perform various tasks in the scope of their qualification, and also to perform further tasks in case of a technology change, following a short, dedicated in-service training course. Assessment and evaluation during the examination is a work full of responsibility, not only because of the expectations of employers and employees, but for life and property protection as well.
What are the responsibilities of the Chamber? – Operating the Hungarian dual vocational training system

The transfer of the organization of vocational competitions in vocational education and training was another step to deepen and extend dual vocational training.

Competitions in Hungary

The Excellent Student of the Trade Competition (Szakma Kiváló Tanulója Verseny, SZKTV) and the National Secondary Vocational School Student Competition (Országos Szakmai Tanulmányi Verseny, OSZTV) are organized by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and have been organized for the 8th time in 2015. The competitions are preceded by careful preparations, the call and the rules of the competitions can be accessed on the chamber’s website (http://www.szakmaszta.hu), approved by the minister responsible for vocational education and training every year.

The tasks of the vocational competition are built on the theoretical and practical studies of the given qualification, taking the effective vocational and examination requirements into consideration.

The vocational competition consists of a

- qualifier,
- a semi-final and
- a final.

The national final of the competitions is the “Star of the Trade Festival” (Szakma Sztár Fesztivál). The 8th Star of the Trade Festival took place in April 2015, at the HUNGEXPO Budapest Fair Center.

By organizing the Star of the Trade Festival the chamber is increasing the prestige of qualifications every year. The success of contenders is proven by the fact that 80-90 per cent of the competing students achieve the necessary scores, and is exempt from taking a final vocational examination, i.e. receive the certificate in the school without the obligation to take an examination.

The Star of the Trade Festival, organized by the chamber is a large-scale event among others because in 2015 it was organized in an area over 13 thousand square metres, and the competition had over 15 thousand visitors.

The number of the events, i.e. the qualifications included increases every year, and the number of students applying for the qualifiers is also growing. This is also due to the efforts of the chamber done for years to increase practical vocational training. In 2015, the national competitions of the qualifications were promoted for 39 qualifications, for final year students in the daytime system by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The finals in Budapest are organized in the framework of a large-scale festival.

At the competitions, students of the following qualifications participated in 2015:
With Dual Training in the World of Work

SZKTV: Mechanic / Metal cutting machinist / Welder / Steel structure locksmith / Toolmaker / Central heating and gas network system fitter / Water, pipe and public utility systems fitter / Cooling and air conditioning systems fitter / Electrician / Bricklayer / Carpenter, scaffolder / Floor and wall tiling / Painter, decorator, wallpaper fitter / Dry constructor / Finish carpenter / Upholsterer / Carpentry fitter / Confectioner / Waiter(ress) / Chef / Hairstylist / Tailor (menswear) / Tailor (womenswear) / Leathersmith / Shop assistant (food and chemical goods, technical goods, clothes).

OSZTV: Machine producing technician / Building engineer technician / Automation technician / Mechatronical technician / Strong current electrotechnician / Electronic technician / Construction engineering technician / Furniture industry technician / Catering organizer - Restaurateur / Logistic executive / Merchant.

The number of applicants for the SZKTV (Excellent Student of the Trade Competition) has been growing dynamically since 2008. While the number of contenders was 2006 in 2008, by 2015 their number reached 4600.

The competition is public, and the students of schools interested visit the event during a one-day study tour. The festival has approximately 15 thousand participants, from schools in the countryside over 9 thousand students come, their journey is organized by the regional chambers.

It is a great honour that at the competitions the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán has also been a guest on several occasions. He held a speech and encouraged the youths. The media representation of the Star of the Trade Festival is strong every year, besides the channels of the public television (MTV), the Hungarian Radio and internet news sites also report about the event.

EuroSkills – WorldSkills

Hungary has been participating in the WorldSkills championships, also called the Olympic Games for skills since 2007, and in the European championships, EuroSkills since 2008. According to the vocational training framework agreement concluded between the government and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2010, from 2011 the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is responsible for the tasks related to WorldSkills and EuroSkills. This task also strengthened the importance of vocational training.

The chamber made the first huge leap into the direction of connecting the national competitions with preparation to the world and European championships. Selection of the participants for the European championships in Lille in 2014 was performed accordingly.

The first world championship to which contenders prepared in the framework of the SkillsHungary programme organized by the chamber took place in the autumn of 2011, in London. At the WorldSkills London 2011 Championships the Hungarian team, based on average scores came 32nd, and one of our participants achieved a merit of excellence in the field of Information Technology.

At the WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 championships, our team achieved above average, i.e. 500 points meaning a medal of excellence in five events: finish carpenter, painter/decorator, IT network administrator, mechatronics (a team of 2 contenders), and beauty therapist. Our contenders were little below the excellence merit among chefs and bricklayers. The Hungarian team, regarding the average score came 31st.

More information about these competitions in Hungary is available at http://skillshungary.hu.
The 2015 WorldSkills Championships, which took place in Sao Paulo was a real breakthrough for Hungary. The country was represented by 14 young tradespersons in 13 qualifications. This was the first time that Hungary had a gold medal at the world championships, as cabinetmaker Attila László won the first place. He managed to perform better than contenders in other countries, which have strong traditions in this “manual” industry. In the IT network administrator competition Dávid Csongrádi won the silver medal, in a qualification, which is traditionally dominated by participants from Asian countries. This result, which, according to Hungarian dimensions is over the limit in vocational education and training, also points out the necessity to strengthen the relationship between vocational education and training and higher education. The Hungarian team was one of the over 1200 contenders from 63 countries in 50 events at the Brazilian WorldSkills Championships, and the Hungarian mechatronics team, and the contestants in floristry and carpentry.

The first European championship, where the preparation of contenders was organized by the chamber, was the EuroSkills Spa-Francorchamps 2012 competition in Belgium, where the Hungarian team achieved an outstanding result. At the competition with the participation of 23 countries the Hungarian team won 5 gold, 1 silver and 5 bronze medals, and 2 medals of excellence, and by this came 6th in the competition of the nations based on the average points achieved.

On the occasion of the excellent results at the EuroSkills 2012 competition, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán received the Hungarian team and the senior managers of the chamber in his study, while President of Hungary János Ader welcomed the members of the Hungarian team at the EuroSkills 2012 competition in his residence, in the Sándor palace.
At the EuroSkills 2014 championships in Lille the Hungarian youths achieved excellent results again. In the competition with the participation of 25 nations Hungary came 6th. Our contenders won 4 first, 2 second and 6 third medals, and two competitors received a medal of excellence.

Based on the results achieved and the experiences gained during the organization of the Excellent Student of Trade Competition in the framework of the Star of the Trade Festival, the National Secondary Vocational School Student Competition and the National Finals of SkillsHungary, Hungary applied for the right to organize the EuroSkills Competition in 2018, which was won against Norway as the other applicant.
Jos de Goey, President of WorldSkills Europe and László Parragh, President of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in the presence of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and state under-secretary Sándor Czomba are signing the cooperation agreement.

Jos de Goey, President of WorldSkills Europe announced that WorldSkills International and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry concluded an agreement on the organization of the EuroSkills 2018 competition, according to which the “European championship for young tradespersons” will be held in Budapest.

After seeing the Star of the Trade Festival, he said he had the impression as he saw the venues of the competitions and the great interest that the decision was right to organize the EuroSkills 2018 competition in Hungary. He was really happy to see the enthusiastic young people, contenders and supporters, and the many students who came to get ideas and impetus for their own career orientation.
Summary and outlook
Dual vocational training is beneficial for students, as

- students can socialize in a real-life working environment during their apprenticeship years,
- their skills are in accordance with the technological challenges of our age and the demands of the labour market,
- they will be able to develop further,
- it is expected that they will find a job in their qualification easier and in higher numbers,
- by the guarantee of a practice-oriented, quality training they acquire the competences necessary in the world of work,
- there will be skilled, immediately employable workforce for companies,
- the apprenticeship contract is a good basis for a work contract and appropriate wages, besides provides social status and financial independence.

Dual vocational training is beneficial for entrepreneurs, as

- it provides the next generation of skilled workers for the company,
- training costs are decreased, the company gets to know the future employee, suitable skill supply is trained, and by that recruiting costs and risks can be minimized,
- students can socialize in the working culture of the company,
- the students get to know processes, technology, colleagues and objectives,
- the students get to know the entrepreneur,
- motivation and loyalty to the workplace is increased,
- appropriate professional standard can be ensured, which improves the market position of the company.

From a European dimension, dual training is beneficial, as

- it can be converted into a central pillar of European vocational training systems,
- it is an important tool in fighting off unemployment,
- it decreases the gap between education and the world of work,
- learning a trade in a workspace environment is more efficient, successful and the vocational and skills profile can be developed as the result of learning.

The chamber is also carrying out continuous analysis for life-like, progressive propositions, which are feasible and beneficial for every stakeholder. For these explorations complex macro-data, micro-information, continuous analysis are necessary within the country, with appropriate outlook to our region and the changed circumstances in Europe and the world. Employment and labour market forecasts can provide guidelines, but for forecasting it is necessary to monitor the situation of smaller regions and counties. In the meantime, we also have to see that the network situation of vocational education and training and entrepreneurial innovation also have an impact on the processes.
In such a situation, strengthening dual training further is the good direction. In 2015, only 2 per cent of all the entrepreneurs employed young people with apprenticeship contract, and half of the students in vocational schools learn the tools of the trade in a real-life working environment, while companies usually seek and hire young tradesmen with work experience.

In the next few years the chamber intends to at least double the number of enterprises providing apprenticeships, and help young people finding a job in a manner that Hungary can also establish and strengthen its vocational education and training adjusted to its working culture, including gaining work experience through apprenticeship.
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With Dual Training in the World of Work

Learning by working