

## Chambers lament lack of progress on apprenticeships

A delegation of Chamber representatives today pressed EU politicians to accelerate the introduction of apprenticeship schemes across Europe in response to escalating youth unemployment. Participating in a European Parliament SME Intergroup meeting on education and employment, national Chambers expressed their concern that the European Commission's Youth Employment package and the Council's subsequent positive messages on the Youth Guarantee<sup>i</sup> scheme have yet to be converted into tangible progress, notably in the key area of vocational education & training (VET).

### Work based learning + Chambers = employment....

The maths seems fairly simple: countries such as Austria and Germany where apprenticeship schemes are well established enjoy the lowest levels of unemployment in the EU. Small, medium and large businesses in these countries are strongly committed to the schemes, not least due to the pivotal role that Chambers play in their governance and delivery.

### ...but member state inaction = unemployment

Despite the compelling evidence and the broad political consensus that work-based learning is crucial both to cutting unemployment and to strengthening Europe's competitiveness, there is little sign of progress in member states such as Spain, Italy and Greece that need it most.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"It's increasingly clear that certain member states either cannot or will not do it themselves, so the EU must do everything within its remit to put in place the main elements for the establishment of apprenticeship schemes across Europe"*.

Three EU level measures to support the development of VET:

1. Establish a cross-border twinning programme between experienced and would-be apprenticeship scheme providers;
2. Ensure that private sector representatives such as Chambers are core members of the new European Alliance for Apprenticeships;
3. Target 2014-20 education and structural funds budgets towards measures to implement the Youth Guarantee scheme.



### Chambers of Commerce are key players in raising skills

Every year:

People receiving training qualifications from Chambers	2,600,000
Apprenticeships managed by Chambers	900,000
People following Chamber distance learning courses	40,000
Chambers cooperating with education and training institutes	81%
Chambers involved in governance of national vocational education and training (VET)	75%
Chambers directly delivering VET	60%

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<sup>i</sup> That under 25s receive an offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education