



European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Action Plan 2023

Table of Contents

1.0	Overview of activities	3
2.0	Introduction	5
3.0	Three areas of services.....	6
4.0	Calendar	12

1.0 Overview of activities

EaFA 2023 Activities – Overview		
Website	Two news articles monthly	Articles promoting activities and events, links to recording and reports of events and activities, presentation of countries.
	One monthly stakeholder article	Success stories, good practices, Good examples of ESF+ funding for apprenticeships
	Community networking platform	<i>To be developed by the service provider</i>
Online library of tools and resources	Addition of 6-8 items monthly, produced by third parties	Quality materials, practical tools and guidance on apprenticeship to help the EaFA members and key stakeholders in designing and delivering quality and effective apprenticeships.
Learning tools	One toolkit	Apprentice mobility (October)
	Three fact-sheets	See possible topics under section 3.3 (Indicatively May, September, December)
	Two webinars	See possible topics under section 3.3 (Indicatively April/November)
Events (in-person)	One high-level event	Celebrating EaFA 10 years and EFQEA 5 years Brussels, June/July 150 participants
	One Get-Together	Informal get-together back-to-back with the high-level event Brussels 50 participants
	One EAN member meeting	Back-to-back with the high-level event Brussels 35 -50 participants
	One meeting co-organised with ETF	Candidate countries and EaFA Partner countries

		(indicatively October/November)120 participants
Newsletter	Quarterly	News Upcoming events Welcome to new members Member of the month (linked to upcoming articles) Country of the month (linked to upcoming articles) Online library Past activities
Social media	EaFA LinkedIn Group: 12-16 posts monthly (including GIFs and video clips	
	EU Social social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook): 2-4 posts monthly	
	2-3 ad campaigns yearly on EAfA events.	
Annual survey	Annual survey among EAfA members	Yearly in September

2.0 Introduction

This document outlines activities and topics that will be implemented by the new Apprenticeship Support Services in 2023 in line with The European Alliance for Apprenticeships' (EAfA) objectives and priorities.

The Alliance unites governments and key stakeholders with the objectives of strengthening the quality, supply and overall image of apprenticeships across Europe, as well as the mobility of apprentices. These aims are promoted through national commitments and voluntary pledges from stakeholders.

In July 2020, the European Commission launched the renewed EAfA as part of the Youth Employment Support Package. The reinforced alliance calls for new commitments on digital and green apprenticeships, focusing on the economic sectors that will be at the front line of the transition to a climate-neutral Europe. By continuing to bring together governments, social partners, businesses, chambers, regions, youth organisations, VET providers and think tanks, the renewed EAfA will unlock decisive actions by all actors. The renewed EAfA have since the launch addressed the following **six priorities**:

1. Encouraging commitment among Member States and companies to quality and effective apprenticeships, including by fostering national apprenticeship coalitions;
2. Incentivising support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in providing a stable supply of quality and effective apprenticeships;
3. Mobilising local and regional authorities as catalysts for apprenticeships within the local business environment;
4. Strengthening social dialogue through more active involvement by national social partner organisations;
5. Proactively engaging European sectoral social dialogue committees on apprenticeships, with a view to obtaining agreement on joint sectoral pledges;
6. Supporting the representation of apprentices in Member States by relaunching the European Apprentices Network (EAN).

Important horizontal issues such as gender, social inclusion, health and safety, and internationalisation of vocational education and training are also being addressed.

The renewed Alliance is embedded in the **Pact for Skills** as announced in the European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience. The EAfA should cooperate with the Pact for Skills service support in cross promoting, and for example joint webinars and agenda items in each other's activities.

In the framework of the **European Year of Skills**, there will be a focus on working together to promote concrete skills actions to boost the competitiveness of European companies, in particular SMEs, and to realise the full potential of the digital and green transformation in a socially fair and just manner. It should promote skills policies and investments to address labour shortages for a better skilled and adaptable workforce in the EU. The Year will also give a concrete boost to the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan targets of 78% employment rate and 60% of adults participating in up- and reskilling each year by 2030.

Therefore, EAfA events and knowledge-sharing activities will be promoted under the umbrella of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and EYS in 2023.

3.0 Three areas of services



A major change in the Apprenticeship Support Services compared to the period 2018-2022 is that as from 2023 benchlearning will not be part of the services. However, EAfA will have a stronger focus on promoting pledges and best practices of the member countries, i.a. through the EAfA newsletters, news articles on the EAfA website, share your story etc.

3.1 Pledges and national commitments

Following the [Council Declaration of 15 October 2013](#) on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, 39 countries have submitted concrete commitments on next steps to increase the quantity, quality and supply of apprenticeships. This includes 27 EU Member States, 6 Candidate countries and all 4 EFTA countries. Since 2021 EAfA opened for membership to potential

candidate countries, Eastern partnership countries and Neighbourhood South countries, Israel, and Georgia have joined so far.

EaFA also welcomes pledges by stakeholders, companies, VET providers, social partners, chambers and other intermediaries across Europe willing to contribute to strengthening the supply, quality and/or attractiveness of apprenticeships, as well as mobility of apprentices. Since 2013, EaFA has received 383 pledges.

All national commitments and pledges are published on the EaFA website.

New pledges

Measures to increase awareness on the apprenticeships and the EaFA will be put in place to increase the number of pledges:

Mobilise EaFA members: members are the main asset of the EaFA, they contribute to moving the network forward and can help widening the Alliance promoting it within their network. About 90% of the respondents to the 2021 EaFA member survey indicated their availability to promote the EaFA within their network. These members can be mobilised by developing material that can be easily shared as: presentations, infographics, fact sheets etc.

Specific stakeholder or sector targeting should be included in promoting EaFA, as done in 2022 with the campaign and the event targeting the rail sector, resulting in 9 new pledges.

Promote in-person events to specific possible pledgers: The events have the potential to inspire new stakeholders to join the Alliance, as new members are invited to participate in person.

Organise pledge campaigns as done for Ukrainian refugees and for green and digital apprenticeships. The possibility of pledging green and digital apprenticeships was included in the pledge template in 2020. A campaign for pledging apprenticeship places to Ukrainian refugees was launched in October 2022. The campaign should be followed up with further promotion of the received pledges and encouraging new pledges.

National commitments

Countries that have not updated their commitments should be contacted. Through the National Implementation Plans linked to the 2020 VET Council Recommendation, EMPL has an overview over new initiatives. This could be the basis for the outreach.

More *EaFA Partner Countries* are expected to join the European Alliance for Apprenticeships with a national commitment (potential partner countries are Eastern Partnership and Southern Neighbourhood countries).

EaFA member survey

While originally conceived to be conducted every two years, the EaFA member survey will be an annual exercise to capture members progress on their pledge and get their feedback on EaFA past and upcoming activities based on their needs and interests. The survey will take place in September 2023 and the report will be published in November 2023.

The survey report will highlight important achievements and results by pledgers that could be selected to be presented in articles on the EAfA website and in the EAfA LinkedIn group.

The Apprenticeship Support Service contractor will develop a system for distinguishing between ongoing and closed pledges and implement a user-friendly visual tracking of progress under pledges and commitments to be made available on the EAfA webpage.

3.2 Networking

Creating networking opportunities for members is one of the key objectives of EAfA. Networking allows members to exchange ideas and develop projects together. However, as part of greening the European Commission and the increased availability and use of digital networking tools, it is sensible and necessary to reduce the number of in-person events. In any case, participation to in-person events remains limited to a fraction of EAfA members.

In-person events

EAfA will arrange two major yearly events:

High-level conference

This conference will take place in Brussels on 26-27 June 2023 linked to the 2023 European Vocational Skills Week with indicative in-person participation of 150 people. In 2023 it will focus on the celebration of EAfA's 10-year anniversary, the 5-year anniversary of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA) and the European Year of Skills. The event could be organised in collaboration with social partners (BusinessEurope, SME United and ETUC), as they are founders of EAfA. Members of the EAfA stakeholder group should also have a role in the event. The ILO could be invited to announce the adoption of international standards on apprenticeships.

Possible topics:

- Apprenticeships as a possible means to secure skilled employees in SMEs
- Adult apprenticeships
- Apprentices as agents of the green and digital transitions / boosting apprenticeships to address labour shortages in the renewable energy sector
- Quality and effective apprenticeships

Two meetings will be arranged back-to-back with the event:

- a get-together in-person networking event for EAfA members
- a European Apprentice Network (EAN) member meeting

Seminar for candidate countries and EAfA Partner countries

In 2023, this will be the 8th annual seminar to be arranged by EAfA in cooperation with the European Training Foundation (ETF). The main purpose will be to enable learning and networking among candidate countries, EAfA partner countries and EAfA members: governments, individual employers and employers' associations, chambers and VET providers. This type of event raises awareness and promotes cooperation and exchange of experience, including with third countries.

Delegations will comprise four members from each candidate country and EAfA partner country (8 countries in 2022), having submitted a commitment for the EAfA. Additionally, 15 participants from the host country and 25 guests from EAfA/Member States will be invited. EU level institutions and relevant stakeholders will contribute with examples of good practices on priority themes, responding to the challenges identified in the candidate countries. Also, five representatives of the European Apprentices Network will be invited to the seminar. The seminar is set to take place in autumn 2023 in one of the partner or candidate countries. The expected total in-person participation of the seminar will be 70 people.

Online networking

In order to expand the opportunity for networking within the EAfA community, while at the same time reducing the number of in-person events, new **EAfA Communities will be set up**. Participation in the Communities will be open only to the EAfA members, who share a common interest in a topic, while LinkedIn will remain available to a wider range of relevant stakeholders, interested in apprenticeships and EAfA activities.

Each Community will be encouraged to focus on a specific thematic area (e.g., Green and digital transitions; Mobility of apprentices; Pedagogical support; etc.) to develop quality and effective apprenticeships. Communities are expected to rely on web-based collaborative environments to communicate and connect, with the focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice.

Each EAfA Community is to be composed of one or several Leads as well as Community members. EAfA Communities are meant to be members-led and baseline support will be provided by the Support Services to assist the new Community Leads with the setting-up of their Community. The expression of interest form (https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/EAfACommunities_EOI_2023) is to be filled in by the EAfA members who wish to lead or join a Community.

LinkedIn group

EAfA has a large LinkedIn group with more than 3000 members, which is continuously increasing. The group mostly functions as a channel for promoting EAfA activities but should be developed further to increase interaction.

3.3 Knowledge sharing

During the past four years AppSS and EAfA have produced a large number of online activities (webinars, live discussions, online training modules, podcasts) covering all EAfA's objectives and priorities. Webinar fatigue after the tremendous increase of online meetings and conferences as a result of COVID-19, led to a significant drop in webinar/online participation in 2022.

EAfA will therefore streamline the organisation of webinars and will organise two yearly. In order to continue promoting knowledge sharing, we will seek for other opportunities such as online networking and sharing news articles, toolkits and factsheets, building also on the high-quality resources produced so far.

Website

All activities in EAfA from the last four years have been organised according to the EAfA objectives and priorities in a Knowledge hub ([Activities Hub webpage](#)) on the EAfA webpage. This hub should be updated with the new activities of the upcoming period. In particular, it will contribute to the promotional campaign for the high-level event in June/July.

News articles

The news articles on the EAfA website have been used mainly to announce upcoming events and online activities, and to share links to recordings and reports. To keep up the activity on the website, news articles should be used for other purposes as well (2-3 news items per month in addition to news about EAfA activities).

The EAfA surveys show that many members appreciate the visibility EAfA gives to their apprenticeship projects. One of the monthly articles could develop our series of *shining the light on EAfA members* on LinkedIn, including more information on their initiatives and a short interview.

As a follow-up of the work that will be done on national commitments based on their VET national implementation plans, a country could be also presented in a monthly article.

Articles could also focus on good examples of ESF+ funding for apprenticeships.

Online library

The online library on the EAfA website includes guidelines, studies/research, toolkits and examples of best practices. Materials are collected in a variety of EU languages and from across the EU and other EAfA member countries, as well as EU-level and international level resources. As of February 2022, there are 350 entries.

8 – 10 items with quality materials, practical tools and guidance on apprenticeship to help the EAfA members and key stakeholders in designing and delivering quality and effective apprenticeships should be uploaded monthly and promoted through newsletters and LinkedIn. The objective is to expand the online library to 450 entries by the end of 2023.

Learning tools

Toolkit

An online toolkit that gives easy access to useful information on mobility of apprentices should be developed and published in autumn 2023. The format could be an online training module, or another format proposed by the contractor.

Factsheets

Three annual fact sheets on useful topics for apprenticeship stakeholders should be published and promoted.

Webinars

Two webinars of approximately 60 minutes, with the involvement of 2-4 thematic experts each should be streamed live as well as recorded and included in the EU Social YouTube channel.

Topics for learning tools

The topics for the learning tools will be decided in cooperation with the new contractor, having considered the input from the EAfA stakeholder group, the EAfA survey and EMPL experts.

Newsletter

EAfA will publish quarterly newsletters that should include:

- News
- Upcoming events
- Promotion of online learning tools and news article on stakeholders/countries
- Welcome to new members
- Online library
- Past activities
- Other non-EAfA events related to apprenticeships

Social media (LinkedIn group)

12-16 posts (including GIFs and video clips) will be published monthly on the EAfA LinkedIn group as well as 2-4 posts for the *EU Social* social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook) and ad campaigns for 2-3 EAfA events and activities.

The posts will include:

- Promotion of events and activities,
- Promotion of newsletters
- Promotion of content on online library,
- Welcoming new members to the group,
- Shining the light on members
- Shining the light on countries
- Celebration of dates connected to apprenticeships (Youth Skills Day, Youth Day, Womens day etc)

- Polls

Possible topics to be addressed in the webinars, factsheets and events (the service provider will also have the possibility to propose additional topics):

Activity	Topics
High-level event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships as a possible means to secure skilled employees in SMEs • Adult apprenticeships • Apprentices as agents of the green and digital transitions / boosting apprenticeships to address labour shortages in the renewable energy sector • Quality and effective apprenticeships
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships in the care sector and social economy • Apprenticeships and the renovation wave, linked to the green transition
Factsheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing models for apprenticeships where public funding (including possible EU funding) is involved • Erasmus + projects on apprenticeships for SMEs • Micro-credentials and apprenticeships (role in training of apprentice trainers, key competencies)
News article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of apprenticeships in attracting talent from outside the EU • Apprenticeships in the public sector (e.g. spotlight on France) • Health and safety at the workplace, including wellbeing at work – apprentices and mental health

4.0 Calendar

Calendar 2023					
	Events	Webinars	Toolkit	Fact sheet	Newsletter
January	Contract not started				
February					

March					
April					Newsletter 1/4
May	EaFA Info Session	Webinar 1		Fact sheet 1	
June	-High level event Brussels -Get together -EAN member meeting				Newsletter 2/4
July					
August					
September				Fact sheet 2	Newsletter 3/4
October	EaFA-ETF seminar Turin		Toolkit Apprentice mobility		
November		Webinar 2			
December				Fact sheet 3	Newsletter 4/4

