Apprenticeship in Malta

Results of a study among apprentices and employers

Research and Development Division
Employment and Training Corporation
Malta

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Apprenticeship in Malta
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Foreword

The Employment and Training Corporation's involvement in apprenticeship training dates back to its setting up when the Corporation was immediately conferred the responsibility of regulating and managing apprenticeship schemes.

A section within the Training Services Division was set up for the purpose whereby a team of training executives were given the direct responsibility to find adequate placements for apprentices as well as monitor their progress throughout apprenticeship training. Meanwhile the section started to liase with other institutions involved in apprenticeship schemes implementation such as the Education Department and the vocational education institutions with the aim of providing a complete service that adequately combines the various training elements in apprenticeship training.

Since then the Corporation has continuously sought to improve its service to both apprentices and employers alike. Indeed, following the assignment of apprenticeship schemes administration responsibility to the Corporation, the intake of apprentices has gone up significantly and hundreds of apprentices received on-the-job training. One recent initiative geared towards the improvement of apprenticeship was the setting up of an Apprenticeship Schemes Board. The Board is made up of representatives of different entities and organisations that have specific interests in apprenticeship including employers' organisations, vocational education institutions and trade unions. The Board's main objectives are to introduce standard based apprenticeship schemes and to increase the uptake of the schemes in general.

Subsequently discussions by the Board have led towards the proposal of a new apprenticeship framework. The framework sees for the upgrading of apprenticeship training through a series of initiatives. Measures covered by the framework include the provision of on-the-job training that is more up-to-date to current employers' and sectoral training needs, training that leads towards more competence based qualifications and training programmes that are based on outcome rather than duration.

It is hoped that through these initiatives more successful results are achieved in the future. The Corporation still considers that there are a number of challenges that have to be faced. These challenges would include the low uptake of apprenticeship schemes by females, the quality of training provided at the employers' establishment and the need for more and better links with vocational education institutions. The Corporation is committed to face such challenges and improve on past results. Eventually apprenticeship is still considered by many as one of the best forms of training that equips individuals, in particular young persons, with employable skills that are crucial for today's labour market.

This report is an attempt to provide information on apprenticeship in general and the views of both employers and apprentices in particular. By tackling issues that range from quality of training and working conditions to employment after apprenticeship, the report attempts to describe the situation of apprentices in a holistic manner. I trust that this report will prove to be a positive contribution not only to the Corporation but also to other institutions and organisations that are directly involved in vocational training as well as policy makers and researchers who wish to equip themselves with relevant information on the subject.

John P. Camilleri
Chief Executive Officer

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The report 'Apprenticeship in Malta: Results of a survey among apprentices and employers' has been compiled by the Employment and Training Corporation in order to expand the information currently available on apprenticeship in Malta as well as to be able to provide more and better services to its clients.

Executive Summary

Why and how was the report conducted?

The report sought to study a set of issues pertaining to apprenticeship including the taking up of apprenticeship schemes by apprentices, non-completion of apprenticeship schemes by apprentices, work experience of apprentices after apprenticeship, participation in apprenticeship schemes by employers and general views of both apprentices and employers on the apprenticeship system.

The report consists of the results of two surveys, one among apprentices and another among employers. The former was carried out between December 2002 and March 2003 and targeted apprentices who participated in apprenticeship schemes between 1990 and 1998. The latter survey was carried out in October 2003 and targeted employers participating in apprenticeship schemes between 1990 and 2003. The first survey consisted of face-to-face interviews conducted by a private research company while the second survey involved a mail questionnaire administered by the Research and Development Division. The Division was mainly responsible for questionnaire design, data analysis and the compilation of the report.

What are the factors influencing the students' decision to take up apprenticeship schemes?

Individual decisions to take up apprenticeship depend on a number of personal and social factors. Factors can include personal attributes and interests, social and family background, gender, organisational settings, labour markets and national policies. Results obtained by this study reveal that, similar to findings of other studies carried out abroad, most apprentices had fathers employed in medium to low skilled occupations such as service and shop and sales workers, plant and machine operators or other elementary occupations. Most apprentices had an average of six 'O' level qualifications or a secondary education/trade certificate only. The majority used to attend state schools. This suggests that vocational education still has (relatively) low status especially when tied to the previous trade school system in Malta.

Most apprenticeship scheme participants tend to be male. The choice of apprenticeship callings made by apprentices is also influenced by gender. In fact the majority of female respondents of this study opted for apprenticeship in the personal service trades (mainly hairdressing) or the industrial design callings while the majority of males participated in the mechanical and the electrical engineering callings.

When asked what were the main factors that influenced them in opting for apprenticeship, respondents stated that they were mostly influenced by the possible work and career prospects resulting from apprenticeship. The influence of guidance teachers in their decision to take up apprenticeship was minimal. Respondents also stated that the information they received prior to their application to join an apprenticeship scheme was clear when it came to information on entry qualifications required but rather limited on other counts such as the work experience and the monitoring of apprentices during on-the-job training. Moreover, more than half of the respondents stated that they did not participate in an information session on apprenticeship schemes prior to their application.

This suggests that before their entry into apprenticeship information on apprenticeship schemes should be clearer, made available to all students and involves a more active involvement of guidance teachers. The apprenticeship system should be enhanced in order to attract a wider audience including females and students of higher social backgrounds and educational attainment.

What is the employers' and apprentices' experience of apprenticeship schemes?

Similar to the findings of other studies abroad, apprentices and employers who participated in this study *do* value apprenticeship. Employers stated that they highly value the training that apprentices receive at the workplace while apprentices stated that they would recommend apprenticeship to a close friend.

However, both employers and apprentices pointed out that certain elements in the apprenticeship system need revising. Particular factors identified by respondents included: more involvement by employers in the training offered to apprentices both at the vocational education institution and at the workplace; the provision of financial assistance to employers; the need for clear links between the training offered at the workplace and that offered at the VET institution; the need for improved monitoring of the working conditions of apprentices; and that the training offered by employers should be improved.

These suggestions need to be studied further since they may be leading towards non-completion of apprenticeship schemes by apprentices. Although non-completion of schemes is multi-faceted, some factors are more likely to lead towards non-completion than others. Factors outlined by apprentices include lack of sponsors, bad working conditions and inadequate training. Other factors identified by employers include having apprentices who realise that they made the wrong choice of occupation once they enrol in apprenticeship or the apprentices' poor performance at work.

In view of the above findings it is recommended that the services available in apprenticeship are reviewed. Areas for further development would include the monitoring of apprenticeship schemes, the level of coordination between different stakeholders, and the support available to both employers and apprentices prior and during apprenticeship.

What are the employment prospects of apprentices after apprenticeship?

Generally, apprenticeship is leading towards positive employment prospects for apprentices. Few apprentices end up unemployed while their unemployment spells tend to be of short duration and last less than one year. Most apprentices manage to find a job that is directly related to their trade. However, quite a number tend to change occupation. Reasons for changes in occupations can be investigated further.

Few apprentices tend to opt for self-employment or to further their studies. More opportunities for training in entrepreneurship should be made available to apprentices. Moreover, more opportunities should be made available to apprentices who wish to continue their studies including studies at tertiary level.

Training offered by employers to apprentices on employment is mainly in-house training and directly related to one's occupation. However, both employers and apprentices mentioned the need of additional training in soft skills such as computing, customer care, health and safety, and management courses. It is recommended that during apprenticeship, apart from receiving training directly related to their chosen occupation, apprentices are also introduced to other important skills such as these, which are currently in demand by the labour market.

Chapter 1

The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) is the main governmental entity reponsible for regulating the employment and training conditions of apprentices at the workplace

Introduction

Fourteen years ago the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) was conferred by law the responsibility of regulating the employment and on-the-job training conditions of apprentices.

Since then it became highly involved in the overall management of apprenticeship and the development of policy concerning vocational education and training in general. The Corporation always considered apprentices' training as an important asset to both the individual seeking to enhance his/her knowledge and skills and the national economy in general by providing a qualified workforce that complies with the needs of the labour market.

Now that Malta is an EU member, it will have to adapt its training and education systems to those adopted by the European Union. The EU's overall objective as outlined in the Commission's communication entitled "Promoting Apprenticeship in Europe" is to enhance apprenticeship among all Member States in order to help boost the employability of young people.

Malta has already shown its commitment towards enhancing its overall training systems to meet European Union requirements by co-signing the Joint Assessment Paper of the Employment Policy Priorities together with the European Commission in 2001. In this respect one of the policy priorities outlined in the JAP refer to the modernisation of vocational education and training with greater involvement of the social partners and the raising of the skill levels of the workforce particularly those of disadvantaged groups. This priority entails the assessment of vocational education and training systems and whether such systems are meeting labour market demands.

This report is a reflection of the Corporation's concern on the one hand to offer better training services to its clients and on the other to enhance the country's knowledge on the local apprenticeship and vocational education and training scenario. The report aims at giving a general overview of the Maltese apprenticeship system as well as the apprentices' and employers' views of apprenticeship. The Corporation hopes that this report will aid policy makers and other individuals who are highly involved in apprenticeship in the development and implementation of future education and training policies. Following is information on the structure of the report.

The following chapter gives a definition of apprenticeship training and general information on various apprenticeship systems adopted in various countries mainly the European Union Member States, Australia and Malta. Chapter three presents findings of the research conducted by the Corporation's Research and Development Division among apprentices who participated in apprenticeship schemes between 1990 and 1998 and employers who actively participated as sponsors of apprentices between 1990 and 2003. Findings cover a set of issues which include information on the apprentices' and employers' decision to take up or participate in apprenticeship, the apprentices' socio-economic background and gender, the availability of sponsors and the apprentices' training experience, completion of schemes by apprentices and their employment experience after apprenticeship. A comprehensive quantitative analysis of all research findings is provided through the use of tables and charts. In chapter four a number of possible recommendations are developed that try to overcome some of the problems and obstacles identified by the research findings, and that aim to offer better training services and vocational education in general.

Chapter 2

Apprenticeship training varies between countries and within countries resulting in a highly heterogeneous training system.

The Apprenticeship System: An Overview

Apprenticeship systems vary across and within countries. Grubb and Ryan (1999) distinguish between two polar types of apprenticeship: the 'modern' and the 'traditional'. Modern apprenticeship involves structured programmes of education, training and work experience. Such programmes are primarily sponsored by employers or by other interested parties such as employer associations, trade unions, educational authorities or public training agencies. The level of training is geared towards craft, technician or even higher skill levels. Skills taught during the apprenticeship serve both educational and occupational purposes rather than immediate job-related requirements. Traditional apprenticeship contains a more loose structure where young people participate in training and work experience with little or no educational requirements and external regulation.

Despite system variations apprenticeship training is characterised by a number of common factors. Training mainly involves a contract that may be both of a written or an oral nature drawn up between the apprentice and the owner of the firm. The contract mainly sets out the rights and duties of both sides. The apprentice is usually entitled to a low remuneration package which is compensated by the training received from the owner of the enterprise, master craftsman, in-company trainers or trainers provided for this specific purpose. In addition to the training provided at the workplace, apprentices are in most cases obliged to attend part-time vocational institutions to receive training that complements the skills being learnt at the workplace. Thus companies have to release apprentices for either a number of days during the week or for several weeks during the year, depending on the system adopted, for the apprentices to attend these institutions. This has led to a dual system where two learning sites exist in parallel with each other (Sellin 1994).

Apprenticeship systems

In European Union Member States such as Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands apprenticeship training is considered an essential part of vocational education. It mainly involves regulated systems of workplace training as well as training at recognised vocational education establishments. The high value placed on apprenticeship training by these countries is reflected in the reforms introduced to the system in order to attract more students towards apprenticeship and vocational training in general. Thus Germany introduced inter-company group training centres with the aid of public funds to ensure good-quality training and special training facilities for youths who are at a disadvantage in the search for training places. The Netherlands has introduced new occupations in the apprenticeship system, particularly those relating to commerce and administration, which have led to an expansion in the number of apprenticeship contracts. Finally apprenticeship in Denmark was modernised while the number of occupational categories was radically compressed (Sellin 1994).

Meanwhile in other countries apprenticeship is not as ordered and systematic. In Italy for example apprenticeship is adopted in an informal context despite efforts by government to introduce alternance training that combines work/training contracts. Moreover, regional differences exist in the amount of importance given to such training. In some regions traditional crafts still offer good opportunities of employment and training while in others they are mostly insignificant (Sellin 1994).

Similarly Australia's training and vocational education system is composed of various training systems operating in parallel in the different states and territories. Despite these variations, a traineeship and an apprenticeship system generally co-exist, with the former being more geared towards the creation of jobs and the toning down of unemployment among youths while the latter aims to foster the development of vocational skills (Harris et al

2001). Both systems allow enterprises to choose their preferred provider for the off-the-job portion of training, and the corresponding method of training delivery. This system has been highly criticised on several grounds especially in terms of the overall low quality training being adopted by various companies (Smith 2002).

In the United Kingdom apprenticeship has received less attention. Quality training at the workplace and parallel schooling were not guaranteed (Sellin 1994). As a direct response to this situation government launched widespread consultations with industry on setting up a system of modern apprenticeships. The latter system, which was officially launched in 1995, mainly involves training agreements made between young people aged 16 and 17 and an employer. Vocational qualifications now form an essential part of modern apprenticeships in the UK (Aldrich 1997; Short 1998).

Apprenticeship in the European Union

It is often claimed that apprenticeship across various EU Member States is facing a series of challenges. A decline in the attractiveness of apprenticeship training has been widely observed in several countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France and Luxembourg (Sellin 1994; Wahle 1995). Wahle links this downturn in the system tothe following factors: the decreasing number of training agreements; demographic development; the increasing interest in higher education; the modernisation of industrial work; and general technical progress coupled with changing vocational requirements. Indeed the spread of advanced training schools and universities coupled with the ever increasing complex work organisation and capital intensive workplaces, is making it more difficult to attract students to take up an apprenticeship as well as to convince employers to invest in initial training. However, despite this decline, several countries, including those where apprenticeship was not considered as an important form of training, still consider apprenticeship as beneficial and consequently are taking up a series of measures to revamp it. Reforms in this regard are mainly designed to:

- narrow the gap between schools and the workplace;
- get closer to market needs;
- promote job flexibility and mobility;
- fight social exclusion;
- raise the level of apprenticeship diplomas;
- give apprentices access to higher education.

(European Commission 1997)

In view of the above situation the European Commission issued a communication on the subject on the 18th June 1997 entitled "Promoting Apprenticeship in Europe". This Communication, while acknowledging the substantial differences in the apprenticeship systems adopted by various Member States' institutional structures, proposed the following five keys to more effective quality apprenticeship training in Europe:

Key 1: **Expansion and development of new forms of apprenticeship training** by increasing the number of training places (particularly in SMEs), using new distance learning technologies (telematics, Internet), and developing training in growth sectors and new occupations (services).

Key 2: **Raising the quality of apprenticeship training** so as to strike a balance between theoretical and in-company training (which have to be combined) and narrow the gap between initial and continuing training (enabling the individual to remain employable in the long run on the basis of transferable and regularly updated expertise).

Key 3: **Encouraging the mobility of apprentices** by facilitating recognition of training periods undertaken in other Member States. Giving a European dimension to apprenticeship training should enable the individual to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Single Market and the global economy.

Key 4: **Involvement of the social partners** in order to achieve broad participation in preparing legislation, developing training content, monitoring and certification so as to improve the status of apprenticeship training and make it more responsive to new developments.

Key 5: **Development of real strategies for apprenticeship training** by facilitating the exchange of best practices and providing everyone concerned (decision-makers, policy-makers, social partners, schools, instructors and enterprises) with indicators which allow them to monitor the development of apprenticeship training in Europe (with the possible introduction of a benchmarking system)

Table 1: Extended skill training scheme available callings

General description	*Profession*
Mechanical engineering and allied trades	Welder burner, sheet metal worker, plumber, general fitter, motor vehicle fitter.
Wood working trades	Woodworker, upholsterer.
Electrical engineering trades	Electrical fitter, winder.
Handicrafts	Ceramist, jeweller, woodcarver, metal craftsman.
Hospitality trades	Commis chef, commis waiter.
Agricultural trades	Horticulturist, stockman.
Building trades	Stone mason, stone dresser.
Personal services trades	Hairdresser.

Source: Employment and Training Corporation, 2002

Apprenticeship in Malta

Apprenticeship schemes in Malta fall into two categories: the Extended Skill Training Scheme (ESTS) and the Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS). The ESTS mainly caters for students following courses at craft level, which vary from hairdressing, electrical installation to graphic design, tailoring, printing trades and auto electricians (refer to table 1). The TAS caters for apprentices following technician courses such as those of draughtsman, mechanical engineering technician and telecommunications technician (refer to table 2). Presently students enrolling in the schemes participate in off-the-job training provided at the Institutes of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) or the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) as well as receive on-the-job training with an authorised employer.

The entry requirements to the schemes vary from successful completion of compulsory secondary or technical education for those students wishing to participate in the ESTS to at least two passes at Ordinary level and/or MATSEC (local secondary school certificate) in either Maths, Physics and Graphical Communication to students interested in the TAS. Prior to on-the-job training apprentices generally have to spend one-year full-time theoretical tuition at one of the institutes, MCAST or ITS. Once accepted the ETC assists apprentices to find and secure a training placement with an employer's establishment for a stipulated period. The duration of the apprenticeship is between two and four years depending on the programme followed.

During the apprenticeship, apprentices are obliged to continue receiving theoretical tuition at a vocational

Table 2: Technician apprenticeship scheme available callings

General description	*Profession*
Mechanical engineering	Mechanical engineering technician, computer aided engineering technician, motor vehicle technician, refrigeration and air-conditioning technician
Agriculture	Agriculture technician
Electrical engineering	Electrical and electronics technician, industrial electronics technician, telecommunications technician
Draughtsmanship	Electrical draughtsman, mechanical draughtsman, civil engineering draughtsman
Industrial design	Industrial design technician
Micro computer	Micro computer technician

Source: Employment and Training Corporation, 2002

education institution together with a day release for on-the-job training at the employer's establishment. The placement with the employer, usually operating in the private sector, and the apprentice is covered by a formal written agreement, which lays down the rights and obligations of both sides for the duration of an apprenticeship. These rights and obligations are laid down in the Employment and Training Services Act of 1990 and corresponding legal notices of 1981, 1990, 1998 and 2003. The role of an employer in apprenticeship is to provide suitable on-the-job training to apprentices to enable them to acquire skills relevant to their choice of calling. Apprentices are also entitled to a weekly stipend paid by the employer the amount of which is established in the legal notices pertaining to both schemes. In addition apprentices also receive a maintenance grant paid by government for most of the training duration.

On completion of an apprenticeship and after passing successfully their trade test, apprentices are awarded a Journeyman's Certificate at craft level for ESTS apprentices and at technician level for those apprentices following TAS. Meanwhile off-the-job training offered at the institutes provides tuition at ISCED levels three and four that mainly leads to either a local qualification or a City and Guilds of London or a B.TEC qualification. Employers are not bound to employ their apprentices on completion of the apprenticeship period.

The management of apprenticeship schemes falls within the remit of the ETC while the VET institutions namely the MCAST; the ITS; and the Education Division provide the underpinning knowledge. The roles of the aforementioned organisations are as follows:

The Corporation is responsible:
- to promote apprenticeship schemes with prospective apprentices and employers;
- to register apprentices;
- to maintain a database of apprentices;
- to prepare a contract of apprenticeship for each apprentice;
- to assist apprentices to find suitable training placements in industry;
- to monitor on-the-job training;
- to approve requests for transfer or resignation of apprenticeship;
- to ensure that the apprentices and the sponsor abide by the conditions of apprenticeship;
- to co-ordinate the trade testing process of apprentices;
- to define a policy framework for apprenticeship;
- to liase with the Education Division for the issuing of maintenance grants;
- to liase with the VET institutions.

The role of the MCAST and ITS is:
- to provide theoretical tuition according to the calling;
- to examine the academic progress of apprentices ;
- to lead apprentices to sit for exams of foreign/local awarding bodies.

The Education Division is responsible:
- to pay the maintenance grants to apprentices.

At this stage it is important to note a series of recent developments in the apprenticeship scenario. For example until 2001 a system of trade schools existed for those students wishing to learn a trade. These students had to leave the general education stream at the age of 14 or 15 to enter the trade schools. Upon entry in the trade schools these students had to follow a two-year programme comprising general education and basic skills in a particular trade. The latter was later replaced by a technology education module. On successful completion of the programme students were eligible to apply for the ESTS, which initially lasted three years. Once accepted as apprentices these students continued to receive off-the-job training at the trade school. Apprentices wishing to participate in an apprenticeship in jewellery and hairdressing participated in a separate scheme referred to as Private Apprenticeship Scheme (PAS).

On the other hand the TAS scheme was mainly intended for those students who completed general secondary education. These apprentices received their theoretical tuition at a series of (mainly small-scale) institutions managed by the Division of Education. After one year full-time off-the-job training at one of the VET institutions, apprentices also received on-the-job training with an employer for two or three days per week.

In the late 1990's a revision exercise of both the apprenticeship schemes and vocational education in general took place in Malta, which saw the end of the trade school system. The ESTS scheme became available to all students who completed general secondary education and who had the appropriate qualification requirements. As to the PAS this was abolished and the Hairdressing Programme was incorporated within the ESTS.

A few years later theoretical tuition was no longer provided by separate vocational institutions but by two VET institutions, MCAST, established in 2000, and the ITS. MCAST embraces a number of specialised institutes namely: business and commerce; information and communication technology; agribusiness; mechanical engineering; maritime; electrical and electronics engineering; art and design; building and construction engineering; and community services.

This revision exercise was intended by policymakers to boost vocational education and training in Malta. As noted by the expert team of the Background Study on Employment and Labour Market in Malta (Zammit et al. 2001):

> Vocational education and training in Malta is not seen as an attractive alternative to the University. Its public status is low, as is the level of funding ... Apprenticeship schemes have traditionally been associated with engineering and craft related occupations and trades; apprenticeship schemes providing VET for service occupations in the highly expanding services sector are lacking. Moreover, guidance teachers provide vocational guidance at secondary level and this tends to be biased towards the academic stream. (P. 42)

According to MacDaniel (1999) participation by companies in apprenticeships is still low. In 1999 out of 6,000 enterprises (among which 70% are SMEs) only 500 were taking part in the schemes. MacDaniel suggests that the lack of incentives to employers to sponsor apprentices may be leading to a situation where the supply of apprenticeship positions is lower than the demand for such posts from prospective apprentices. Malta's legislation does not provide for any form of financial compensation for companies participating in the schemes.

Apart from the revision exercise referred to above, Government's commitment to ensure a better vocational education and training system also included an increase in funding. Although Malta's funding on education is quite high especially when compared to other new EU member states, until recently its spending on vocational education and training was on the low side (MacDaniel 1999; Joint Assessment Paper 2001). Appropriate action was taken in this regard by Government in increasing the funds allocated to the MCAST. The sum allocated to MCAST in 2003 saw an increase of Lm1.9 million over that of 2002 from Lm2.5million to Lm4.4million.

An Apprenticeship Board was set up in 2002 with the aim of introducing standardbased apprenticeship schemes and to increase their uptake by apprentices, in particular by women. The board includes representatives from the ETC, the MCAST, the ITS, the Education Division, trade unions, employers, and other constituted bodies. Recently the board was discussing ways of improving the new apprenticeship framework and also increasing the variety and number of apprenticeship callings currently available (Progress Report 2003).

In the past few years an increase was registered in the enrolment levels of apprenticeship schemes (refer to table 3). However, this general trend masks the low level of uptake of apprenticeship schemes by female students. It seems that apprenticeship options were losing favour with females or that the latter preferred the academic route rather than vocational education and training. On a general level, despite the registered increases in the apprenticeship schemes' uptake by students leaving general secondary level of education, it is still early to ascertain whether late reforms in vocational education and training are producing the expected positive results.

Table 3: Intake in TAS and ESTS 1995-2000

Year	ESTS			TAS			Total
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1995	96	0	96	182	9	191	287
1996	103	21	124	223	13	236	360
1997	368	28	396	229	14	243	639
1998	281	46	327	285	15	300	627
1999	304	37	341	289	11	300	641
2000	244	76	320	299	9	308	628

Source: Employment and Training Corporation

Table 4: Sample distribution of apprentices' survey*

Year of Intake	Males	Females	Total
1985	*0	*1	*1
1988	2	0	2
1989	4	0	4
1990	51	9	60
1991	28	6	34
1992	32	8	40
1993	26	12	38
1994	25	6	31
1995	20	9	29
1996	20	11	31
1997	36	17	53
1998	28	13	41
1999	1	0	1
2000	1	0	1
2002	1	0	1
Total	**275**	**92**	**367**

**A total of 10 respondents answered that they had joined an apprenticeship scheme prior 1990 or after 1998.*

Research scope and methodology

In view of the limited amount of research on apprenticeship schemes in Malta, the ETC felt the need to launch a research study on apprenticeships in Malta. The purpose of this study covered the following research areas:

- take up of apprenticeship schemes by apprentices;
- participation in apprenticeship schemes by employers;
- non-completion of apprenticeship schemes by apprentices;
- work experience of apprentices after apprenticeship;
- apprentices' and employers' views on the apprenticeship system in general.

The study comprised two separate surveys one among apprentices and another among employers.

The target population for the apprentices' survey consisted of all apprentices who applied to participate in an apprenticeship scheme between 1990 and 1998. The total number of apprentices participating in the schemes during this period amounted to 4,354 of which 4,007 were males and 347 females. A sample of 367 apprentices was selected using stratified systematic random sampling from the apprentices' database held by the ETC (a sample size considered appropriate for a population of under 10,000). The sampling rate stood at 8.4% of all apprentices. Stratification was adopted in the years and gender categories to ensure adequate representation of apprentices during the whole period covered by the survey and of both sexes. In addition due to the overall low female participation rate in the schemes, the proportion of females in the sample was slightly increased for better representation of both sexes in the total sample population.

Subsequently a covering letter was sent by post to selected apprentices inviting them to participate in the survey.

ETC's Research and Development Division formulated a questionnaire devised in the survey (refer to Annex 1). The questionnaire was piloted among five individuals randomly selected from the ETC apprentices' database. ETC research staff interviewed the selected individuals.

Data was collected between the beginning of December 2002 and the end of March 2003. All data was captured through face-to-face interviews by a group of trained interviewers who were outsourced for the purpose. During the course of the fieldwork a total of 111 individuals either refused to participate in the survey or could not be reached. For the sake of achieving a full response rate the ETC further selected possible interviewees with the same characteristics from the original ETC apprentices' database by using systematic random sample techniques. Selected individuals were first contacted by phone. Those individuals who accepted to participate in the survey were than contacted by the interviewers for the face-to-face interview. Table 4 represents the sampling distribution by year of intake and gender of all participating individuals.

The target population of the second survey consisted of all employers who participated in apprenticeship schemes between 1990 and 2003. The total number of employers participating in the schemes during this period amounted to 887. A mail survey was adopted for this part of the study whereby all employers were sent a questionnaire formulated by ETC's Research and Development Division in October 2003 (refer to Annex 2). An accompanying covering letter was sent to the employers with the questionnaire inviting them to fill in the questionnaire and send it to the Division in a pre-paid envelope. 32 employers could not be reached. 160 employers sent the questionnaire duly filled in. Thus the sampling rate of this survey stood at 18.7% of 855 employers. Table 5 represents the sampling distribution of survey participants by economic sector and size of company.

Table 5: Sample distribution of employers' survey

	Size of company							
Economic sector	**Self employed without employees**	**Less than 10 employees**	**10 - 19**	**20 – 49**	**50+**	**Non respondent**	**Total**	**% within economic sector**
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	**1.8**
Mining and quarrying	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	**1.3**
Manufacturing	2	20	9	8	11	2	52	**32.5**
Electricity, gas and water supply	0	2	0	0	1	0	3	**1.8**
Construction	0	5	0	1	0	0	6	**3.8**
Wholesale and retail trade, repairs	1	14	5	5	3	1	29	**18.1**
Hotels and restaurants	0	3	0	1	8	0	12	**7.5**
Transport, storage and communication	1	3	0	1	2	0	7	**4.4**
Real estate, renting and business activities	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	**2.5**
Education	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	**1.3**
Health and social work	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	**0.6**
Other community social and personal service activities	2	24	1	1	2	2	32	**20.0**
Non-respondents	0	1	0	0	1	5	7	**4.4**
Total	**7**	**77**	**17**	**18**	**31**	**10**	**160**	**100.0**
% within size of company	**4.4**	**48.1**	**10.6**	**11.3**	**19.4**	**6.2**	**100.0**	

Chapter 3

The decision to opt for an apprenticeship may involve both personal and social factors that influence the young school leaver in taking up such a scheme.

Research Findings

Apprentices may decide to take up an apprenticeship because they like that particular trade which they ultimately wish to take up in the future as full-time employment. However, other social factors such as the socio-economic situation and the educational background of young people may also channel them to choose an apprenticeship.

Vickerstaff (2003) in her study of a small group of apprentices in Australia notes that individual decisions, including decisions made in school-to-work transitions may be attributed to factors such as individual biography, interests and attributes, family relationships, personal settings, organisational settings, labour markets and national policies. She quotes research done in the 1960s by Veness where the latter identified three possible sources of career choice: 'tradition directed' in which young people follow in their family's footsteps in particular their fathers'; 'inner directed' in which people pursue a career they prefer; and 'other directed' where choice of job or apprenticeship was made with reference to outside sources of information.

Raffe (1994) adds that career pathways followed by young people also reflect the different choices and opportunities open to them rather than differences in more fundamental values such as socio-economic status and personal abilities. Making particular educational and occupational choices may partly reflect the actual opportunities available in the educational and labour market set up. Gender may be an exception in this regard because it reflects deeply rooted values and socialisation. But as Raffe notes there seems to be a convergence in many countries in the career expectations of males and females and that gendered occupational choices may still partly reflect actual opportunities in the labour market and the social and personal costs of working in other cross-gendered working areas.

Another reason usually attributed to occupational and career choices including the choice of apprenticeship is the provision of school guidance and counselling. Young people in many countries have criticised schools for not giving them enough information and advice about possible educational and occupational pathways (Raffe 1994). Indeed as opportunities in education and employment become more diverse and more flexible the counselling task becomes more important but also more difficult. Students' diverse backgrounds coupled with a more heterogeneous educational and labour market may make it more difficult to guidance and counselling teachers and career officers to describe actual career and educational pathways.

Raffe also notes that there is a tendency of guidance teachers favouring school-based options whereas career officers favouring college or work-based options. He explains this situation in terms of the diversity in institutions and the competition arising between different service providers. Moreover, Mjelde (1993) in her study of apprentices in Norway stated that in general, school counsellors come from an academic background and have a scant knowledge of the labour market. This lack of knowledge of the complexities of the labour market may create information problems. She refers to research done by Berge in 1977 and Aga in 1983 where they point out that students were not satisfied with the information they were given prior to them choosing the occupation of their choice and that they were more influenced by their parents, social environment and friends than by the information, advice and appraisals provided by teachers and professional counsellors.

Similarly Cutajar (2002) and Bartolo Galea (2002) contend that the low uptake of apprenticeships by Maltese school leavers may also be attributed to wrong information prior to the taking up of an apprenticeship. Cutajar notes that when students register to participate in a vocational education programme they are not fully aware of the apprenticeship system. He argues that non-completion of apprenticeship schemes can be attributed to a lack of adequate information on scheme requirements, general

perception held by outsiders of such schemes and inappropriate guidance. Bartolo Galea states that guidance and counselling teachers are mostly of an academic background with limited knowledge of labour market requirements and who have minimal contact with work establishments.

Generally survey respondents tend to confirm the contentions put forward above. Indeed most respondents were most likely to be influenced by the fact that their prospective work interested them and offered them a career path and by conditions of work followed by role models, family and teachers in their decision to take up an apprenticeship scheme. Similarly work prospects influenced respondents most in their choice of vocational course. Pay, guidance and counselling and friends were the factors, which influenced respondents least in their decision to take up an apprenticeship. However women were somewhat more attracted to the work's potential for interest and for career development than males, while men were more likely to have been influenced by their teachers, pay prospects and guidance and counselling services (refer to chart 1).

Most respondents got to know about apprenticeship schemes from school followed by their friends and family. Interestingly, females got to know about the schemes more from their friends or family than from school when compared to men (refer to chart 2). There were more students coming from the trade schools who got to know about the schemes than students coming from other schools (refer to chart 2). This may be due to the fact that before the revision exercise that took place in the late '90s apprenticeship schemes were mostly tied to the trade school system with them being considered as a secondary option to all other students. More than half of the respondents (54.8%) stated that they did not participate in an information session dealing on apprenticeship schemes before applying to participate in such schemes. Information sessions are organised on a regular basis by the ETC in all secondary schools around Malta and Gozo.

On application to an apprenticeship scheme respondents stated that they were quite aware of entry qualifications but more vaguely aware of scheme and course details, apprentices' pay and work experience (refer to chart 3).

Chart 1: Factors influencing the apprentices' decision to take up an apprenticeship scheme

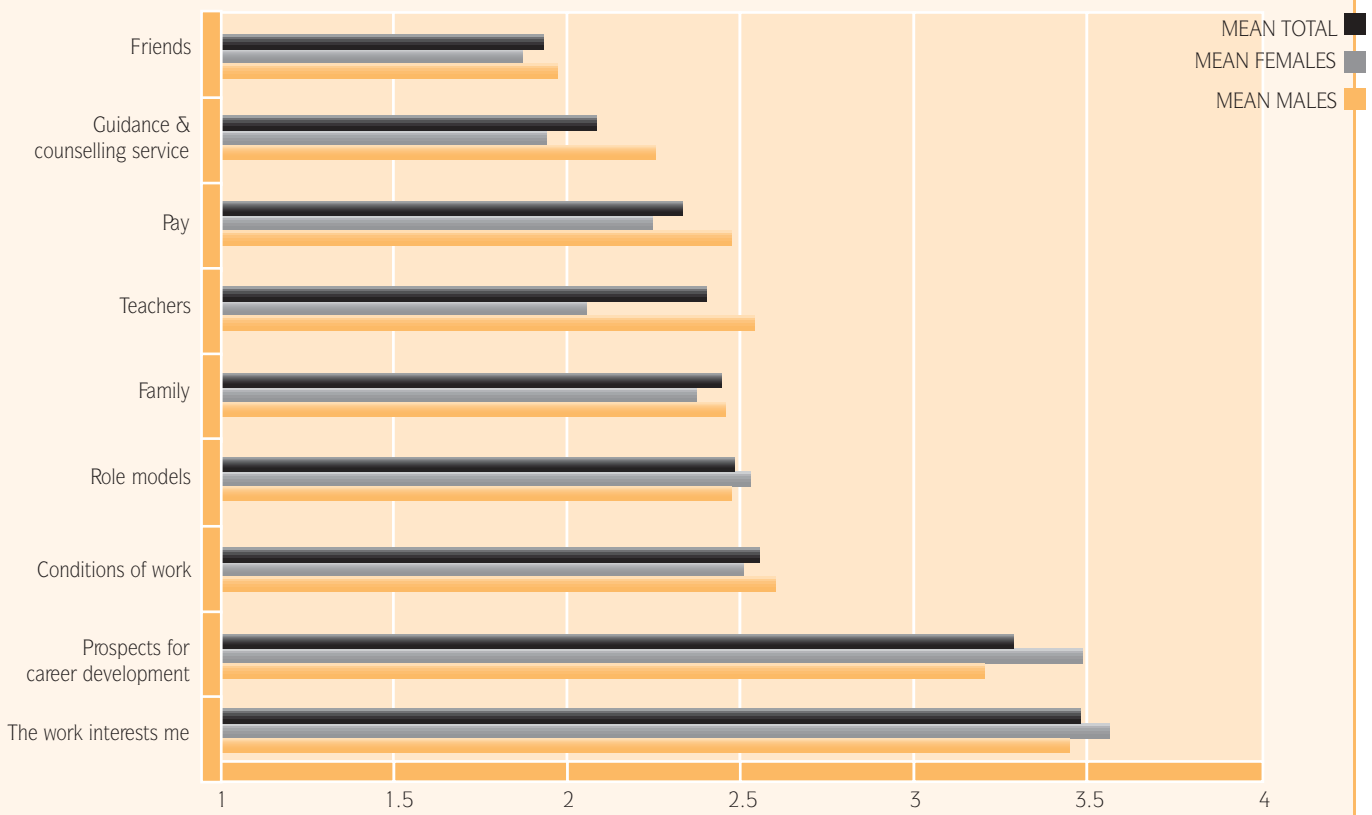


Chart 3: Awareness by apprentices of scheme features

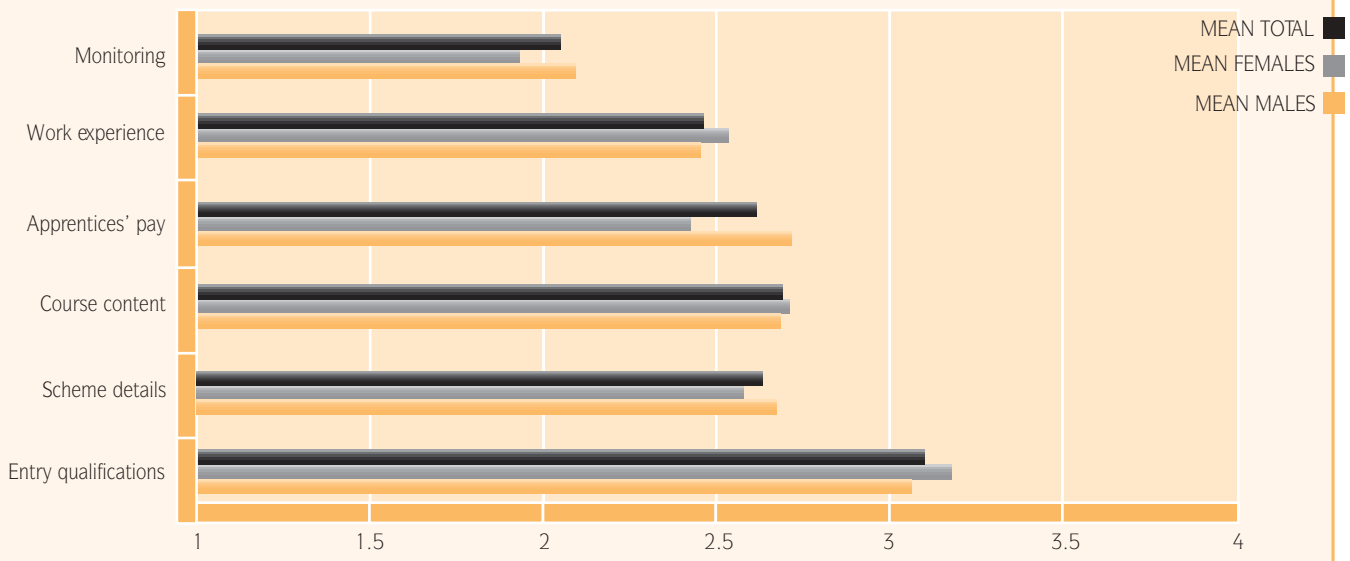
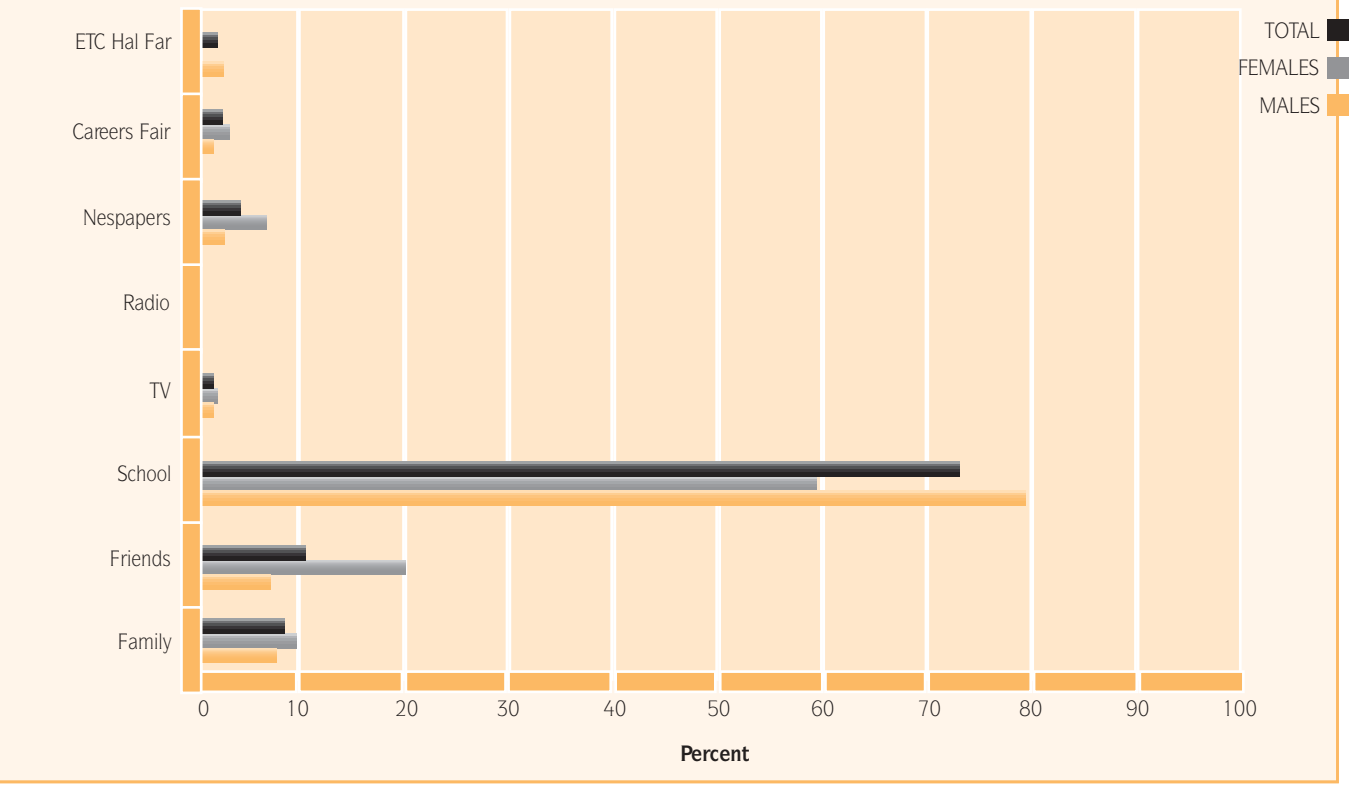


Chart 2: How apprentices got to know about apprenticeship schemes



Most respondents were hardly aware of monitoring arrangements while 46 respondents (38.3 %) stated that general information received prior to their application to participate in an apprenticeship scheme was not clear enough.

Socio-economic background of apprentices

The socio-economic background of apprentices also plays an important role in the youths' decision to take up an apprenticeship. Studies referring to the socio-economic environment of apprentices note that young people of lower socio-economic background have a higher probability of becoming an apprentice than other young people (Mjelde 1993; Smits and Stromback 2001).

Out of 1,617 Norwegian apprentices interviewed by Mjelde in her study of apprenticeship in Norway, 50 percent came from the working class while 16% came from the managerial/academic class. Mjelde quotes various other studies conducted in Sweden and Norway which also found that a higher rate of youth from working class background tend to opt for vocational fields of study (Iversen 1971; Lesjo 1979; Wego Fleischer 1977; Harnquist-Svendson 1980; Axelson 1982).

Similarly Smits and Stromback quote a study by Austin conducted in Australia in 1997 who found that having a father who is a skilled worker increased the chance of youths becoming an apprentice. The father's trade also influenced the choice of trade of apprentices who usually chose the same trade as their father's.

Mjelde also notes that there is a correlation between the rate of employment of apprentices' mothers and apprentices. In her study she found that the rate of employment of apprentices' mothers tends to be higher than Norwegian women's overall employment rate.

Generally, findings of this survey tend to correspond to those of other researchers referred to above. Only 39 respondents (13.3%) had fathers who were legislators, senior officials, managers or professionals while only 30 respondents (8.2%) had fathers working as technicians and associate professionals (refer to table 6). Most respondents had fathers working as service workers and shop and sales workers (24.8%) followed by those who had fathers working as plant and machine operators or working in elementary occupations (21.0%). Almost an equal number had their fathers working as craft and related trades workers (20.2 %).

Table 6: Fathers' occupation

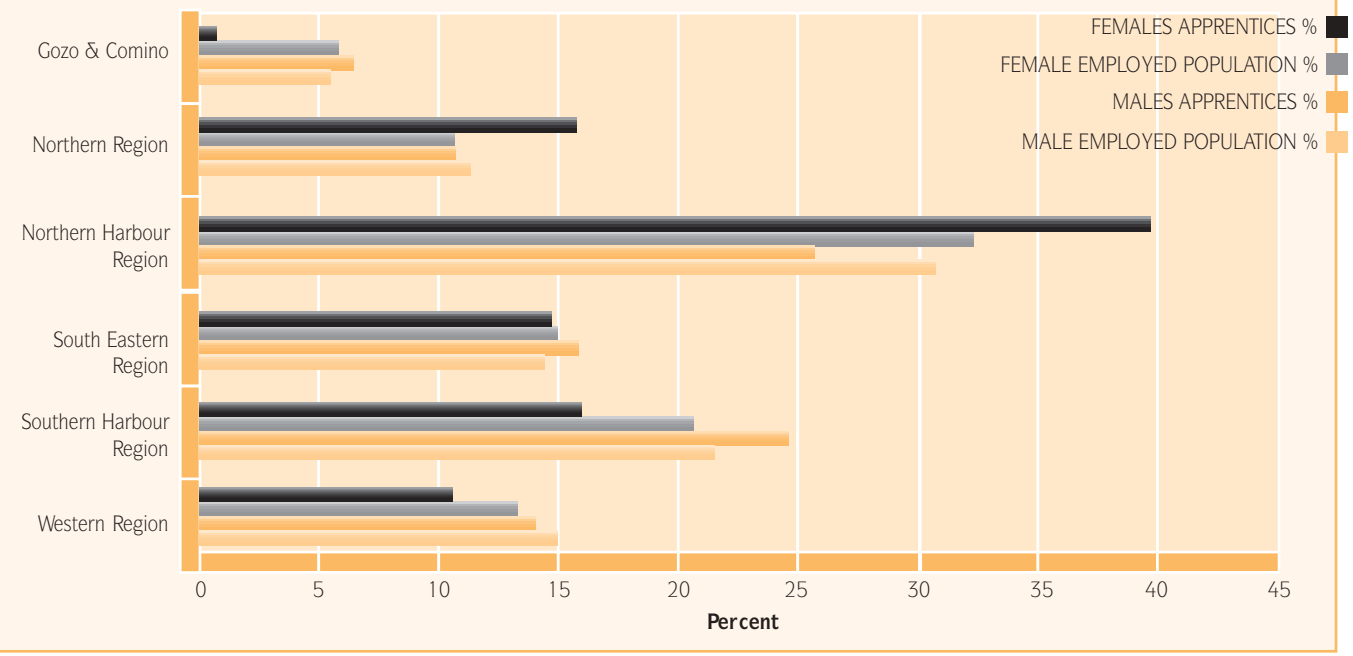
Occupation	Number	%
Armed Forces	7	1.9
Legislators, senior officials and managers	24	6.5
Professionals	25	6.8
Technicians and associate professionals	30	8.2
Clerks	16	4.4
Service workers and shop and sales workers	91	24.8
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	9	2.5
Craft and related trades workers	74	20.2
Plant and machine operators	25	6.8
Elementary occupations	52	14.2
Unemployed	4	1.1
Deceased	8	2.1
Non Respondent	2	0.54
Total	**367**	**100.0**

As to the occupation of the apprentices' mothers results of this survey do not correspond with the findings of Mjelde. Indeed only 63 or 17.7% of apprentices' mothers' were in employment. This low figure may be a direct reflection of the general low level of female labour market participation in Malta with the current female employment rate standing at 34.2%.

Furthermore there seem to be no overall regional disparities win the uptake of apprentices since results tend to correspond to the total employment population in each region. Interestingly however, an analysis of the results by gender reveals that more male apprentices lived in the Southern Harbour and South Eastern regions and less in the Northern Harbour region at the time of their application, while more female apprentices lived in the Northern Harbour and Northern region, and less in the Southern Harbour region and Gozo and Comino (refer to chart 4).

As to the general educational aptitude of apprentices, Smits and Stromback state that generally it is of a low or intermediate level with the majority of apprentices following a less academic or vocational path in their later years in

Chart 4: Number of apprentices compared to total employed population by gender and region



school or having left school early. They also note that these paths differ from country to country depending on the range of occupations available and what the alternatives are. In Germany and to a lesser extent The Netherlands, youths of various educational qualifications are attracted towards apprenticeships. In these countries the apprenticeship system is a dominant type of post-school training and encompasses a wide range of alternatives. On the other hand in countries like France and Italy where apprenticeships are restricted to a small number of low-skill occupations, only youths with low educational achievement choose to take up an apprenticeship.

In comparison to the above findings, most respondents of this survey tend to have an intermediate level of educational attainment or lower (refer to table 7). Indeed 63.2% stated that they had obtained O level qualifications with the mean average of qualifications obtained amounting to six. O level qualifications obtained by respondents ranged from one to 13 subjects. (It is important to note that there were 13 respondents, who stated they had obtained A level qualifications but did not state the amount of O level qualifications obtained. This may have resulted in a drop in the amount of O level qualifications stated by survey respondents.) The remaining 36.5% stated that they had a general secondary school certificate only with some

Table 7: Qualifications of apprentices prior to entry into apprenticeship schemes

Qualification	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	Total%
General Secondary School Certificate	55	20.0	16	17.4	71	19.4
General Secondary School Certificate and Trade Certificate	55	20.0	8	8.7	63	17.2
O Levels	149	54.2	55	59.8	204	55.6
O Levels and A Levels	16	5.8	12	13.0	28	7.6
Non respondent	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	0.2
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

Table 8: Secondary school attended by apprentices

School	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	Total %
Junior lyceum	83	30.2	33	35.9	116	31.6
Area secondary school	46	16.7	38	41.3	84	22.9
Opportunity centre	2	0.7	0	0.0	2	0.5
Trade school	97	35.3	5	5.4	102	27.8
Other secondary School	47	17.1	15	16.3	62	16.9
Non respondent	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	0.3
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

stating that they also had in addition a trade school certificate. A total of 28 respondents (7.6%) stated that they had also obtained an A level qualification with the majority of respondents obtaining qualifications in one or two subjects. These respondents chose the following callings: mechanical and electrical engineering trades (9); industrial design (8); draughtsmanship (6); micro computer (3); and personal services trades (2). The proportion of females obtaining O and A level qualifications tends to be higher than that of males.

As to the secondary school attended by respondents prior to their participation in an apprenticeship the majority went to the junior lyceum (31.6%) followed by those attending the trade schools (27.8%) and the area secondary schools (22.9%) (refer to table 8). These results should be attributed to the situation that existed prior to the revision exercise of apprenticeship schemes held in the late '90s where students participating in trade schools were channelled directly to the ESTS while the rest such as those attending the Junior Lyceum were mostly ushered to choosing the TAS (refer to chart 5).

The low status usually attributed to vocational education in general, especially that tied to the trade school system in Malta, is confirmed by the low number of students attending private (2.18%) or Church schools (16.62%) who took up an apprenticeship scheme. These schools tend to channel their students towards more academic training and University education in general giving slight emphasis to the vocational education and training option. The latter was and may still be considered by such schools as less credible and of lower status.

Chart 5: Secondary school attended by apprentices and apprenticeship scheme

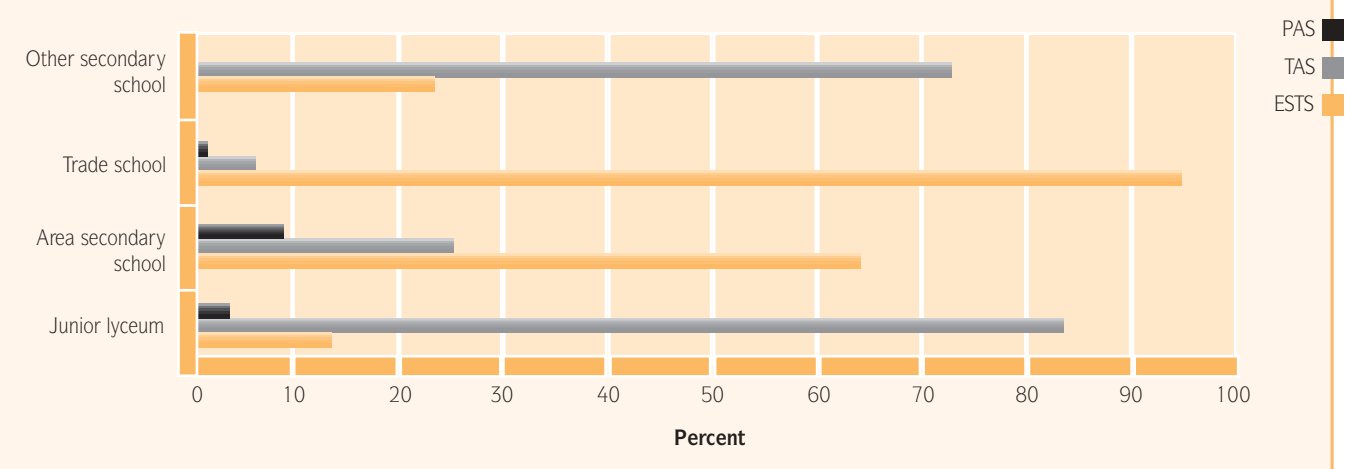


Table 9: Student intake at the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology in 2001

Institute	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Business and commerce	121	17.5	245	76.3	366	36.1
Art and design	48	6.9	35	10.9	83	8.3
Information and communication technology	177	25.6	33	10.3	210	20.7
Building and construction engineering	204	29.5	6	1.9	210	20.7
Electrical and electronics engineering	132	19.1	2	0.6	134	13.2
Maritime	10	1.4	0	0.0	10	1.0
Total	**692**	**100.0**	**321**	**100.0**	**1013**	**100.0**

Source: Malta College of Arts Science and Technology

Gender

The low uptake of vocational education courses and corresponding apprenticeship schemes by females has been registered widely in various countries. Most females tend to opt for more academic training with vocational education and training remaining predominantly a male-dominated area of study. However recent statistics show that females seem to be catching up and are increasingly opting for vocational and technical education courses. Yet, despite this increase, their participation in apprenticeship schemes has very much remained on the low side. As noted by Pair in his analysis of various vocational and training education systems in various OECD countries (1998):

> Young women succeed academically better than their male counterparts and are found in greater numbers in the more academically esteemed programmes and a little less in VOTEC They are very much in the minority in apprenticeship. Their share in VOTEC is increasing however, as it is in employment, with the development of the tertiary sector. The increase often tends to be concentrated somewhat in the highest levels of training. (P.18)

Women who opt for vocational education and apprenticeship opt for particular courses that are usually attributed to females. As also noted by Pair:

Table 10: Student intake at the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology in 2002

Institute	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Business and commerce	156	19.0	271	67.6	427	35.0
Art and design	45	5.5	35	8.7	80	6.6
Information and communication technology	250	30.5	80	20.0	330	27.0
Building and construction Engineering	202	24.7	10	2.5	212	17.4
Electrical and electronics engineering	152	18.6	5	1.2	157	12.9
Maritime	14	1.7	0	0.0	14	1.1
Total	**819**	**100.0**	**401**	**100.0**	**1220**	**100.0**
Increase in student uptake from 2001	127	18.4	80	24.9	207	20.4

Source: Malta College of Arts Science and Technology

Table 11: Student intake in the ESTS in 2001 and 2002

Calling	2001*		2002					
			Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	Total %
Mechanical engineering and allied trades	0	0.0	12	3.6	0	0.0	12	3.1
Wood working trades	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Electrical engineering trades	56	15.7	68	20.4	1	2.0	69	18.1
Handicrafts	58	16.2	35	10.5	11	22.4	46	12.0
Hospitality trades	78	21.8	64	19.2	15	30.6	79	20.7
Agricultural trades	9	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Building trades	0	0.0	15	4.5	1	2.0	16	4.2
Personal services trades	24	6.7	3	0.9	21	42.9	24	6.3
Common core technology	132	37.0	136	40.8	0	0.0	136	35.6
Total	**357**	**100.0**	**333**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**382**	**100.0**

*Source: Employment and Training Corporation * Statistics not available by gender*

> But while there is a tendency for greater similarity of behaviour between young men and women, with comparable participation rates in the broad categories of training, this is true only of the global situation, and the specialities chosen remain very different, women are significantly represented in only a small number of occupational fields: administration, health, social services and personal services. (P. 19)

A similar situation exists in Malta. Figures for 2001 and 2002 showing the intake of students at the newly set up MCAST reveal a low number of female students registering at the College (refer to tables 9 and 10). Moreover, females tend to register for courses organised by the Business and Commerce, Information and Communication Technology and Art and Design institutes. There is negligible participation by females in the Building and Construction, Electronic Engineering and Maritime institutes. The choice of subjects by both genders has remained quite stable for both years in almost all institutes in spite of the general increase in the overall student uptake by the College. Higher female participation rates have been registered by other VET institutions such as the Institute of Health Care, Institute of Tourism Studies or School of Hairdressing. Courses offered at these Institutions tend to appeal to females more than most of the technical courses offered at the College.

Table 12: Student intake in the TAS in 2001

Calling	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Mechanical engineering	53	24.2	0	0.0	53	21.4
Agriculture	4	1.8	8	27.6	12	4.8
Electrical engineering	103	47.0	0	0.0	103	41.5
Draughtsmanship	23	10.5	2	6.9	25	10.1
Industrial design	13	5.9	19	65.5	32	12.9
Micro computer	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Applied mechanical electrical engineering	23	10.5	0	0.0	23	9.3
Total	**219**	**100.0**	**29**	**100.0**	**248**	**100.0**

Source: Employment and Training Corporation

Table 13: Student intake in the TAS in 2002

Calling	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Mechanical engineering	35	15.6	1	2.0	36	13.2
Agriculture	9	4.0	9	18.4	18	6.6
Electrical engineering	89	39.7	3	6.1	92	33.7
Draughtsmanship	45	20.2	7	14.3	52	19.0
Industrial design	7	3.1	26	53.1	33	12.1
Micro computer	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Applied mechanical electrical engineering	20	8.9	1	2.0	21	7.7
Computer hardware technician	19	8.5	2	4.1	21	7.7
Total	**224**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**273**	**100.0**

Source: Employment and Training Corporation

Consequently the proportion of female students who apply for an apprenticeship scheme is significantly lower than the proportion of females who enter the College (refer to tables 11, 12 and 13). Females make up an average of 15.0% out of the total number of apprentices while almost 33% of the total student population at the College is female. However, it is important to note that the general low female participation in apprenticeships may be attributed to the lack of apprenticeship schemes available to those students who enrol in the Business and Commerce institute at the College. This Institute comprises a strong female population, which is currently deprived of the opportunity to undergo apprenticeship training.

Table 14: ESTS apprentices by gender and calling *

Calling	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Mechanical engineering and allied trades	60	42.0	0	0.0	60	30.9
Wood working trades	12	8.4	0	0.0	12	6.2
Electrical engineering trades	28	19.6	1	2.0	29	14.9
Handicrafts	5	3.5	3	5.9	8	4.1
Hospitality trades	6	4.2	2	3.9	8	4.1
Agricultural trades	4	2.8	0	0.0	4	2.1
Building trades	14	9.8	0	0.0	14	7.2
Personal services trades	0	0.0	37	72.5	37	19.1
Common Core Technology	5	3.5	0	0.0	5	2.6
Graphic designer	4	2.8	2	3.9	6	3.1
Printing trade	4	2.8	0	0.0	4	2.1
Tailoring	0	0.0	3	5.9	3	1.5
Industrial design	0	0.0	2	3.9	2	1.0
Non respondent	1	0.7	1	2.0	2	1.0
Total	**143**	**100.0**	**51**	**100.0**	**194**	**100.0**

** Sample population may not reflect recent total population of apprentices due to variations in the provision of callings between years. PAS apprentices were included with ESTS scheme participants.*

Table 15: TAS apprentices by gender and calling *

Calling	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Mechanical engineering	16	12.1	1	2.4	17	9.8
Agriculture	6	4.5	2	4.9	8	4.6
Electrical engineering	49	37.1	2	4.9	51	29.5
Draughtsmanship	16	12.1	6	14.6	22	12.7
Industrial design	10	7.6	24	58.5	34	19.7
Micro computer	12	9.1	0	0.0	12	6.9
Applied mechanical electrical engineering	19	14.4	1	2.4	20	11.6
Personal services trades	0	0.0	2	4.9	2	1.2
Graphic designer	0	0.0	3	7.3	3	1.7
Non respondent	4	3.0	0	0.0	4	2.3
Total	**132**	**100.0**	**41**	**100.0**	**173**	**100.0**

** As per table 14.*

As to the callings most popular with male and female students females tend to opt for handicrafts, hospitality trades, personal service trades (hairdressing) and industrial design. The participation of female students in mechanical engineering or electrical engineering related callings is minimal. Likewise most female survey respondents participated in the personal service trades (hairdressing) and the industrial design callings respectively while the majority of male respondents participated in the mechanical engineering and electrical engineering callings. This confirms the gender stereotype that exists in the apprenticeship system (refer to tables 14 and 15).

Availability of sponsors

Apprenticeship is generally considered a beneficial form of training since it provides employers with a good supply of workers with recognisable skills as well as providing apprentices with exposure to real productive work and the acquisition of work related skills. Despite this recognition a decline is observed in several countries in the willingness of enterprises to offer training places for apprenticeships (Sellin 1994). This decline may be attributed to various reasons.

At present enterprises seem to be finding it cheaper to recruit skilled workers and employees directly from the labour market or out of technical schools or colleges. Husemann (1997) attributes this fact to general economic fluctuations that resulted into lower means available for VET to be spent by enterprises. Some argue that in times of recession, training is often the first item to be terminated. As a result companies would start relying on state subsidies to place and provide training to trainees (Cutajar 2002).

As to the high costs attributed to apprenticeship training evidence suggests that in general the net cost of such training for employers is quite large. Smits and Stromback (2001) note that in all countries examined, quantitative research reveals that only a small proportion of firms benefit from a zero or positive net cost in apprenticeship training. However variations exist between firms and industries. In industries such as the food industry apprentices would require little supervision while apprentices engaged by large industries would contribute very little to the company in the initial years. Moreover firms who are fortunate enough to get 'good' apprentices would benefit from a significant contribution after a relatively short time.

Similarly Saunders (2001) notes high costs related to apprenticeship by Australian firms. The author notes a study by Dockery et al. among 59 firms which states an average cost of $22000 over a four-year apprenticeship, with a particularly high net cost in year one shifting to a small net benefit by year four. The authors also note variations in costs between firms who found lower costs and higher benefits in food and hairdressing compared to metal, electrical and other traditional trade groups.

Apart from the costs attributed to apprenticeship, technological changes at the workplace may also be resulting in a low supply of apprenticeship places. Work processes today are becoming more specialised and highly skilled thus offering few possibilities for training in a wide

range of skills as is usually necessitated by apprenticeship. Skill levels of craft workers have been upgraded to technician level in order to cope with new technology (Husemann 1997). Companies are favouring training and training arrangements that can ultimately be integrated into the firm's total human resource system with the aim of providing training that matches internal requirements. This practice is generally attributed to narrow firm specific training, which considers apprenticeship training as rigid and lacking flexibility (Williams 1957).

In addition production processes are constantly shifting thus requiring an appropriate mix of skilled labour, including highly qualified individuals, who are capable to adapt to the new patterns of production and work organisation. Consequently the immediacy with which companies have to respond to such changes makes them less prone to invest and make decisions on a long-term basis as done by other companies in the past. Thus it has become harder for companies to predict which skills would be required in say three or four years' time making the apprenticeship system unsuitable to the needs and requirements of employers since it is based mainly on long term investment (Cutajar 2002).

Meanwhile new occupations are emerging, with further industrialisation and the development of the service industries that were not previously served by the apprenticeship system. As in the case of Britain, apprenticeships were generally the preserve of a limited number of traditional blue-collar occupations thus limiting the amount of employers that could benefit from such a system (Smits and Stromback 2001). In the Netherlands the inclusion of occupations in the apprenticeship system such as those relating to commerce and administration in the private services sector, led to an expansion of apprenticeship, which doubled the amount of contracts from 1983 to 1992 (Sellin 1994).

In spite of the general decline in apprenticeship places and the high net cost placed by employers on apprenticeship as suggested by quantitative evidence,

Chart 6: Companies' reasons for participation in apprenticeship schemes

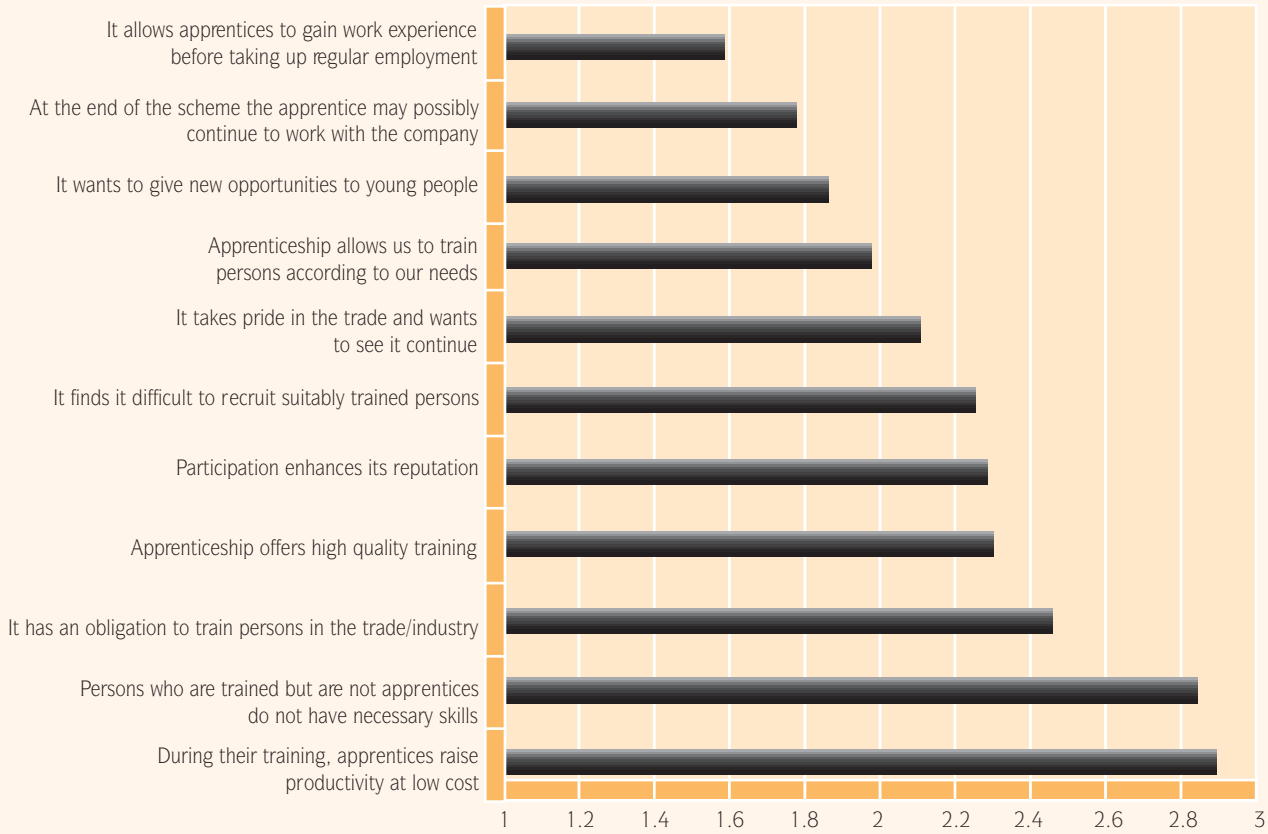
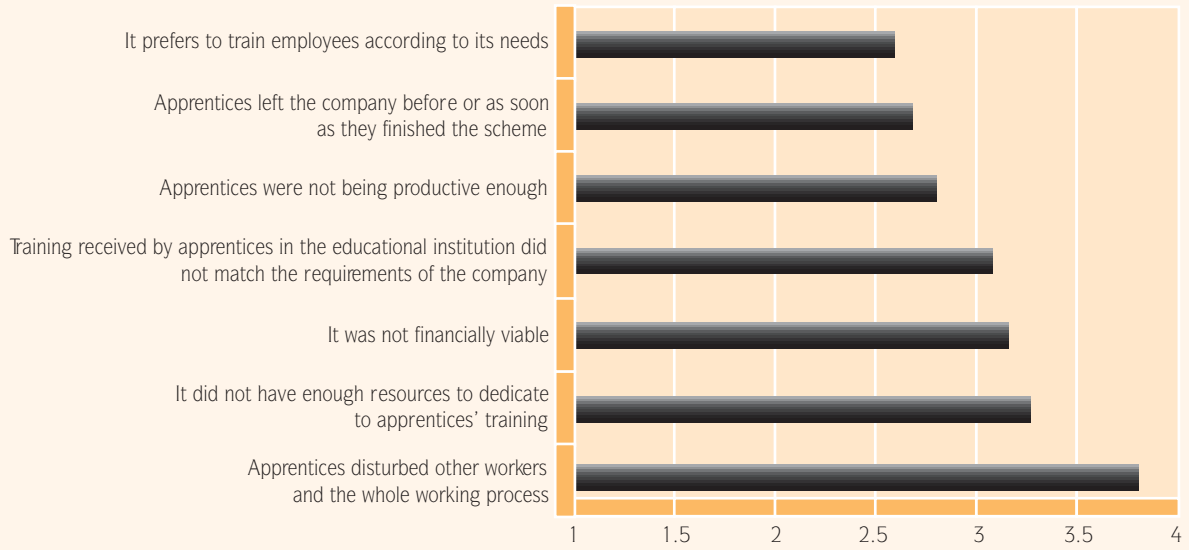


Chart 7: Companies' reasons for stopping participation in apprenticeship schemes



employers who do participate in apprenticeship still tend to value the system for its returns. As noted by Dockery et al. (in Smits and Stromback 2001), apart from considering as a net benefit the fact that after apprenticeship an apprentice may stay on with the company, employers also mentioned the fact that an apprentice may be trained according to the company's needs, that they wished to contribute to the supply of trade persons, that they wanted to get pure satisfaction in training 'quality tradespersons' and that they wanted to give young persons a break.

Employers participating in this study were asked to state their level of agreement with a number of statements pertaining to apprenticeship scheme participation. Employers seem to value highly the work experience gained by apprentices during apprenticeship and also the possibility of engaging apprentices with their company once they complete their training. Moreover, apprenticeship gives them the possibility to give young persons new opportunities (refer to chart 6).

Overall employers seem less prone to engage apprentices to increase their company's productivity since this was the statement to which they agreed with the least. However smaller companies tended to agree with this statement more than larger companies possibly because the contribution of an apprentice to the workplace is usually more felt by smaller companies than by larger companies as outlined above. Differences were also registered between companies engaging ESTS apprentices and companies engaging TAS apprentices. The former seem to value more the possibility of training apprentices in their company's trade while employers engaging apprentices in the TAS scheme tend to value more the high quality training being provided through apprenticeship. This difference may be tied to the kind of training on offer through the different schemes. ESTS tends to provide apprentices with training at crafts level while TAS focuses more on specialised training involving the latest technology.

A quarter of the companies (40) participating in the survey mentioned that they ceased from participating in apprenticeship schemes. Companies decided so mostly because they were either seeking more flexible methods of training that matched their company's requirements or because apprentices had left their company. The low level of productivity of apprentices also influenced employers in their decision to cease participating in apprenticeship schemes. Thus these findings tend to confirm the findings of other studies quoted above that a lower rate of return in the investment made by companies in apprenticeship training as well as a higher degree of flexibility at the workplace may influence companies in favouring other modes of training especially in-house training that is made to measure to the company's needs (refer to chart 7).

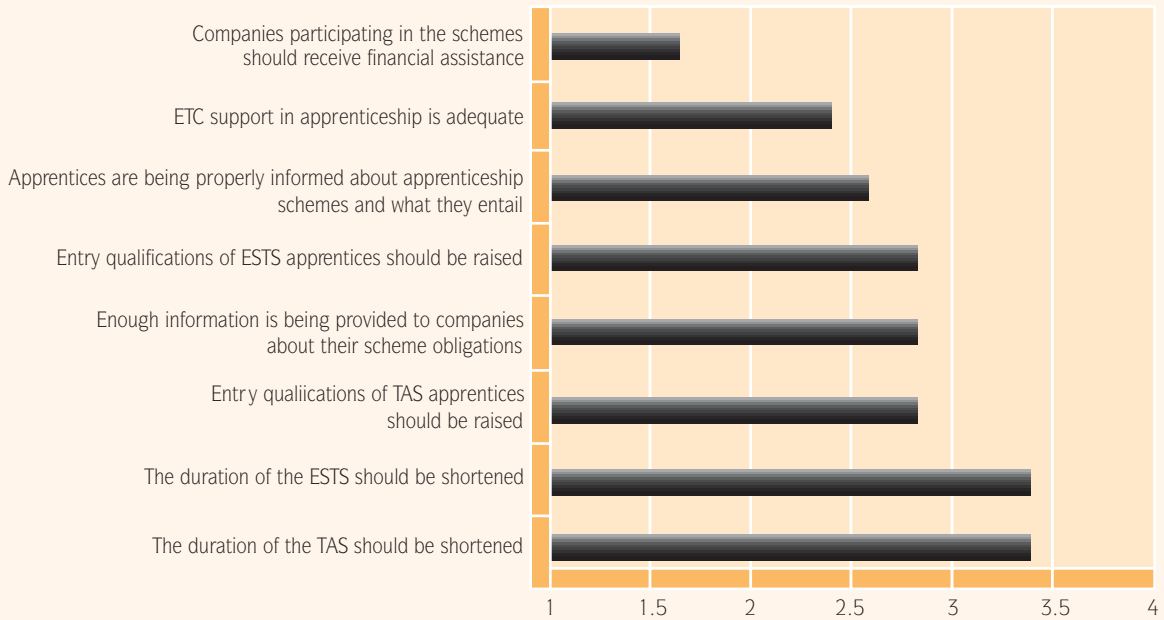
Table 16: Apprentices who did not complete the scheme and had no sponsor by region

Region	No Sponsor	Row %	Non Completers	Row %
Western	12	80.0	15	100.0
Southern Harbour	6	26.1	23	100.0
South Eastern	3	20.0	15	100.0
Northern Harbour	10	38.5	26	100.0
Northern	12	66.7	18	100.0
Gozo and Comino	4	57.1	7	100.0
Total	**47**	**45.2**	**104**	**100.0**

This study also sought to explore the main reasons why in general a number of apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship and in particular whether they succeed to find a sponsor. 47 respondents or 45% of non-completers stated that they had no sponsor with the absolute majority stating that they could not find one. Six respondents stated that they either had not enough time to find one or that they were not happy with the sponsor they had. One stated that he did not know about having to find a sponsor at all.

The proportion of ESTS apprentices who did not complete apprenticeship and had no sponsor was higher (58.0%) than that of TAS apprentices (33.3%) thus partly confirming the need by employers for more trained workers at technician level in general. Moreover, male non-completers were more likely not to find a sponsor than their female counterparts with 48.7% and 34.6% respectively. An analysis of this information by region reveals that the proportion of apprentices living at the Western and Northern region were more likely not to find a sponsor than apprentices living in other regions (refer to table 16). Apprentices from these regions may be experiencing particular difficulties in finding a sponsor which may include transport difficulties since most industrial areas tend to be situated in other parts of the island.

Chart 8: Companies' opinion on administration of apprenticeship



When given the opportunity to express their views about the apprenticeship system and how they think the ETC can enhance its service to apprentices, 16 respondents said that the Corporation should seek to find a sponsor for all those youths who apply for an apprenticeship while three respondents commented that the workplace where they were receiving on-the-job training was too far away from their residence.

Employers on their part seem to agree profusely with the view that companies participating in apprenticeship should receive financial assistance. As outlined above the net costs experienced by companies in apprenticeship training may cause companies not to participate in apprenticeship in the first place. Moreover they seem to regard themselves as less informed on scheme obligations than apprentices. ETC's support during apprenticeship is considered as adequate by most employers, however quite a number either did not position themselves or disagreed with the statement pertaining to ETC support. Employers do not seem to favour the raising of entry qualifications in particular those required for entry into the TAS scheme. They also are generally against the shortening of apprenticeship both for the ESTS and TAS schemes (refer to chart 8).

When asked for further suggestions that may enhance the administration of apprenticeship schemes seven employers commented that the length of apprenticeship, in particular the on-the-job training placement, should increase. Others mentioned the need to provide advice to companies and apprentices, the need to have better school to work links, that courses should also value conduct and attitude at work by apprentices and that there should be better supervision by the ETC during apprenticeship.

Integration of workplace and classroom

Learning through apprenticeship is usually considered by many as superior to full-time schooling followed by in-service training since it offers the opportunity to apprentices to learn through high levels of interaction with materials, teachers and fellow worker-learners. As noted by Mjelde (1993) interaction in the learning process, be it in full-time schooling or apprenticeship training, is today being considered as the most effective way of learning. Through interaction the learner and the "expert" carry out activities jointly in such a way that the learner gradually masters successively the difficult parts of the task until he/she would no longer require the assistance of the "expert". In order to achieve such learning methods, institutions involved in the students' training have to adopt their training systems accordingly.

This form of learning process is at its best in vocational education in general and apprenticeship in particular since the central aspect in such training is learning by doing through interaction. As Raizen (1994) notes, in her analysis of various research conducted on the different learning modes both in and outside school adopted by learners across various countries:

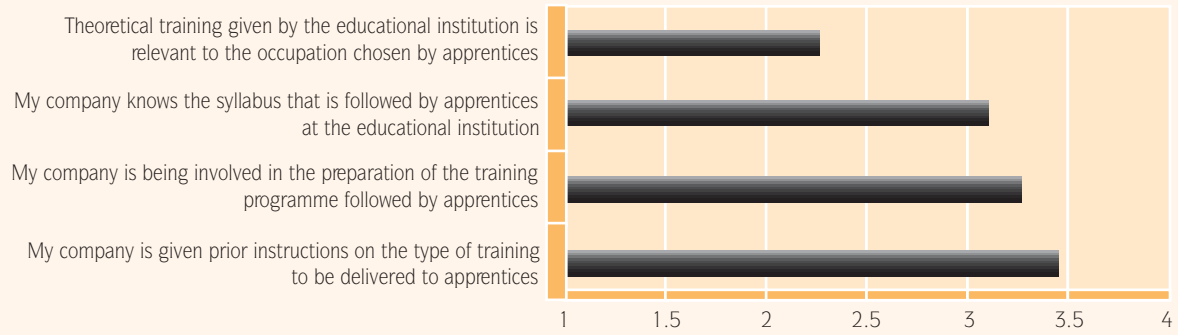
> ...learners ideally should participate in some combination of formal, school-based learning and work experience. The work experience needs to be well structured: it should be linked to an educational institution and expressly designed to provide situated learning and participation in an accomplished work group. (P. 98)

In apprenticeship apprentices have the opportunity to immediately test in practice what they have learnt in theory directly at the workplace through on-the-job training under close supervision by a mentor or supervisor. The different forms of communication and learning taking place in on the job training are different from those normally found in pure classroom work.

However in spite of the benefits in learning related to apprenticeship, research suggests that in reality there exists poor integration of the classroom and workplace. Grubb and Ryan (1999) note that little evidence is available on the benefits of apprenticeship as an ideal form of learning in pedagogical terms but other studies concerned with the direct implementation of apprenticeship point towards poor integration of the classroom and the workplace as a source of learning. Similarly in her study of apprenticeship in Norway, Mjelde (1993, 1997) found that apprentices did not seem to find any connection with what they were learning in the workplace and the practical/theoretical training they received at the apprenticeship school. They preferred learning at the workplace because through apprenticeship they could earn a wage, learn through practice and learn in an environment, which for them was more social and cooperative. Meanwhile Smith (2002) found that in Australia most employers participating in apprenticeships had little idea about the apprentices' progress at the educational establishment and did not offer opportunities to the apprentices to practise what they had learnt at school. On the other hand teachers were not generally familiar with what the young person was doing at work. Generally Raizen (1994) notes difficulties in creating linkages between schools and employer-based training by countries where the educational and employing establishments have diverse objectives.

A similar situation seems to exist in Malta. As noted by Cutajar (2002) off-the-job training in Malta has been

Chart 9: Employers' views on training received during apprenticeship



Average mean (1 strongly agree - 5 strongly disagree)

Table 17: Apprentices' views on both on-the-job and off-the-Job training *

Apprentices' Views	Number
Taħriġ aħjar u iżjed interessanti Better and more interesting training	30
Monitoring għandu jkun iżjed prattiku Monitoring should be more practical	18
Log Book – (mhux addattat – għandu jkun spjegat aktar) Log Book – (not adequate – has to be explained better)	16
L-apprendistat għandu jkun relatat mal-kors Apprenticeship has to be related with the course	13
L-ETC għandha żżomm kuntatt bejn l-apprendisti u l-isponsor The ETC should maintain contact between the apprentices and sponsor	8
Aktar prattika fi żmien il-kors More practical training during the course	7
Teachers għandhom jintbagħtu għal refresher courses Teachers should be given refresher courses	7
Aktar attenzjoni individwali More individual attention	6
Studenti għandhom jingħataw għodda addattata Students should be given appropriate tools	5
Aktar għajnuna lill-isponsors biex dawn jgħinu lill apprentisti More help to sponsors so that they can help apprentices better	5
Il-kors għandu jkun ta' teorija biss The course should involve theoretical training only	3
It-taħrig mhux qed isir kollu skond is-sillabu Training given is not all in line with the syllabus	2
Total	**120**

Table 18: Reasons for dissatisfaction with scheme by non completers *

Reasons	Total
The on-the-job training was inadequate	8
Conditions of work were unpleasant	7
The quality of the teaching was not adequate	6
The work experience was not relevant to the course	6
The course material was not relevant to the work done at the workplace	5
Remuneration was inadequate	5
Did not have a sponsor	2
Chose the wrong course	1
Place of work was too far away from residence	1
Total	**41**

** Respondents could cite more than one reason*

criticised as not being in line with present and future work requirements. The majority of programmes offered have been imported from foreign institutions with little or no consultation with employers and other social partners. Employers have on several occasions complained that they were not being involved in the development of training programmes and that usually off-the-job trainers decide themselves what to include in the training programmes. Meanwhile most employing establishments in Malta are small and as such are not in a position to provide structured training to apprentices. Resource and technology limitations result in poor training for apprentices who many times end up doing routine and repetitive tasks. As a result most apprentices are forced to change their employer and start searching for yet another employer with the hope of receiving better training.

Similar conclusions were attained through the findings of this study. Employers were asked a series of questions on the training provided to apprentices both at the vocational education institution and within their company. Most companies stated that they were not being involved in the preparation of the training programme followed by apprentices nor in the course work followed by apprentices at the vocational institution. Moreover they were not being given prior instructions on the type of training to be delivered to apprentices at the work place. However they tended to agree, albeit in a lean way, with the theoretical training being delivered at the vocational education institution and its relevance to the occupation chosen by apprentices (refer to chart 9).

Almost 63% of all employers participating in the survey mentioned having a person assigned the responsibility of overseeing the apprentices' training at the workplace. Only half of these stated that this person received training as a trainer.

Apprentices participating in the study also expressed their views about off-the-job and on-the-job training and the links between them. Table 17 includes a list of all the statements mentioned by respondents dealing with this subject. Generally responses varied from wanting more valid training at the workplace to improved assistance by the ETC and more up-to-date off-the-job training. They stated that training at the workplace should be of a higher quality and more related to the course content. Some respondents stated that this situation could be ameliorated through more help given to sponsors and more adequate training tools given to apprentices. On the other hand off-the-job training should be more in line with what is happening at the work place while more individual attention should be given in learning. Other statements dealt with practical issues that involve their monitoring and assessment throughout their apprenticeship such as the monitoring held by ETC officials who are responsible for their training throughout the apprenticeship period and the compilation of the logbook. They wish for more practical monitoring and clear explanations of the purpose and validity of the logbook. They also stated that the ETC should maintain contact between the apprentice and the sponsor. Most respondents seemed to value both the practical and theoretical parts of training since only three

respondents stated that there should be no practical training at all. Seven stated that they wanted more practical training throughout the course.

Meanwhile 34 non-completers stated that they were not satisfied with the scheme with more ESTS (36.0% of ESTS non-completers and 29.6% of TAS non-completers) and male (34.6% of male non-completers and 26.9% of female non-completers) students showing signs of dissatisfaction than their counterparts. The most cited reasons for such dissatisfaction were directly related to the training received at the workplace and working conditions experienced. Most stated that the training received was of bad quality or that it did not match off-the-job training. Others mentioned that the skills learnt off the job were not relevant to the kind of work they were being asked to do at the workplace (refer to table 18).

On a related note, Raizen (1994) lists some of the key conditions necessary for effective work-based training. These conditions may also be useful for Malta in terms of providing useful and better training to apprentices. The conditions may appeal to all those concerned with training to apprentices from the teachers based at the college, the ETC official responsible for assisting the apprentice throughout his training, and the owner of the company responsible for the apprentice's training at the workplace. Raizen notes that:

- Individuals responsible for training must be familiar with useful pedagogic techniques that help give appropriate coaching and engage trainees in acquiring the range of skills required and in appraisals of their performance.
- Individuals assigned training roles must be carefully selected taking into account both their work expertise and their pedagogic skills.
- Periodic training should be provided to trainers to ensure they keep up to date on new technological developments and organisational strategies.
- Supervisors and workers with training responsibilities should have their work acknowledged and given adequate time to build training responsibilities into their work schedules. They should also be recognised for good

Table 19: Respondents' views on working conditions in apprenticeship *

Apprentices' Views	Number
Għajnuna aktar lill-apprendisti u mhux lill-isponsors More help to apprentices and not to sponsors	33
Aktar superviżjoni fuq apprendisti (waqt il-work phase) More supervision of apprentices during the workphase	26
Abbuż fuq l-apprendisti mill-isponsors Abuse on apprentices by sponsors	12
Paga aħjar Better pay	9
L-istudenti għandhom jiġu stmati kollha l-istess (ma jkunx hemm preferenzi jew li tingħata stigma lil ċerti studenti) Students should be treated the same way (no preferences should be made between apprentices and certain apprentices should not be looked upon)	6
Ħafna mill-korsijiet jistgħu ikunu iqsar (eż. Sentejn flok erba snin) Most courses can be of a shorter duration (ex. Two years instead of four years)	5
Iżjed awareness fuq is-sigurta fuq il-post tax-xogħol More health and safety awareness at the workplace	1
Ġranet ta' xogħol ghandhom ikunu konsekuttivi Working days should succeed each other	1
Total	**93**

** Respondents could cite more than one reason*

performance in training as in other areas with training functions being included in performance appraisals.

- Work must be organised and include adequate time for mentoring and training even after initial skills have been learnt.
- Individuals and groups with training functions must be supported in developing effective learning experiences at the work site. With the help of adequate support they could then give prominence to training instead of considering it as a by-product of the work that has to be done. (Pp.105)

Working conditions at the workplace

In addition to better training, apprentices also expressed their concern regarding the working conditions that they experienced at the workplace whilst an apprentice. Seven non-completers stated that generally their working conditions were not good while another five mentioned that the apprentice pay was not adequate (refer to table 18). Meanwhile when all respondents were asked for suggestions on how the ETC could better the apprenticeship system, quite a substantial number referred to working conditions on-the-job and how these could be enhanced. Most stated that apprentices should receive more help than sponsors and that there should be more direct supervision of apprentices at the workplace. Twelve mentioned apprentices being taken advantage of by their sponsors. Another nine stated that the apprentices' pay should be higher. The rest mentioned discrimination between apprentices and stressed that all apprentices should be treated equally, that most courses can be of a shorter duration, that there should be more health and safety awareness at the workplace and that consecutive working days should be introduced (refer to table 19).

Similar experiences by apprentices were recorded in other studies conducted abroad (Mjelde 1993 and 1997; Harris et al. 2001; Vickerstaff 2003). Harris et al. (2001) in their study of apprenticeship and traineeship in Australia and the factors influencing non-completion by apprentices and trainees note that apprentices, trainees and their teachers and trainers highlighted the impact of factors such as poor pay and work conditions. All parties believed that retention of apprentices by their sponsors was affected negatively by work related conditions such as low wages, harassment at work and a work environment that offered only routine and 'boring' work.

Similarly Mjelde (1993; 1997) describes incidences of exploitation, poor training, routine labour and stress experienced by Norwegian apprentices. In her study of 1,617 apprentices she found out that apprentices experienced bad training conditions with their training plan not being followed at all. There were unclear issues of responsibility at the workplace and apprentices were unsure of their requirements for graduation and the journeyman's exam. Meanwhile some employers appeared to regard apprentices as a source of cheap labour and were not taking their teaching responsibilities seriously. Experiences cited by apprentices included too much work for a bad pay, doing routine and boring work, no time for good training, no supervision and no direct following of the training plan.

Apprentices however were ready to endure such treatment knowing that the apprenticeship contract was tied to a time span. Apprentices tended to adopt the attitude that they have to accept the situation as others before them had done since there was no way of changing the situation. Mjelde (1993; 1997) quotes the example of an apprentice in hairdressing who liked her master and felt she was learning but in her own words:

> "...I have not had a day off except for vacation time. I have a minimum wage, never any specific time for meals. The working quarters are poor and they haven't been renovated for fifteen years, an important factor in a beauty parlour. But as I already said, I am learning the trade in any case." (P. 93)

Apprentices frequenting other courses such as cooks, masons, graphics students and copper and tinsmith apprentices cited similar experiences.

Moreover almost all apprentices (89%) in Mjelde's survey still favoured apprenticeship in spite of the difficulties and negative experiences. Among those who preferred apprenticeship, the reasons varied from being tired of school, liking to earn money, liking the atmosphere at work, together with a combination of these factors. Apprentices in general felt useful, freer and part of the adult world.

On a similar note 82%t of apprentices participating in this survey stated that they would recommend apprenticeship to a close friend. TAS students (87.9%) were more ready to recommend apprenticeship than ESTS students (76.8%). This result may be partly attributed to ESTS apprentices finding it more difficult to get a sponsor than TAS apprentices and tighter working conditions at crafts level in general such as smaller workplaces, more direct contact with the employer, and less advanced job materials, tools and technological devices. Apprentices who had no sponsor were less ready to recommend apprenticeship to a close friend than other apprentices (78.7% and 87.7%

respectively). Similar responses were obtained when checking the information for any gender differences.

Completion of schemes

The survey also sought to gather information on completion of schemes by apprentices and explore the factors that underlie the process of completion. As outlined by Harris et al. (2001) in their study of retention of apprentices and subsequent completion of traineeships and apprenticeships, various factors influence such a process. They identify six types of conditions that increase the likelihood of apprentices and trainees to complete the schemes: (1) personal factors such as interest in the occupation, personal maturity and support from their families; (2) a certain amount of value placed on the qualification and the occupation in question by industry and the labour market in general; (3) support available to students and apprentices in case of special circumstances such as closure of the workplace or personal incidents such as injuries; (4) good conditions at the workplace that include support by work colleagues and high level training; (5) integrated training that links both skills learnt at the workplace and in the classroom and which is compatible with other levels of qualifications providing a career or learning pathway; and finally (6) apprenticeship and traineeship has to be valued by all parties concerned with apprentices receiving ongoing support over the time they are in training. As Harris et al. conclude:

> Retention is the collective responsibility of all parties involved in vocational education and training. The commitment to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship does not reside solely within the individual apprentice or trainee. Retention is enhanced by institutional processes that are responsive, learner-centred and acknowledge the unique needs and circumstances of apprentices and trainees and the contexts in which they live and work. Retention is one of the products of quality partnerships between apprentices/ trainees, their employer(s) and the registered training organisations with whom they work. (P. 6)

Twenty eight percent of apprentices participating in the survey stated that they did not complete the scheme. Interestingly more TAS apprentices (31.2%) did not complete the scheme than ESTS apprentices (25.8%). Almost the same proportion of males (28.4%) and females (28.3%) did not complete the scheme. Apprentices living in particular regions such as the Northern (39.1%) and Western (31.3%) regions together with Gozo and Comino (29.2%) seem to be experiencing higher difficulties in scheme completion than other regions. Most apprentices tend to abandon the scheme in their second (43.3%) or first year (39.4%) of study while the rest terminate the scheme in their third (15.4%) or fourth year (1.9%).

As already pointed out in other sections of this report almost half of all non-completers (45.2%) had no sponsor with the proportion of ESTS apprentices without any sponsor (58.0%) being higher than that of TAS apprentices (33.3%). When asked as to whether they were dissatisfied with the apprenticeship scheme almost one third of all non-completers (32.3%) showed signs of dissatisfaction. The main reasons were dissatisfaction with the quality of training received at the workplace followed by bad conditions at work and inadequate training offered at the

Chart 10: Factors influencing non-completers in deciding to abandon the apprenticeship scheme

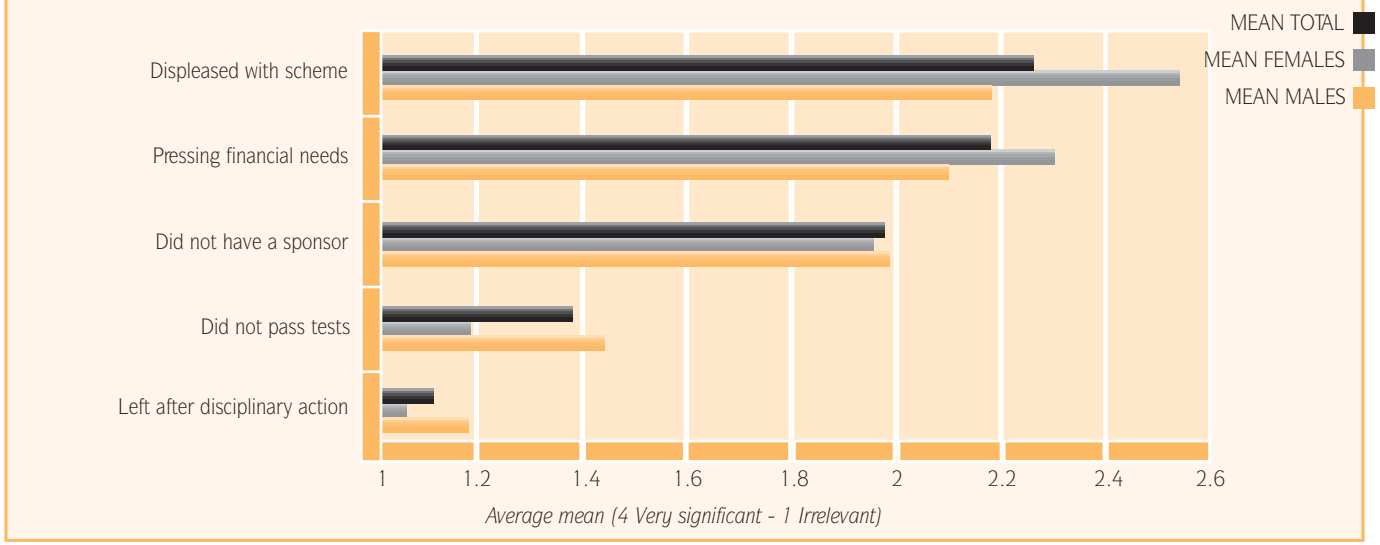


Table 20: Employers' views on reasons for non-completion by apprentices

Factors	Average Mean*
They were not good at work (lack of interest, communication problems, lack of desire to learn etc...)	2.36
They found out that they made the wrong choice of occupation	2.75
There was a mismatch between the training received at the educational institution and the work that they were being asked to do	3.38
Apprentices felt they were doing repetitive tasks	3.59
Apprentices had personal / family circumstances that prevented them from continuing to work with the company (had an accident; they wanted to marry etc...)	3.62
Apprentices wanted better conditions of work such as breaks, less working hours, less responsibility at work etc...	3.69
Apprentices felt that they were doing more work than was appropriate for their status of apprentice	3.69
They did not receive enough assistance from ETC representatives	3.71
They felt that they were not receiving individual attention at the workplace	3.81
Apprentices expected better treatment by their colleagues at the place of work	4.00
Apprentices felt they were not receiving good training at the workplace	4.00
The company did not want to participate in the scheme anymore	4.17
The company was not faring well	4.20

** Average mean refers to a five-point scale with one meaning strongly agree and five meaning strongly disagree.*

training institution. Thus workplace and training conditions including provision of sponsor seem to have an influence on the degree of completion by apprentices in general.

Furthermore a high rate of non-completers (62.5%) stated that they abandoned the scheme to seek employment. This decision may be attributed to the youths' keenness to enter into the labour market. However this decision may not be solely attributed to the individual but also to social factors that may influence the young person in deciding as to whether s/he should continue further training on completion of compulsory schooling. As noted by Mjelde (1993) the social and educational background of apprentices may influence their decision as to whether they continue training or enter directly into the labour market. She found that most apprentices in her study were not keen on learning at school and were more attracted to training that gave them the opportunity to experience the workplace and finally earn a pay. The fact that most apprentices, including participants of this study, tend to come from lower social class backgrounds and have corresponding lower levels of education may impinge on their decision as to whether they complete an apprenticeship or not.

Consequently when asked how much particular factors influenced their decision to abandon the apprenticeship scheme, the reasons most preferred by non-completers were dissatisfaction with scheme followed by pressing financial needs (refer to chart 10). This result confirms the contentions presented previously which relate scheme non-completion to both workplace and training conditions including availability of sponsor and the social background of the apprentices themselves. An analysis of responses by gender reveals that males tend to be influenced more by failure in scheme examinations and disciplinary action than females. 13 respondents mentioned other reasons, which influenced their decision to abandon the scheme. These reasons mainly relate to special circumstances experienced by apprentices during the scheme. Four stated that they were still not sure what decision they should take regarding their choice of career; another four mentioned health reasons while two mentioned that they had a traffic accident. Other reasons included wanting to continue studying on a full-time basis (2 respondents) and marriage (1 respondent).

Table 21: Employment status of apprentices by gender

Type of employment status	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Full-time employee (31 hours or more)	227	82.6	63	68.5	290	79.0
Part-time employee (between 1hr and 30 hrs)	2	0.7	3	3.2	5	1.4
Both full-time and part-time employee	9	3.3	2	2.2	11	3.0
Works more than one part-time job	1	0.4	1	1.1	2	0.5
Self-employed with employees	4	1.4	2	2.2	6	1.6
Self-employed without employees	9	3.3	4	4.3	13	3.5
Full-time student	8	2.9	1	1.1	9	2.5
Part-time student	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Full-time student and works part-time	4	1.4	1	1.1	5	1.4
Registered unemployed	7	2.5	0	0.0	7	1.9
Unemployed not registering	3	1.1	1	1.1	4	1.1
Takes care of home and family	0	0.0	14	15.2	14	3.8
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

Similarly when asked why do they think apprentices left their firm before completing the apprenticeship scheme most employers agreed with those reasons referring either to the apprentices' poor performance at work or the apprentices' wrong choice of occupation. Employers engaging apprentices under the ESTS scheme and smaller firms tended to agree with these statements more than other firms. Most employers disagreed with other statements mostly referring to working conditions, type of training received or the company's state of business (refer to table 20). One third of all companies participating in the survey stated that they had apprentices who left their firm before completing the apprenticeship schemes.

Finally 14.4% of non-completers (15 respondents) stated that they had failed their apprenticeship examinations. The majority of these respondents were male (86.7%) and had enrolled in a TAS apprenticeship scheme (73.3%). The latter finding may be one of the reasons why a higher number of TAS students do not complete their apprenticeship scheme. It seems that TAS apprentices are finding their examinations, in particular those pertaining to technical training, more difficult than their counterparts. In fact the majority failed in the course tests. Reasons for failing were varied but mainly apprentices referred either to the material being too difficult or inadequate preparation by their trainer at the off-the-job training establishment.

These findings tend to confirm the findings of other studies referred to above stating mainly that the reasons for non-completion of schemes by apprentices are various and multi-faceted. The type of training provided to apprentices, working conditions and personal factors of apprentices all contribute towards scheme completion or non-completion.

Table 22: Unemployment among apprentices

Category	Total	Number	Period of Unemployment in Months				
			3	6	12	30	60
Completers	263	92	0.59	0.46	0.28	0.05	0.02
Non-completers	104	41	0.80	0.56	0.27	0.07	0.02
TAS apprentices	173	59	0.69	0.39	0.25	0.00	0.00
ESTS apprentices	194	74	0.62	0.51	0.30	0.11	0.04
Males	275	105	0.68	0.47	0.28	0.07	0.03
Females	92	28	0.57	0.57	0.29	0.04	0.00

Table 23: Occupation of apprentices by gender

Type of occupation	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Armed forces	7	2.6	0	0.0	7	1.9
Legislators, senior officials and managers	13	4.7	1	1.1	14	3.8
Professionals	14	5.1	3	3.3	17	4.6
Technicians and associate professionals	87	31.6	12	13.0	99	27.0
Clerks	15	5.4	14	15.2	29	7.9
Service workers and shop and sales workers	41	14.9	34	37.0	75	20.4
Skilled agriculture and fishery workers	4	1.4	0	0.0	4	1.1
Craft and related trades workers	44	16.0	4	4.3	48	13.1
Plant and machine operators	27	9.8	4	4.3	31	8.5
Elementary occupations	7	2.6	3	3.3	10	2.7
Housewife / taking care of house and family	0	0.0	14	15.2	14	3.8
Student	7	2.6	2	2.2	9	2.4
Unemployed	9	3.3	1	1.1	10	2.7
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

Table 24: Economic sector of apprentices by gender

Economic sector	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
Agriculture, hunting an forestry	5	1.8	1	1.1	6	1.6
Fishing	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Mining and quarrying	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Manufacturing	63	22.9	9	9.8	72	19.6
Electricity, gas and water supply	29	10.5	2	2.2	31	8.5
Construction	21	7.6	4	4.3	25	6.8
Wholesale and retail trade, repairs	45	16.4	5	5.4	50	13.6
Hotels and restaurants	19	6.9	5	5.4	24	6.5
Transport storage and communication	36	13.1	3	3.3	39	10.6
Financial intermediation	6	2.2	1	1.1	7	1.9
Real estate, renting and business activities	0	0.0	2	2.2	2	0.5
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	16	5.8	2	2.2	18	5.0
Education	4	1.5	6	6.5	10	2.7
Health and social work	4	1.5	2	2.2	6	1.6
Other community, social and personal service activities	13	4.7	34	37.0	47	12.8
Not applicable *	13	4.7	16	17.4	29	8.0
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

** Five respondents who previously declared that they are out of employment mentioned that they are working in a particular sector.*

Moreover employers and apprentices seem to have different views on why apprentices tend not to complete their apprenticeship. A valuable approach would be to deal with both parties and try to bridge their different interests.

Employment effects

Employment prospects of apprentices on completion of their apprenticeship are usually considered as positive and include low levels of unemployment. Various studies conducted across different countries, such as France and Germany, usually point towards superior employment outcomes in the early working lives of apprentices. Apprentices are employed in more stable jobs and experience unemployment less than other youths with different or no qualifications. In France for example an analysis of the gross outcomes of different French programmes revealed that jobs found by apprentices on completion of an apprenticeship proved more stable than those found by graduates of full-time vocational secondary education (Grubb and Ryan 1999).

Generally positive employment outcomes among all apprentices have also been registered by this survey. Most respondents, including both completers and non-completers, are presently engaged in full-time employment (79.0%) or self-employment (5.1%) (refer to table 21). The number of females in employment is lower than that of males mainly due to their decision to opt out of the labour market because of family responsibilities. Only eleven respondents stated that they were seeking employment. Most apprentices are employed as technicians and associate professionals (27.0%) followed by service workers and shop and sales workers (20.4%) and craft and related trades workers (13.1%). The majority of males are employed as technicians while most females are employed as service workers and shop and sales workers (refer to table 23). The sector that employs most apprentices is the manufacturing sector (19.6%) followed by wholesale, retail trade and repairs (13.6%) and the other community, social and personal services activities sector (12.8%). As expected most females are employed in the last sector since most of them had chosen the personal services apprenticeship and are mostly employed as hairdressers (refer to table 24).

Less than half of all respondents (36.2%) stated that they had experienced periods of unemployment in their careers (refer to table 22). Unemployment spells experienced by respondents usually lasted less than one year. However males, scheme non-completers and ESTS apprentices tend to experience periods of unemployment more than their respective counterparts. Correspondingly their unemployment spells are also longer.

Another aspect influencing the job prospects of apprentices is the degree of retention of apprentices by the training firm after scheme completion. Although the sponsoring organisation may not be obliged to retain apprentices on completion of apprenticeship, this may present itself as a necessary condition for a training firm to recover a net cost during the training period (Smits and Stromback 2001). In fact most training firms across various countries tend to retain a considerable number of apprentices on completion with the proportion of firms laying off apprentices residing between 10 to 20%. Reasons for job moves may vary from the training firm itself that lays off apprentices which it does not want or require, the apprentices who wish to seek for better career opportunities, those who discover that they lack aptitude in the training occupation and thus decide to change occupation altogether, and those who leave because they simply want to change or pursue other opportunities.

Table 25: Reasons cited by employers for offering employment to apprentices once they finish their apprenticeship

Reasons	Number*
Usual company procedure	32
Apprentices tend to be good on the job and reliable	19
Good quality training received by apprentices	15
To have a return on the time and investment invested in apprentices' training	12
To provide further opportunities to apprentices	4
Apprentices are trained in specific fields	2
Apprentices become part of the work team	2
Apprentices are trained according to company needs	1
Total	**87**

** Employers could cite more than one reason*

Similarly 71.9%of employers participating in this survey stated that they offer employment to apprentices trained with their company as soon as they finish their apprenticeship. The reasons most cited by employers for offering employment were that it was a usual company procedure to offer employment to apprentices as soon as they finish their studies and that in this way they could have a return on the amount of time and resources invested in the apprentices' training. Others mentioned the good quality training received by apprentices, the apprentices' reliability and that they preferred employing apprentices to provide them with new opportunities. Employers who were less keen to offer employment to apprentices once they finish their studies stated that it very much depended on the company's requirements or on the apprentice's performance on his/her job (refer to table 25).

However this observation tends to mask important variations between firms of different sizes and sectors. Company's employing less than 10 employees were less prone to offer employment to apprentices as soon as they finish their apprenticeship. Likewise in Germany, for example, apprentices that are trained in large and medium-sized enterprises have a greater chance of being retained by their training firms than those trained in small firms. Small firms, mainly those operating in the crafts sector, retain just over half of their apprentices while the largest firms retain almost all apprentices. Subsequently in Australia a division in the retention of apprentices by their training firms exists between those companies offering better training and those having low skill requirements. Where skill requirements are low apprentices are not retained or they leave on their own accord. Thus firms with higher skill requirements providing more training and incurring higher net costs retain a significant proportion of apprentices for quite some time. The expected retention period is usually that of five years (Smits and Stromback 2001).

Correspondingly only a quarter (25.6%) of apprentices who claimed to have had a sponsor stated that they were still employed with their sponsor at the time of the study. Out of these respondents, five had not completed their apprenticeship scheme but were still retained by their sponsor. TAS (75.8%) and female (78.5%) apprentices tend to leave their sponsor more than ESTS (71.3%) and male (71.8%) respondents respectively. This finding seems to reveal a different pattern from that found in other countries where apprentices enrolling in craft-related apprenticeships are less retained by their sponsors than other apprentices. When asked why they stopped working with their sponsor most survey respondents cited that they wanted to seek another job (48.1 %); the next largest group were those who left against their will (33.6%). More TAS apprentices (54.3%) answered that they wanted to seek alternative employment than ESTS students (42.0%) while more ESTS students (39.5%) answered that they left their sponsor against their will than TAS apprentices (27.6%). It seems that TAS apprentices were seeking better career opportunities while ESTS students had lower career expectations and were happy to remain with their training firm. In fact those apprentices who wanted to change their job answered that they mostly left their training firm because they wanted a better pay followed by a more interesting job and a better grade or position in the company. Generally those apprentices who left their training firm to seek another job stated that it was not difficult for them to find alternative employment. Meanwhile most apprentices who left their training firm against their will stated that either their contract was not renewed (45.6%) or that they were made redundant (21.5%).

A smaller percentage stated that they left their sponsor to open a business (7.6%) or to continue with their studies (7.1%). All respondents except one are still running their business. Most opened a business in hairdressing (6

Table 26: Type of training offered by employers to newly recruited apprentices

Type of Training	Number*
On-the-job training related to job	27
Further training not specified	26
Off-the-job training related to job	24
Training in soft skills	9
Technical training overseas	7
Total	**93**

** Employers could cite more than one option*

Table 27: Type of training given to ESTS apprentices by training firm after apprenticeship by course

Calling	Training
Mechanical engineering and allied trades	Computer, welding, mechanical fitter, mechanic, health and safety, spray painting, VRVS (air-conditioning), air-condition installation.
Wood working trades	Machines, sales.
Electrical engineering trades	Management course, electrical fitter, art.
Handicrafts	Sales, quality control, on the job safety, operating system.
Hospitality trades	Patissier, on the job safety.
Personal services trades	Hairdressing seminars, time management.
Common Core Technology	Mechanic
Graphic designer	Art
Tailoring	Machines

Table 28: Type of training given to TAS apprentices by training firm after apprenticeship by course

Calling	Training
Mechanical engineering	Machines, mastering technician, polymers engineering, management course, VRVS (air-conditioning), air-condition installation.
Agriculture	Computer, diploma agriculture, modern boiler, farm management.
Electrical engineering	Systems of knowledge, computer, technicians (signs and light), CNC mechanic programmer, servicing and maintenance of medical equipment.
Draughtsmanship	Computer, land surveyor, air-condition installation.
Industrial design	Computer
Micro computer	Computer, operating system, customer care services, mastering technician, ACAD.
Applied Mechanical Electrical Engineering	Machines, mechanic.

Chart 11: Employers' views on apprentices and academically qualified individuals

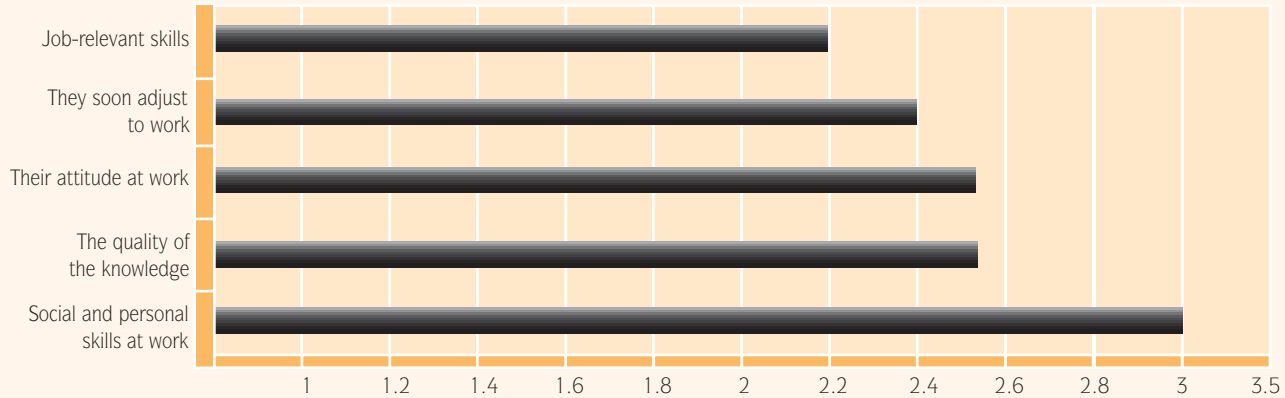


Table 29: Survival in the first employment spell after apprenticeship among completers

Category	Total	Months				
		3	6	12	30	60
All completers	263	0.93	0.79	0.68	0.44	0.25
Stayers	125	0.97	0.80	0.67	0.46	0.25
Movers	129	0.96	0.84	0.74	0.48	0.27

** Nine respondents did not state whether they stayed with their training firm or moved to another job*

respondents), mechanic services (2 respondents), catering (2 respondents), computer services (2 respondents) and air condition repairing or electricians (2 respondents). Another two respondents mentioned tile laying and the running of a petrol / diesel station. Interestingly six out of the 18 respondents were scheme non-completers. The low level of apprentices who opened up a business seems to reflect a situation where generally apprentices are not being encouraged to consider self-employment once they complete apprenticeship.

Meanwhile most respondents who left their sponsor to continue with their studies continued studying at a degree level (8 respondents) followed by those studying A level subjects (6 respondents) and diplomas (4 respondents). Similar to students taking up the entrepreneurship route, apprentices who wish to continue furthering their studies, in particular those wishing to progress to diploma or degree level of education, are still very much on the low side. It seems that students following apprenticeship training and vocational education and training in general are either themselves not aspiring to further their training or they are not finding the necessary support to continue with their studies. This situation may also be due to the fact that locally vocational qualifications are not as yet recognised for entry to the University. Such a situation is also present in other countries where vocational education and training in general exhibit blockages to higher-level

Chart 12: Job mobility of apprentices by gender

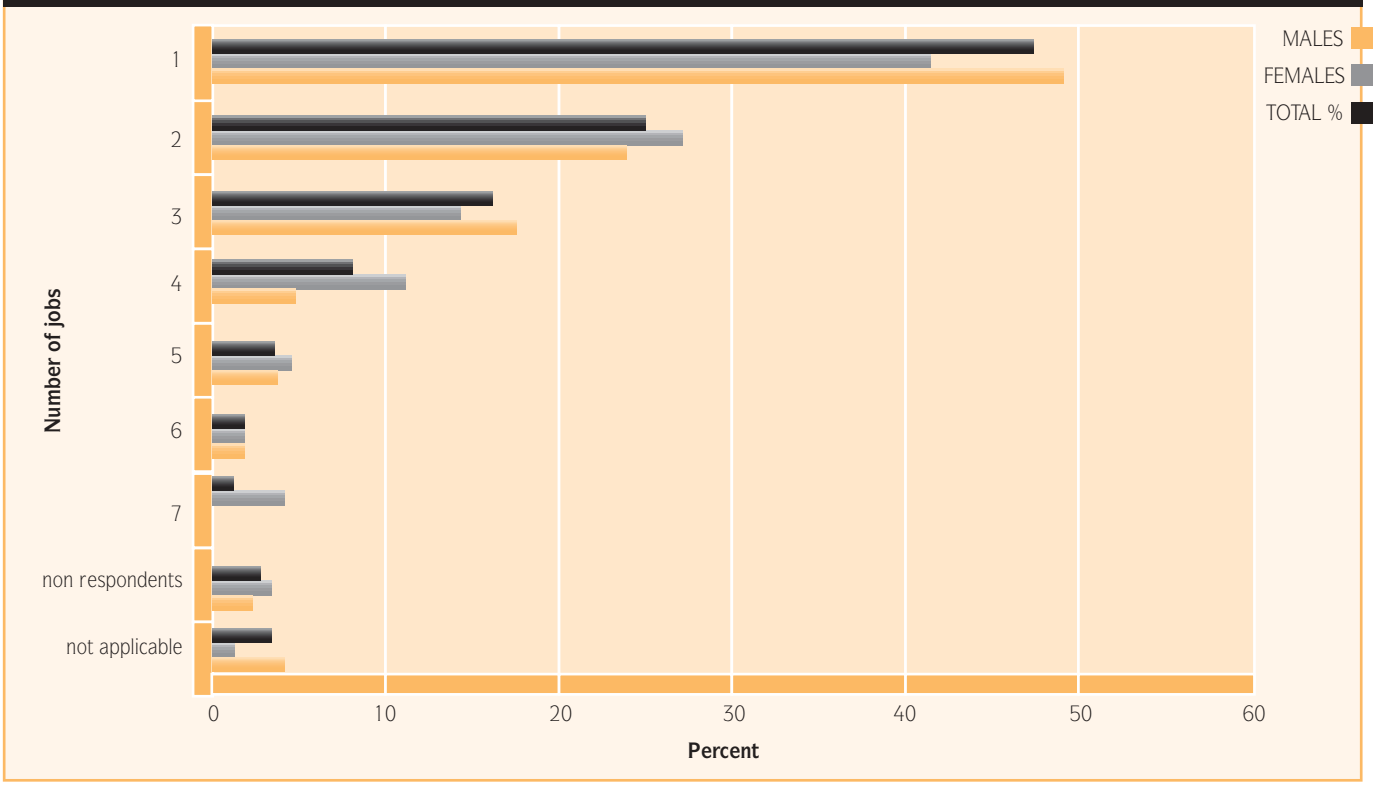
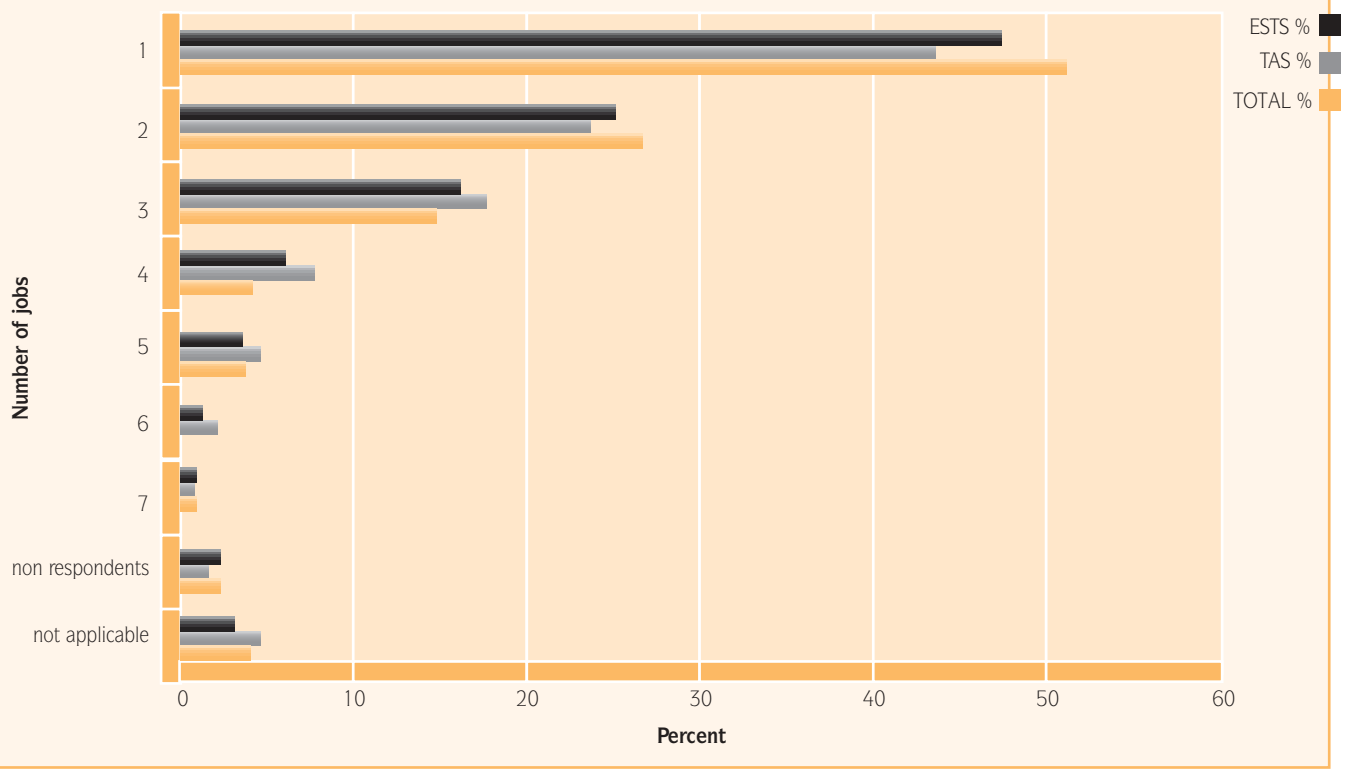


Chart 13: Job mobility of apprentices by apprenticeship scheme



technical or academic courses. As noted by Drake (1994) such a situation is being reformed in countries such as the United Kingdom where a credit system was being introduced by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications that allows for the transferability of credits between the vocational qualifications structure and the school-based academic qualifications.

On a similar note both employers and apprentices were asked whether they offered or received training on completion of apprenticeship respectively. One fifth of all apprentices who had a sponsor (20.9%) answered in the affirmative while almost one third of all employers (61.9%) stated that they offered further training to apprentices employed with their firm. Training mentioned by employers was mainly in-house training directly related to the job followed by unspecified further training, off-the-job training related to the job of the apprentice, training in soft skills and technical training overseas (refer to table 26). Training mentioned by apprentices was mainly in-house training or training leading to a certificate of attendance. Only eight respondents were offered training at a higher level such as training at diploma level. These respondents were mainly TAS students. Sixteen respondents had also the

Table 30: Occupational mobility among completers

Category	Total	Number	Stayed in skilled occupation	Moved to another skilled occupation	Moved to an elementary occupation	Non respondents
All completers	263	242	0.63	0.33	0.01	0.03
Males	197	185	0.64	0.32	0.02	0.02
Females	66	57	0.60	0.37	0.00	0.03
ESTS Apprentices	144	130	0.60	0.36	0.02	0.02
TAS Apprentices	119	112	0.66	0.30	0.00	0.04

Table 31: Occupational mobility among ESTS completers by calling

ESTS Calling	Number	Stayed in skilled occupation	Moved to another skilled occupation	Moved to an elementary occupation
Mechanical engineering and allied trades	45	28	17	0
Wood working trades	10	6	4	0
Electrical engineering trades	21	13	7	1
Handicrafts	4	1	2	1
Hospitality trades	6	4	1	1
Agricultural trades	1	0	1	0
Building trades	11	3	8	0
Personal services trades	22	20	2	0
Common Core Technology	3	1	2	0
Graphic designer	1	0	1	0
Printing trade	2	2	0	0
Tailoring	1	0	1	0
Industrial design	1	0	1	0
Non respondent	2	0	0	0
Total	**130**	**78**	**47**	**3**

opportunity to train abroad. Training offered was generally related to the occupation of the apprentice, which in some cases also introduced the apprentice to new machinery utilised in the company. However a considerable number of apprentices mentioned training which did not relate directly to one's occupation such as training in computers, management courses, customer care, sales and health and safety at the workplace (refer to tables 27 and 28). As also noted by Drake (1994) the demand for soft skills is on the increase. Companies operating in various sectors

Table 32: Occupational mobility among TAS completers by calling

Calling	Number	Stayed in skilled occupation	Moved to another skilled occupation	Moved to an elementary occupation
Mechanical engineering	11	8	3	0
Agriculture	5	2	3	0
Electrical engineering	31	27	4	0
Draughtsmanship	19	13	6	0
Industrial design	21	7	14	0
Micro computer	10	10	0	0
Applied Mechanical Electrical Engineering	8	4	4	0
Personal services trades	2	2	0	0
Graphic designer	1	1	0	0
Non Respondent	4	0	0	0
Total	**112**	**74**	**34**	**0**

Table 33: Gross monthly income of all apprentices by gender						
LM	Males	Males %	Females	Females %	Total	%
40-199	15	5.5	1	1.1	16	4.4
200-299	30	10.9	24	26.1	54	14.7
300-399	95	34.5	23	25.0	118	32.2
400-499	64	23.3	13	14.1	77	21.0
500-599	26	9.5	2	2.2	28	7.6
600-699	8	2.9	2	2.2	10	2.7
700-799	2	0.7	0	0.0	2	0.5
1000-1500	2	0.7	0	0.0	2	0.5
Not applicable or don't know	33	12.0	27	29.3	60	16.3
Total	**275**	**100.0**	**92**	**100.0**	**367**	**100.0**

including manufacturing companies are increasingly utilising skills such as computer literacy, customer care and marketing in their day-to-day operations.

Consequently only 35.6% of companies stated that they ask for the Journeyman's certificate when recruiting new employees. Most stated that the fact that apprentices may have received training from other companies does not present any difficulties for their firm when recruiting new employees. They also stated that the training received by apprentices with their firm should not present them with particular difficulties when searching for employment with other companies. Companies considered apprentices as better than academically qualified employees on all job-

Table 34: Average gross annual salary for employees by main occupation in March 2003						
Occupational Group	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female			
	No	Average Lm	No	Average Lm	No	Average Lm
Armed forces	1,310*	4,964.00*	-	-	1,310*	4,964.00*
Legislators, senior officials and managers	6,946	9,090.61	1,805*	7,280.84*	8,751	8,717.32
Professionals	6,777	6,926.72	6,360	6,003.36	13,137	6,479.69
Technicians and associate professionals	11,993	5,976.90	7,339	4,951.45	19,332	5,587.61
Clerks	5,524	4,990.33	10,150	4,124.52	15,674	4,429.66
Service workers and shop and sales workers	12,012	4,479.62	6,571	3,307.71	18,583	4,065.23
Skilled agriculture and fishery workers	806*	4,041.84*	-	-	806*	4,041.84*
Craft and related trades workers	15,035	4,638.61	281*	3,588.64*	15,316	4,619.34
Plant and machine operators	9,769	4,539.89	5,516	3,795.79	15,285	4,271.36
Elementary occupations	14,823	4,184.00	5,000	3,132.85	19,823	3,918.86
Total	**84,995**	**5,282.83**	**43,022**	**4,390.10**	**128,017**	**4,982.82**

Source: Labour Force Survey, March 2003

**under-represented*

Table 35: Average gross annual salary classified by educational level in March 2003

Highest Education Level	Count	Average Annual Salary
No Schooling	1,019*	4,190.21*
Primary	20,828	4,314.13
Secondary (General)	56,135	4,459.34
Secondary (Vocational)	10,738	4,998.71
Post-secondary (General)	12,771	5,365.02
Post secondary (Vocational)	8,126	5,420.18
Diploma issued by a University	6,005	6,073.37
First Degree	9,606	7,097.21
Masters & PhD	2,707	8,248.00
Special schools for persons with disability	82*	2,762.00*
Total	**12,8017**	**4,982.82**

Source: Labour Force Survey, March 2003 ** under-represented*

related aspects mentioned in the questionnaire. Apprentices scored highly in the job relevant skills held by apprentices while they scored the least in the social and personal skills aspect (refer to chart 11).

Meanwhile when looking beyond the first job, very few apprentices stay with their training firm for the rest of their working life. This pattern is similar to the job mobility pattern of young people, which usually comprises a lot of movement between jobs, different occupations, periods of unemployment and other activities. As Smith and Stromback outline in their analysis of apprenticeship in Germany 91% of all apprenticeship-qualified people stay in their first job for at least three months. After one year 71% remain, but after five years only 38% are still in their first job. Moreover, there is no significant difference between those apprentices who stay with their training firm and those who move to another job immediately on completion. Both categories are just as likely to leave their first job. When compared to other students, however, apprentices experience less job changes with their second, third and subsequent jobs lasting much longer than those of other individuals with no post-school qualifications. University graduates and students attending other forms of vocational training tend to have larger mobility-reducing effects than apprenticeship.

Similar results were obtained on job mobility among survey respondents. 93% of completers stayed in their first job for a period of at least three months. However only 68% remained in their job for at least one year and even less (25.0%) for five years or more. Moreover, as the results obtained in the study among German apprentices, there are no significant differences between those who remained with their training firm and those who moved to another firm. Apprentices staying with their training firm tend to leave their first job as those who changed job on completion (refer to table 29). Almost half of all the apprentices interviewed in the survey including, non-completers, tend to retain their first job (46.9%) while an almost equal amount tend to change their job twice to four times (45.5%). Females, non-completers and TAS apprentices tend to change jobs more than their respective counterparts (refer to charts 12 and 13).

Furthermore a significant number of apprentices apart from changing jobs also tend to move away from the occupation for which they were trained. Only 63% of apprentices who completed apprenticeship and are presently in employment have remained in their training occupation. The remaining 33% moved to another skilled occupation while 3 respondents moved to an elementary occupation. Females and ESTS students tend to move to other skilled occupations more than their respective counterparts (refer to table 30).

Apprentices following particular courses such as handicrafts, building trades, common core technology, agriculture, tailoring and industrial design move to other

skilled occupations more than apprentices following other courses (refer to tables 31 and 32).

This finding features across various countries including Australia and Germany. In Australia after the first ten years less than 50% remain in their trade. Most of those who leave their training occupation move into an unrelated occupation while those who move to a related occupation mostly find a job in supervisory, sales and administrative positions. Upward career progression is very limited for apprentices with higher-level positions being filled by those with higher vocational and university education (Smits and Stromback 2001).

In Germany only 60% remain in their trade after the first five years. Two thirds of those who leave their training occupation move to a skilled job with the remaining one third moving into an unskilled job. The latter category particularly comprises those working in traditional artisan occupations that have low transferability of skills. In fact apprentices trained in large industrial concerns tend to have a stronger attachment to both their firm and their occupation than those apprenticed in the crafts sector. Although these results may suggest that apprenticeship training is being wasted due to occupational mobility Smits and Stromback argue that on a general level training received during apprenticeship is utilised in other occupations. Apprentices are able to learn new skills through experience and informal on-the-job training in their new job. As to those apprentices who move to unskilled occupations their earnings tend to be higher than those of other unqualified individuals.

In relation to the above, although apprentices in unskilled jobs tend to receive higher earnings than other unqualified individuals, on a general level gains in terms of pay after completing an apprenticeship when compared to full-time schooling are almost negligible across various countries (Grubb and Ryan 1999; Smits and Stromback 2001). In Britain for example an A-level qualification on its own is associated with much higher earnings than apprenticeship while the earnings of those who have not complemented their apprenticeship with a City and Guilds qualification are very much on the low side. Similarly in Germany individuals with a base level of schooling earn 18% less than apprentice-trained individuals but individuals opting for higher vocational education and university graduates earn 21 and 46% more respectively.

In this particular survey most respondents, including non-completers, mentioned earning between Lm300 to Lm399 gross income per month (32.2%) followed by those earning between Lm400 and Lm499 per month (21.0%) (refer to table 33). Only 11.4 percent of respondents earned higher salaries. The mean average wage of TAS apprentices tends to be higher than that of ESTS apprentices with Lm416.3 and Lm322.7 respectively. When comparing these earnings to those quoted in the Labour Force Survey of March 2003, salaries earned by survey respondents generally relate to those earned by persons employed in occupations other than the legislators, senior officials and managers and professionals categories (refer to table 34). This can be attributed to the fact that most apprentices are employed as technicians, service and shop and sales workers and crafts related workers. Few are employed as managers or professionals. Meanwhile LFS data showing the earnings of respondents by educational level reveals that generally individuals with vocational qualifications tend to earn higher salaries than those with other post-secondary or lower qualifications (refer to table 35). However most respondents of this survey have declared to earn lower salaries than those quoted in the LFS for persons with vocational qualifications.

Smits and Stromback (2001) attribute the average earnings of apprentices to the wide range of skill levels present in today's labour market and to the limited opportunities for career advancement open to apprentices. Indeed apprentices tend to experience high increases in pay early in their careers but then tend to stop at a certain age, 30 to 35, receiving very small increases in pay later in their careers. This terminal aspect attributed to the pay received by apprentices is also present in other career opportunities such as career advancement and personal development.

Generally all survey respondents experienced positive changes in their working conditions from when they finished or abandoned their apprenticeship to their present employment. Most changes were experienced in their grade or position followed by management responsibilities and general working conditions. When asked explicitly if they experienced particular changes throughout their careers almost a quarter of all respondents (73.6%) answered in the affirmative. Changes mentioned by respondents mostly referred to more responsibility at work, changes in their working environment and working conditions such as shifts, pay and workload. Other changes mentioned by respondents include promotions, self-employment, introduction of new machinery and new skills at work and changes in their occupation.

Chapter 4:

The overall purpose of this research was to study the apprentices' experience of apprenticeship training, employers' views on apprenticeship, as well as to give a brief overview of apprenticeship in the Maltese Islands and abroad.

Conclusion

The study has highlighted some of the issues experienced by apprentices and how these compare with the situation of other apprentices in other countries together with employers' opinions on a set of issues pertaining to apprenticeship. Following are the main findings of this study and their implications for policy development.

Apprentices tend to have good employment prospects with most being in full-time stable employment. Most find employment that is directly related to their trade, although quite a few tend to change their choice of occupation. Further research needs to be done to identify those apprentices who change their occupation from the one they choose to follow during apprenticeship and the reasons why they have done so.

Very few apprentices tend to opt for self-employment after apprenticeship. It is recommended that apprentices receive training on how to open and run a business with the aim of encouraging them to opt for self-employment and generate further employment opportunities.

Only a small number of apprentices decide to further their studies. It seems that once apprentices complete apprenticeship the chances of them continuing training and education is minimal. This situation may be due to the fact that apprenticeship and vocational education in general are not yet recognised by other educational establishments, such as the University, that offer higher technical and academic courses. Ideally a credit system based on a national vocational qualifications structure would be introduced to allow apprentices to transfer credits from one educational set-up to the other. This system would also help to reduce the present gap that exists between academic and vocational qualifications structures in general.

The type of training offered by employers to apprentices once they are engaged in full-time employment varies from training directly related to their occupation to training in other soft skills such as computer applications, management courses, customer care and health and safety issues. The demand for such skills seems to be rising over many sectors. Apprentices would preferably be equipped with such skills during their apprenticeship training to better respond to the demands of the labour market.

Meanwhile more and better links should be developed between the different actors involved in apprenticeship training. Such links would lead to a more holistic training programme that combines labour market requirements with further general training that is more flexible and less firm specific. Most employers stated that they were not being involved in the planning of training programmes to be followed by apprentices both at the vocational institution and at the workplace. Apprentices mentioned receiving off the job training that was not in line with the requirements of the workplace. On the other hand others stated that training at the workplace was of low quality and should be linked to training received at the educational institution. Apprentices remarked that they should be provided with appropriate tools for training, especially at the workplace, and that the training material covered should be in touch with current labour market requirements.

A significant number of apprentices claim to have suffered from bad working conditions and suggested that there should be more direct supervision of the apprentices' training at the workplace. Such conditions coupled with inadequate training may deter apprentices from remaining with the sponsor until completion of the apprenticeship scheme. On the other hand employers claimed that non-

completion of schemes by apprentices was mainly due to the latter's wrong choice of occupation or poor performance at work. It seems that the latter is also one of the main reasons why employers decide not to continue participating in apprenticeship schemes at all. In view of this it is recommended that the monitoring of apprenticeship schemes is enhanced and that the appropriate support is given to both employers and apprentices prior and during apprenticeship.

On a more positive note the majority of scheme participants stated that they would still recommend apprenticeship to a close friend despite general scheme shortcomings. Certain individuals may still prefer apprenticeship training than other forms of education for a number of reasons.

Another factor influencing scheme non-completion is the availability of sponsors. Apprentices, in particular those participating in the ESTS, tend to find it difficult to find an employer ready to offer them training throughout their apprenticeship. On a related note employers also stated that one of the main factors why they decided not to continue participating in apprenticeships was to have access to more flexible training that is directly in line with the company's needs. Moreover the majority agreed that they should receive financial assistance while participating in apprenticeship schemes. Thus it is recommended that a system of incentives is introduced to encourage more employers engage apprentices with their company. Moreover an in-depth analysis of the courses and callings on offer should be conducted on a regular and systematic basis to assess which callings may no longer be in demand by the labour market and whether to introduce new ones.

The introduction of new callings may also provide future apprentices, in particular females and individuals coming from a higher social background, with more options from where to choose. Diversity in both apprenticeship callings and vocational courses on offer may lead towards a higher uptake of vocational education in general and apprenticeship in particular.

Meanwhile more and better information should be provided to the general public on apprenticeship and vocational education. Information should not only target young students but also other actors that are likely to influence the young individual's decision to opt for apprenticeship and vocational education. Parents, guidance teachers together with Church and private schools in particular should be shown the relevance of vocational education and that it should also be considered as one possible option for young students to take up after compulsory schooling instead of academic training. Organisations providing such information should ensure that it is clear and that, apart from entry qualifications, it also includes relevant particulars such as scheme and course details, monitoring, pay and work experience during on-the-job training. Such information should also be provided to employers prior to their entry into the apprenticeship schemes. For information campaigns to be successful it is recommended that they give prospective apprentices examples of work and career prospects at end of apprenticeship preferably through the use of role models that have made a successful career after completing an apprenticeship.

These and other issues presented in this study are intended to contribute to raising the quality and uptake of apprenticeships in Malta. Such training could lead to better employment prospects for individuals as well as providing employers with a qualified workforce that matches their requirements. In many respects these goals should be the collective responsibility of all key stakeholders within the vocational and training system. Creating more and better links between different actors will surely lead towards an enhanced training system that benefits all those who value apprenticeship and vocational education and training.

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Annex 1: Questionnaire to Apprentice

PART ONE: SCHEME UPTAKE

1.0 Please indicate how strongly the following factors influenced your choice to take up the Apprenticeship scheme:

		Very strong	Quite strong	Slight	Not at all
1	The prospective occupation – job interest	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Prospective occupation – career development	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Prospective occupation – pay	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Prospective occupation – working conditions	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Appealing role models	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Influence of family	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Influence of friends	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Influence of teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Influence of guidance & counselling	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Other: _____				

2.0 How did you first become aware of the Apprenticeship Scheme?

Family ☐ Friends ☐ School ☐ TV ☐ Radio ☐ Newspapers ☐ Other _____

3.0 Did you attend an information session on the Scheme before applying?

Yes ☐ No ☐

4.1 How aware were you of the following aspects of the Apprenticeship Scheme when you applied to join it?

		Very aware	Aware	Vaguely aware	Not aware at all
1	Entry requirements to Apprenticeship Scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Structure of Scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	The course content	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The work experience	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	The stipend	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The monitoring	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.2 Did you receive any other information when you applied to participate in the scheme from that referred to above?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Go to 5.0)

4.3 What are your comments on this information?

_____

5.0 Which Scheme did you choose?

ESTS ☐ TAS ☐ PAS ☐

6.0 What training programme did you choose?

_____

7.0 How much did the following factors influenced you to choose this training programme?

	Very strong	Quite strong	Slight	Not at all
1 The prospective occupation	☐	☐	☐	☐
2 The availability of course information	☐	☐	☐	☐
3 Other persons	☐	☐	☐	☐
4 Other: _____				

8.0 Did you complete the Scheme?

Yes ☐ (Go to Part 3 Q.15.0) No ☐ (Go to Part 2 Q.9.0)

PART TWO: NON-COMPLETERS

9.0 In what year did you discontinue the scheme?

Yr 1 ☐ Yr 2 ☐ Yr 3 ☐ Yr 4 ☐

10.0 Did you leave the scheme to take up employment?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11.0 How would you rate the following as reasons for discontinuing the scheme?

		Very significant	Significant	Little significance	Irrelevant
1	Did not have a sponsor	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Did not pass tests	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Left after disciplinary action	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Was not satisfied with scheme	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Pressing financial needs	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Other:_____				

12.1 Did you have a sponsor?

Yes ☐ (Go to 13.1) No ☐

12.2 If you did not have a sponsor, was this because

1. You were not offered one ☐
2. You did not like the one you were offered ☐
3. Other: _____

13.1 Did you pass the tests?

Yes ☐ (Go to 14.1) No ☐

13.2 If you did not pass the tests, on which of the following did you get stuck?

Course tests ☐ Logbook ☐ Interview ☐ Practical ☐ Written ☐

13.3 What do you think was the main reason for your failing this component?

1. Material too difficult ☐
2. Did not value Journeyman's Certificate ☐
3. Did not make sufficient effort ☐
4. Inadequately prepared by VET provider ☐
5. Inadequate support from ETC ☐
6. Other: _____

14.1 Were you pleased with the scheme?

Yes ☐ (Go to Part 3, q.15.0) No ☐

14.2 If you were displeased with the Scheme, was this because you thought:

1. The course material was not relevant to the work you were doing ☐
2. The quality of the teaching was not adequate ☐
3. The work experience was not relevant to your course ☐
4. The on-the-job training was inadequate ☐
5. Your remuneration was inadequate ☐
6. Your conditions of work were unpleasant ☐
7. Other: _____

PART THREE: EMPLOYMENT

15.0 In which year did you complete or left the scheme?

_____

16.0 Kindly list all the jobs you were engaged in from date of completion of apprenticeship scheme or the date you left the apprenticeship scheme to date. Include those jobs in which you were self-employed.

Occupation	If self-employed tick	Which economic sector	Used to be my sponsor	Started	Finished

16.1 Did you experience periods of unemployment?

Yes ☐ (Go to 17.0) No ☐ (Go to 18.0)

17.1 Kindly state the year and length of unemployment.

_____

17.2 Did you register for employment?

Yes ☐ No ☐

18.0 Are you still employed by your sponsor?

Yes ☐ (Go to q. 28.0) No ☐ (Go to q. 19.0)

19.0 Why are you no longer with your sponsor?

1. You left to take up alternative employment ☐ (Go to q. 20.0)
2. You left to start your own business ☐ (Go to q. 22.0)
3. You left to resume studies ☐ (Go to q. 26.0)
4. You left involuntarily ☐ (Go to q. 27.0)
5. Other: _____

20.0 If you left to take up alternative employment, how would you rate the following as reasons for leaving the sponsor?

		Very significant	Significant	Little significance	Irrelevant
1	More interesting work	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Greater responsibilities at work	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Better position in firm's hierarchy	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Better pay	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Better working hours	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Greater training prospects	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Other: _____				

21.0 If you sought alternative employment, was this

1. Offered to you immediately and the way you preferred ☐
2. Quite easy for you to find ☐
3. Hard to find ☐
4. Next to impossible to find ☐

22.0 If you left to start your own business, which sector did you enter?

1. Agriculture, hunting and forestry ☐
2. Fishing ☐
3. Mining and quarrying ☐
4. Manufacturing ☐
5. Electricity, gas and water supply ☐
6. Construction ☐
7. Wholesale and retail trade, repairs ☐
8. Hotels and restaurants ☐
9. Transport, storage and communication ☐
10. Financial intermediation ☐
11. Real estate, renting and business activities ☐
12. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security… ☐
13. Education ☐
14. Health and social work ☐
15. Other community, social and personal service activities ☐
16. Private households with employed persons ☐
17. Extra-territorial organizations and bodies ☐

23.0 What is the nature of the goods / services you produce?

_____

24.0 What year did you start?

_____

25.0 Is your business still running?

Yes ☐ No ☐

26.0 If you left to resume studies, what studies were these?

1. Advanced level ☐
2. Diploma level ☐
3. Degree level ☐
4. Other: _____

27.0 If you left involuntarily, were you

1. Made redundant ☐
2. Contract not renewed ☐
3. Dismissed before contract expiry ☐
4. Other: _____

28.0 Did your sponsor give further training after you left/completed Scheme?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Go to q.30.1)

29.1 **If yes what kind of training and...**

29.2 **...did you receive a certificate at the end of the training?**

29.3 **Did you follow this training in Malta or abroad?**

30.1 **How would you rate the following aspects of your current job when compared to your situation on leaving/completing the Apprenticeship Scheme?**

		Greatly Improved	Improved	Similar	Worsened	Greatly worsened
1	Your position in firm's hierarchy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Physical working conditions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Working hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	How interesting is your job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Your management responsibilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

30.2 **Did you experience any changes during your work experience?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Go to Part 4 q.31.0)

3.3 **If yes, could you state what kind of changes have you experienced?**

PART FOUR: GENERAL EVALUATION

31.0 **In general, how would you rate ETC's service during your experience of the Scheme?**

		Very good	Fair	Poor
1	Placement	☐	☐	☐
2	During apprenticeship	☐	☐	☐
3	Preparation to trade testing	☐	☐	☐
4	Other: _____			

32.0 **Would you like to offer any comments as to how ETC may improve any aspect of its services to apprentices?**

33.0 **Would you advise a close friend to take up the Apprenticeship route?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

34.0 Could we use your comments in promotional material?

Yes ☐ No ☐

PART FIVE: PERSONAL DETAILS

35.0 Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

36.0 Age: ___

37.0 Residence at take-up of scheme: _____

38.0 Current marital status:

Single ☐ Married ☐ No longer married ☐ Widowed ☐

39.0 Current employment status:

1. Full-time employment (30 hours or more) ☐
2. Part-time employment (between 1 and 29 hours) ☐
3. Works full and part-time ☐
4. I do not work full-time but I work ☐
5. More than one part-time job ☐
6. Self-employed with employees ☐
7. Self-employed no employees ☐
8. Full-time student ☐
9. Full-time student and work part-time ☐
10. Registers for work ☐
11. Seeks work but not registering ☐
12. Unable to work (sick, disabled) ☐
13. Take care of home and family ☐
14. Other: _____

40.0 Occupation:

1. Armed Forces ☐
2. Legislators, senior officials and managers ☐
3. Professionals ☐
4. Technicians and associate professionals ☐
5. Clerks ☐
6. Service workers, shop and sales workers ☐
7. Skilled agricultural and fishery workers ☐
8. Craft and related trades workers ☐
9. Plant and machine operators ☐
10. Elementary occupations ☐

41.0 Economic sector:

1. Agriculture, hunting and forestry ☐
2. Fishing ☐
3. Mining and quarrying ☐
4. Manufacturing ☐
5. Electricity, gas and water supply ☐
6. Construction ☐
7. Wholesale and retail trade, repairs ☐
8. Hotels and restaurants ☐
9. Transport, storage and communication ☐
10. Financial intermediation ☐
11. Real estate, renting and business activities ☐
12. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security ☐
13. Education ☐
14. Health and social work ☐
15. Other community, social and personal service activities ☐
16. Private households with employed persons ☐
17. Extra-territorial organizations and bodies ☐

42.1 What is your mother's occupation?

1. Armed Forces ☐
2. Legislators, senior officials and managers ☐
3. Professionals ☐
4. Technicians and associate professionals ☐
5. Clerks ☐
6. Service workers, shop and sales workers ☐
7. Skilled agricultural and fishery workers ☐
8. Craft and related trades workers ☐
9. Plant and machine operators ☐
10. Elementary occupations ☐
11. Housewife / takes care of house and family ☐

42.2 What is your father's occupation?

1. Armed Forces ☐
2. Legislators, senior officials and managers ☐
3. Professionals ☐
4. Technicians and associate professionals ☐
5. Clerks ☐
6. Service workers, shop and sales workers ☐
7. Skilled agricultural and fishery workers ☐
8. Craft and related trades workers ☐
9. Plant and machine operators ☐
10. Elementary occupations ☐
11. Housewife / takes care of house and family ☐

43.1 In which economic sector does your mother work?

1.	Agriculture, hunting and forestry	☐
2.	Fishing	☐
3.	Mining and quarrying	☐
4.	Manufacturing	☐
5.	Electricity, gas and water supply	☐
6.	Construction	☐
7.	Wholesale and retail trade, repairs	☐
8.	Hotels and restaurants	☐
9.	Transport, storage and communication	☐
10.	Financial intermediation	☐
11.	Real estate, renting and business activities	☐
12.	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	☐
13.	Education	☐
14.	Health and social work	☐
15.	Other community, social and personal service activities	☐
16.	Private households with employed persons	☐
17.	Extra-territorial organizations and bodies	☐

43.2 In which economic sector does your father work?

1.	Agriculture, hunting and forestry	☐
2.	Fishing	☐
3.	Mining and quarrying	☐
4.	Manufacturing	☐
5.	Electricity, gas and water supply	☐
6.	Construction	☐
7.	Wholesale and retail trade, repairs	☐
8.	Hotels and restaurants	☐
9.	Transport, storage and communication	☐
10.	Financial intermediation	☐
11.	Real estate, renting and business activities	☐
12.	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	☐
13.	Education	☐
14.	Health and social work	☐
15.	Other community, social and personal service activities	☐
16.	Private households with employed persons	☐
17.	Extra-territorial organizations and bodies	☐

44.1 Highest qualifications on entry into scheme:

a. school leaving certificate ☐

b. school leaving and trade certificate ☐

c. O levels ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, number _____

d. A levels ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, number _____

44.2 Any other qualifications?

45.0 **Education received prior entry into scheme:**

Secondary education:

Name of school	School type	Non – religious private school	Church	State
_____	Junior lyceum ☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	Area secondary school ☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	Opportunity centre ☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	Trade school ☐	☐	☐	☐

Post-secondary education:

Name of 6th form / college /training agency	Non –religious private school	Church	State	Maltese	Foreign
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Tertiary education:

Name of University	Maltese	Foreign
_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐

Other education: _____

46.0 **In which year have you started the apprenticeship scheme?**

_____

47.0 **Current gross monthly earnings:** LM _____ (approximate to closest Lm10)

Annex 2: Questionnaire to Employers

SURVEY AMONG COMPANIES PARTICIPATING IN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES

For each statement, kindly mark the box that applies to you or write the information required in the space provided. Certain questions in the questionnaire may apply to specific companies only. Please fill in where appropriate.

FIRST SECTION: ENTRY INTO SCHEMES

1.0 My company participates or participated in apprenticeship schemes because:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Persons who are trained but are not apprentices do not have the necessary skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	It has an obligation to train persons in the trade/industry.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	It finds it difficult to recruit suitably trained persons.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	It takes pride in the trade and wants to see it continue.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	It wants to give new opportunities to young people.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Participation enhances its reputation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Apprenticeship offers high quality training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	During their training, apprentices raise productivity at low cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Apprenticeship allows us to train persons according to our needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	At the end of the scheme the apprentice may possibly continue . to work with the company.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	It allows apprentices to gain work experience before taking up regular employment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other reasons (kindly list any other reasons that may have influenced your company's decision to participate in the schemes):

2.0 Only companies who have ceased to participate in apprenticeship schemes should answer this question.

My company has stopped participating in apprenticeship schemes because:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	It prefers to train own employees according to its needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	It was not financially viable .	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Apprentices were not being productive enough.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	It did not have enough resources to dedicate to apprentices' training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Training received by apprentices in the educational . institution did not match the requirements of the company .	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Apprentices left the company before or as soon as they finished the scheme.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Apprentices disturbed other workers and the whole working process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other reasons (kindly list any other reasons that may have influenced your company's decision to cease from participating in the schemes):

SECOND SECTION: TRAINING PROVIDED DURING SCHEMES

3.0 Only companies whose apprentices left their firm before completing the apprenticeship schemes, should answer this question.

Apprentices did not complete their apprenticeship with the company because:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	They found out that they made the wrong choice of occupation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	They were not good at work (lack of interest, communication problems, lack of desire to learn etc...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	There was a mismatch between the training received at the educational institution and the work that they were being asked to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	They felt that they were not receiving individual attention at the workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	They did not receive enough assistance from ETC representatives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	The company was not faring well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	The company did not want to participate in the scheme anymore	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Apprentices wanted better conditions of work such as breaks, less working hours, less responsibility at work etc...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Apprentices felt that they were doing more work than was appropriate for their status of apprentice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	Apprentices expected better treatment by their colleagues at the place of work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	Apprentices had personal / family circumstances that prevented them from continuing to work with the company (had an accident; they wanted to marry etc...)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	Apprentices felt they were doing repetitive tasks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	Apprentices felt they were not receiving good training at the workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other reasons (kindly list any other possible reasons that may have led to the apprentices leaving your company before completing apprenticeship).

_____

_____

4.0 Please mark your level of agreement with the following statements:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Theoretical training given by the educational institution is relevant to the occupation chosen by apprentices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	My company is being involved in the preparation of the training programme followed by apprentices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	My company knows the syllabus that is followed by apprentices at the educational institution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	My company is given prior instructions on the type of training to be delivered to apprentices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5.0 Has your company a person assigned the responsibility of overseeing the apprentices' training at the workplace?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable ☐

6.0 If yes, is this person trained as a trainer?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable ☐

THIRD SECTION: EMPLOYMENT AFTER APPRENTICESHIP

7.0 My company offers employment to the apprentices trained with the company as soon as they complete apprenticeship:

- Always ☐
- Mostly ☐
- Not always ☐
- Never ☐

8.0 Kindly state why you have answered so.

_____

_____

9.0 My company offers employment to those apprentices trained with the company but did not complete their apprenticeship:

- Always ☐
- Mostly ☐
- Not always ☐
- Never ☐

10.0 If the company employed its apprentices as soon as they completed the scheme, did it offer them further training?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11.0 If yes, what type of training and at what level?

_____

_____

12.0 Please answer the following questions as indicated:

		Yes	No	Don't know / not applicable
1.	Do you think that the type of training that apprentices received in your company may make it difficult for them to find work elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐
2.	Does your company have difficulties in employing apprentices trained with other companies?	☐	☐	☐
3.	Does your company ask for the Journeyman's certificate when recruiting new employees?	☐	☐	☐

13.0 How do you compare a qualified apprentice to an academically qualified employee ('A' Levels or University)?

		Much better	Somewhat better	The same	Worse	Much worse
1.	They soon adjust to the work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	The quality of the knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Job-relevant skill	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Their attitude to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Social and personal skills at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

FOURTH SECTION: APPRENTICESHIP ADMINISTRATION

14.0 Please mark your level of agreement with the following statements:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Companies participating in the schemes should receive financial assistance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	ETC support in apprenticeship is adequate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Enough information is being provided to companies about their scheme obligations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Apprentices are being properly informed about apprenticeship schemes and what they entail.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Entry qualifications of ESTS apprentices should be raised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Entry qualifications of TAS apprentices should be raised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	The duration of the ESTS should be shortened.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	The duration of the TAS should be shortened.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other reasons (kindly list any other suggestions which in your opinion may enhance apprenticeship schemes).

_____

_____

SECTION FIVE: COMPANY DETAILS

15.0 Your company trains apprentices in the following callings:

Extended Skill Training Scheme

Mechanical fitter	☐	Hairdresser	☐	Plant maintenance fitter	☐
Hospitality trades	☐	Electrical installer	☐	Heritage skills craftsman Vehicle body Vec	☐
Vehicle body repairer	☐	Plasterer	☐	Motor vehicle mechanic	☐
Tile layer	☐	Plumber	☐	Painter and decorator	☐
Welder	☐	Ceramist	☐	Woodworker	☐
Jeweller / silversmith	☐	Sheet metal worker	☐	Metal craftsman	☐
Electronic servicing fitter	☐	Printer	☐	Electrical installer	☐
Stone carver	☐	Agricultural trades	☐	Wood carver	☐
Stone dresser / stone mason	☐	Tailoring	☐	Stained Glass	☐

Other: _____

Technician Apprenticeship Scheme

Agricultural technician	☐
Computer hardware technician	☐
Micro computer technician	☐
Mechanical engineering technician	☐
Draughtsman	☐
Electrical and electronics engineering technician	☐
Mechanical and electrical engineering technician	☐
Computer aided engineering technician	☐
Information technology technician	☐
Art and design technician	☐
Industrial electronics technician	☐
Motor vehicle technician	☐
Heating, ventilation and air conditioning technician	☐
Telecommunications and electronics engineering technician	☐

Other: _____

16.0 Number of employees employed with the company:

- Self employed without employees ☐
- Less than 10 employees ☐
- 10 – 19 ☐
- 20 – 49 ☐
- 50 + ☐

17.0 Economic sector in which your company operates:

- Agriculture, hunting and forestry ☐
- Fishing ☐
- Mining and quarrying ☐
- Manufacturing ☐
- Electricity, gas and water supply ☐
- Construction ☐
- Wholesale, retail trade and repairs ☐
- Hotels and restaurants ☐
- Transport storage and communication ☐
- Financial intermediation ☐
- Real estate, renting and business activities ☐
- Public administration and defence; compulsory social security ☐
- Education ☐
- Health and social work ☐
- Other community, social and personal service activities ☐

18.0 Your position/grade in the company:

_____

19.0 The company is:

- Maltese owned ☐
- Foreign owned ☐
- Shared by Maltese and foreign owners ☐