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R208 - Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208)

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Preamble

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened in Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met at its 111th Session on 5 June 2023,

Noting that global unemployment and underemployment rates continue to be high, that inequality persists and that rapid transformations in the world of work, such as those resulting from the challenges of climate change, exacerbate skills mismatches and skills shortages, requiring the development of quality apprenticeships that provide opportunities for people of all ages to skill, reskill and upskill continuously,

Noting also that this continuous skilling, reskilling and upskilling contributes to promoting full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all,

Underlining the importance of quality education and training for all and access to quality lifelong learning,

Recalling that all human beings have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity,

Recognizing that the promotion and development of quality apprenticeships can lead to decent work, contribute to effective and efficient responses to world of work challenges and provide lifelong learning opportunities to enhance productivity, resilience, transitions and employability and meet current and future needs of apprentices, employers and the labour market,

Recognizing that the promotion, development and delivery of quality apprenticeships can also support entrepreneurship, self-employment, employability, the transition to the formal economy, the creation of decent jobs and the growth and sustainability of enterprises,

Considering that an effective framework for quality apprenticeships requires apprenticeships to be well regulated, sustainable, sufficiently funded, inclusive and free from discrimination, violence and harassment and exploitation, to promote gender equality and diversity, to provide adequate remuneration or other financial compensation and social protection coverage, to lead to recognized qualifications and to enhance employment outcomes,

Emphasizing that apprenticeships should be promoted and regulated, including through social dialogue, with a view to ensuring their quality, providing benefits and protection to apprentices and enterprises, and enhancing the attractiveness of apprenticeships to potential apprentices and employers, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises,

Recalling the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

Underlining the relevance of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), as amended in 2022, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), as amended in 2022, the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, as amended in 2022, the Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (2007) and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) for the promotion of quality apprenticeships and the effective protection of all apprentices, particularly in the light of the profound transformations in the world of work,

Recalling the provisions of other relevant ILO instruments, particularly the Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendation (No. 122), 1964, the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), the Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169), the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195), and the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204),

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals concerning quality apprenticeships, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation,

adopts this 16 June 2023 the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023:

I. Definitions, scope and means of implementation

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation:

(a) the term “apprenticeship” should be understood as a form of education and training that is governed by an apprenticeship agreement, that enables an apprentice to acquire the competencies required to work in an occupation through structured and remunerated or otherwise financially compensated training consisting of both on-the-job and off-the-job learning and that leads to a recognized qualification;

(b) the term “intermediary” should be understood as an entity, other than the host enterprise or the educational and training institution, that coordinates, supports or assists in the provision of an apprenticeship;

(c) the term “pre-apprenticeship programme” should be understood as a programme designed to help potential apprentices to develop their competencies with a view to improving their workplace preparedness or meeting the formal entry requirements for an apprenticeship;

(d) the term “recognition of prior learning” should be understood as a process, undertaken by qualified personnel, of identifying, documenting, assessing and

certifying a person's competencies, acquired through formal, non-formal or informal le established qualification standards.

2. This Recommendation applies to apprenticeships in all enterprises and sectors of econon

3. Members may give effect to the provisions of this Recommendation through national law collective agreements, policies and programmes or other measures consistent with national

4. Members should implement the provisions of this Recommendation in consultation with and workers' organizations.

II. Regulatory framework for quality apprentice

5. Members should incorporate and promote quality apprenticeships within their relevant e training, lifelong learning and employment policies.

6. Members should establish a regulatory framework for quality apprenticeships, and qualif systems to facilitate the recognition of competencies acquired through apprenticeships. Rep workers' organizations should be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and e systems, policies and programmes for quality apprenticeships.

7. Members should establish or designate one or more public authorities responsible for reg which representative employers' and workers' organizations should be represented.

8. Members should ensure that the competent authorities have clearly defined responsibilit and work in close cooperation with other authorities or institutions responsible for regulati and training, labour inspection, social protection, occupational safety and health, and publi services.

9. Members should adopt a process, in which representative employers' and workers' organ determining whether an occupation is suitable for quality apprenticeships, taking into accou

(a) the competencies needed to work in that occupation;

(b) the appropriateness of an apprenticeship as a means of acquiring such competencie

(c) the duration of the apprenticeship required to acquire such competencies;

(d) the current and future demand for skills in, and employment potential of, that occu

(e) the occupational, training and labour market expertise of employers' and workers' o

(f) the wide range of emerging occupational fields, and evolving production processes a

10. Members should, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizat specific or general standards, as appropriate, for quality apprenticeships by taking measure other things, for:

(a) the minimum age for admission, in accordance with the Minimum Age Convention, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182);

(b) occupational safety and health, in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Hea 155), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention,

(c) any educational qualifications, attainments or prior learning required for admission

(d) the responsibilities of apprentices, employers, educational and training institutions

(e) the supervision of apprentices by qualified personnel and the nature of such supervi

(f) the appropriate balance between apprentices and workers in the workplace, with a v apprenticeship programmes and adequate supervision, and while taking into account t replacement of workers and to promote apprenticeships in micro, small and medium-s

(g) the expected minimum and maximum duration of the apprenticeship;

(h) the extent to which the expected duration of the apprenticeship may be reduced on or progress made during the apprenticeship;

(i) learning outcomes and curricula based on relevant occupational competencies, the e needs of apprentices and labour market needs;

(j) the appropriate balance between off-the-job learning and on-the-job learning;

(k) access to vocational guidance and career counselling, and other support services as and after the apprenticeship;

(l) the qualifications and experience required for teachers, instructors, in-house trainer involved in apprenticeships;

(m) the appropriate balance between apprentices and teachers, taking into account the education and training;

(n) the procedures for assessing and certifying the competencies acquired;

(o) the qualification acquired on the successful completion of the apprenticeship.

11. Members should take measures to ensure that there is a fair and transparent process by can be undertaken in more than one enterprise, subject to the apprentice's consent, when th for the completion of the apprenticeship.

12. Members should prescribe the conditions under which:

(a) enterprises may offer apprenticeships;

(b) educational and training institutions may provide off-the-job and on-the-job trainir

(c) intermediaries may coordinate, support or assist in the provision of apprenticeships

13. Members should take measures to continuously:

(a) develop and strengthen the capacity of government agencies, employers' and worke educational and training institutions;

(b) strengthen the training capacity of host enterprises;

(c) increase the competencies of teachers, instructors, in-house trainers and other expe apprenticeships.

14. Members should take measures to ensure that apprenticeship systems and programmes and evaluated by the competent authorities. The results of monitoring and evaluations shou improve the systems and programmes accordingly.

III. Protection of apprentices

15. Members should take measures to respect, promote and realize the fundamental princip relation to apprenticeships.

16. Members should take measures to ensure that apprentices:

(a) receive adequate remuneration or other financial compensation, which may be incr the apprenticeship to reflect the progressive acquisition of occupational competencies;

(b) are not required to work hours that exceed limits specified by national legislation ar

(c) are entitled to holidays with adequate remuneration or other financial compensatio

(d) are entitled to be absent due to illness or accident, with adequate remuneration or c compensation;

(e) have access to paid maternity or paternity leave and parental leave;

(f) have access to social security and maternity protection;

(g) are afforded freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to colle

(h) are afforded protection and receive training in respect of occupational safety and he discrimination and violence and harassment;

(i) are entitled to compensation for work-related injuries and illnesses;

(j) have access to an effective complaints and dispute resolution mechanism;

(k) are entitled to protection of personal data.

IV. Apprenticeship agreement

17. Members should ensure that apprenticeships are governed by a written agreement that i apprentice and a host enterprise or public institution and, if permitted by national laws and signed by a third party, such as an educational or training institution or an intermediary.

18. Members should ensure that an apprenticeship agreement:

(a) clearly defines the parties' respective roles, rights and obligations;

(b) specifies where the apprenticeship takes place;

(c) does not contain any provision that operates to restrict the apprentice's opportuniti mobility after the apprenticeship;

(d) contains provisions relating to the apprenticeship duration, remuneration or other and its frequency, hours of work, rest time, breaks, holidays and leave, occupational saf security, dispute resolution mechanisms and the termination of the apprenticeship agr

(e) identifies the competencies, certifications or qualifications to be attained and any ac to be provided;

(f) is registered under conditions established by the competent authority;

(g) is signed at the beginning of the apprenticeship;

(h) where the apprentice is a minor, is signed on the apprentice's behalf by a parent, gu representative, or by the apprentice with the consent of a parent, guardian or legal repr national laws and regulations.

19. Members should develop, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' o apprenticeship agreement to facilitate consistency, uniformity and compliance.

V. Equality and diversity in quality apprentices

20. Members should take measures to promote equality, diversity and social inclusion in ap special account of the situation and needs of persons belonging to one or more vulnerable g situations of vulnerability.

21. Members should take appropriate measures to promote gender equality and balance in a apprenticeships, including in access to apprenticeships.

22. Members should take effective measures to prevent and eliminate any discrimination, v and exploitation against apprentices and provide access to appropriate and effective remedi

23. Members should actively promote apprenticeships for adults and experienced individua industry or occupation, upgrade their skills or enhance their employability, in order to pron freely chosen employment.

24. Members should take measures to promote access to quality apprenticeships as a means transition from the informal to the formal economy and from insecure to secure work that i access to social security and labour protection.

VI. Promotion of quality apprenticeships

25. Members should, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizat create an enabling environment for promoting quality apprenticeships, including by:

(a) developing and implementing strategies, setting national goals and allocating adequ apprenticeships;

(b) mainstreaming quality apprenticeships in national development strategies and in e training, lifelong learning and employment policies;

(c) establishing sectoral or occupational skills bodies to facilitate the implementation o

(d) developing and maintaining robust mechanisms, such as labour market informatio consultations with representative employers' and workers' organizations, to assess the for skills with a view to designing or adapting apprenticeship programmes accordingly;

(e) implementing effective and sustainable financing models;

(f) providing incentives and support services;

(g) developing robust monitoring mechanisms, including data collection by the compet retention, non-completion and success in apprenticeships, to assess the effectiveness o incentive schemes in creating quality apprenticeships;

(h) facilitating effective public–private partnerships to support quality apprenticeships regulatory framework;

(i) supporting, where appropriate, intermediaries that coordinate, support or assist in t apprenticeships;

(j) undertaking awareness-raising activities and promotional campaigns at regular inte and attractiveness of quality apprenticeships by highlighting the benefits of apprentices people, families, teachers, career counsellors, employers' and workers' organizations, a micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;

(k) increasing awareness of apprentices' rights, entitlements and protections;

(l) establishing needs-based pre-apprenticeship programmes with a focus on increasing retention and success in apprenticeships by persons belonging to one or more vulnerab situations of vulnerability;

(m) facilitating access to further vocational training and other education opportunities

(n) providing flexible learning pathways and career guidance to support mobility, lifelo of skills and qualifications;

(o) developing, supporting and encouraging the inclusion of mentorships in apprentice

(p) using new technologies and innovative methods to improve the effectiveness and qu

(q) promoting apprenticeships in fields related to the green economy and a just transiti disseminating knowledge and building skills oriented towards the future of work.

26. Members should promote a culture of lifelong learning, skilling, reskilling and upskilling core skills.

27. Members should, in consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizat facilitating the transition from the informal to the formal economy, take measures to:

(a) strengthen the capacity of micro, small and medium-sized economic units by facilita development and financial services, improving the occupational safety and health envir the teaching and training methods and the technical and entrepreneurial competencies

(b) ensure that apprentices have access to off-the-job learning and may complement th other enterprises or through intermediaries, where appropriate;

(c) strengthen the capacity of associations of micro, small and medium-sized economic financial support, to improve the quality of apprenticeships;

(d) adopt a process to recognize relevant prior learning, including when acquired in the encourage the provision of bridging courses.

VII. International, regional and national cooperation apprenticeships

28. Members should take measures to:

(a) enhance international, regional and national cooperation and exchange information aspects of quality apprenticeships;

(b) cooperate to offer expanded learning opportunities to apprentices and to recognize through apprenticeship programmes or prior learning;

(c) build effective partnerships to promote quality apprenticeship programmes, includi national, sectoral or occupational skills bodies, global and regional alliances and appre

(d) promote the recognition of apprenticeship qualifications nationally, regionally and

Key Information

Recommendation concerning quality apprenticeships

Adoption: Geneva, 111st ILC session (16 Jun 2023)
Status: Up-to-date instrument.

See also

Submissions to competent authorities by country

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