



P4LLL-tec Company Survey -- Synthesis of results

IO 4 impact analysis

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1. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

- A) Germany 30
- B) Greece 32
- C) Ireland 15
- D) Latvia 30
- E) Spain 30

The targeted number of participants (30 per country) has been met in all partner countries, except in Ireland due to a very difficult field access. It was difficult to find companies who could provide relevant information to the topic of the questionnaire because partnership programs as defined by the project are still not very common.

2. General information of companies (sizes and branches)

Branches and sizes of companies who participated in the survey varied from country to country.

In Germany, most of the companies were large (12) (500 – 3499 employees) or very large (6) (3500 employees or more), some (9) were of medium size (50 -499 employees), only one was very small (4 employees). Most of them (26) operated in technical domains, e.g. engineering and construction, metal/steel industry, automobile and aircraft construction as well as electricity. Only a minority belonged to commerce and services (4).

The participants from Ireland were of small (7), medium (6) or large (2) size, mostly operating in the fields of manufacturing, tool making or plastics.

The Latvian interviewees were representing a mix of very small or small (13), medium sized (10) and large or very large (7) companies. Their businesses represented a brought array of branches, the largest groups of which being the domain of electricity (4), food technology or services (4), construction and/ or wood processing (4).

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In Greece, most of the companies that took part in the survey were very small (22), some were small (8) and only two were large. Their branches were very often related to mechanical engineering (25), a few others were in energy (3) transportation or construction (3).

In Spain as well, most companies were rather small (19) or very small (3) size, 6 had a medium size and only two were large. The biggest groups of them operated in a technical domain of machinery and construction (11), manufacturing (8), in the metal (4) or plastic (2) industry.

3. Type to training provided and training experiences

The company questionnaire addressed different training opportunities

- Full-time apprenticeship training (2 ½ -3 ½ years of training, incl. training contract),
- Part-time apprenticeship training (integrated into dual study or bridging program), and
- Internships as a part of a study program (duration 1 year or less)

Companies were asked to provide information on each of the training courses they were offering and to indicate how much experience they had in the different programs.

Apprenticeships were only offered in Germany (all participants) and to some degree in Ireland (5 companies). Part-time apprenticeship training was offered in all countries, except Greece and internships as part of a study program have been important for all countries. It was the only relevant training opportunity in Greece and huge importance for the Latvian companies (27 out of 32) and – as for Spain – almost equally relevant compared to the part-time apprenticeship training offers provided by Spanish firms. For more details, see Figure 1 below.

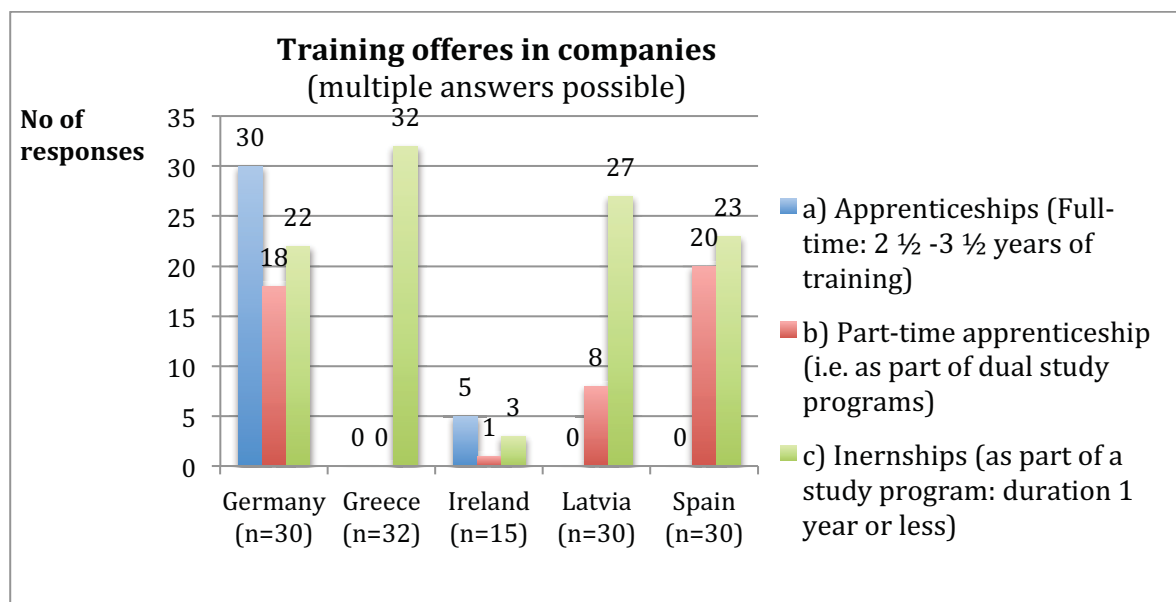


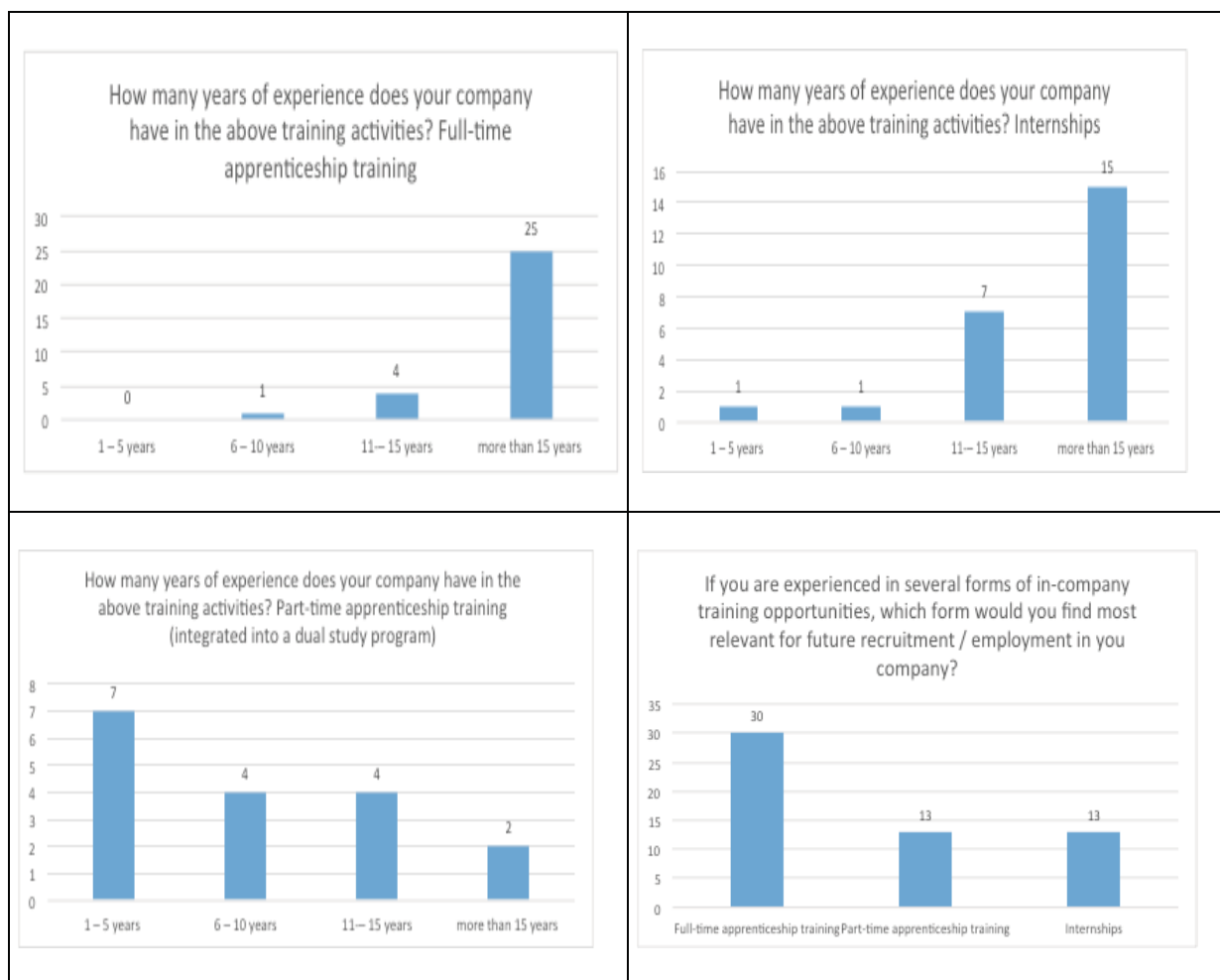
Figure 1: Types of training opportunities provided in companies (P4LLL-tec Company survey)

Experiences with the different training programs

Germany: As for the full-time apprenticeship, which was the most relevant programme in Germany the experiences regarding this traditional type of training were very long in most of the cases (see figure 2). 25 out of 30 companies were offering apprenticeships for 15 years or longer. But also regarding the other two training schemes, experiences were relatively long in most of the cases: most of the persons interviewed stated that their company had more than ten years of experiences with internships as part of a study program. On the other hand, internships as a part of a double qualifying program were not offered that long in most of the cases. Only in six cases, companies were already offering such training opportunities for more than 11 years. The majority only stated engaging into such programs within the past decade. This result reflects the general trend in Germany towards dual studies, notably double qualifying programs.

However – if asked about the relevance of the all training opportunities with regard to future recruitment, still most of the interviewees stated that for them, this would remain the traditional dual apprenticeship training (see Box 1, second row on the right).

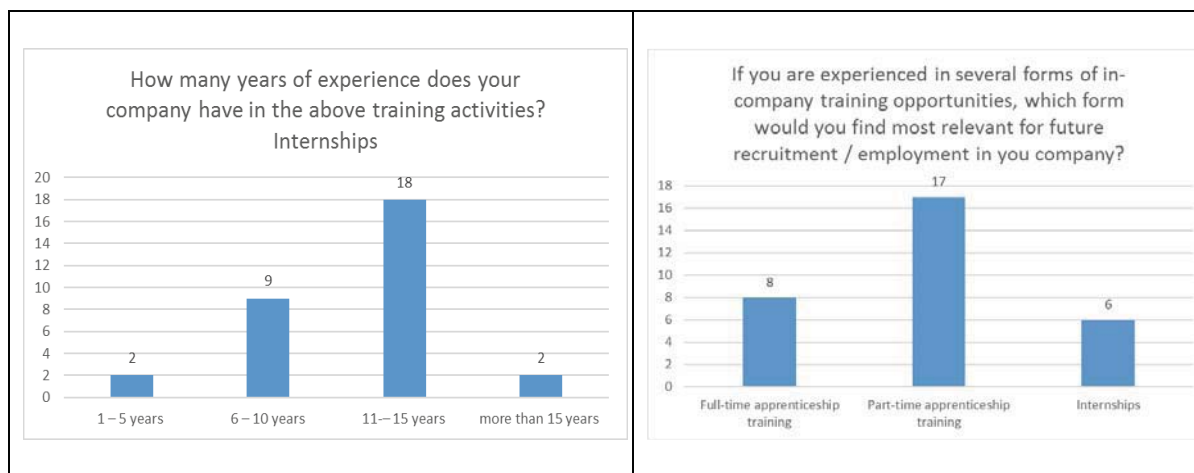
BOX: Experiences with different training programs in GERMANY



Greece: In Greece where internships were the only training opportunity offered by the firms interviewed, most of these firms had also relatively long experiences regarding this type of learning. Almost two thirds of the companies were offering internships for 11 years or longer.

It is interesting however, that without having experiences in apprenticeship training - either as a full-time or as a part-time training opportunity - Greek firms were to a great majority convinced that this type of training would be more relevant than internships when it comes to recruitment of future personnel (see Box 2 below).

BOX 2: Experiences with internships in Greece, estimations on its relevance for recruitment



Ireland: Due to the low number of persons interviewed in Ireland and also due to low rates of response with regard to the questions on the experiences on different in-company training opportunities, this part of the questionnaire could not be examined in the Irish case.

Latvia: Compared to Germany or Greece, the Latvian experiences made in offering internships as part of a study program or are a bit shorter. The majority of firms were no longer involved than 5 years in such training opportunities, which probably reflects a general picture of the Latvian company engagement in vocational education and training.

Box 3 summarises the Latvian results of the questionnaire on this issue. It has further turned out that in view of future recruitment activities, the overall picture shows a clear contentedness with internships as the most relevant form of supporting them. This is a clear contrast to the opinion, Greek company representatives were providing.

BOX 3: Experiences with internships in Greece, estimations on its relevance for recruitment



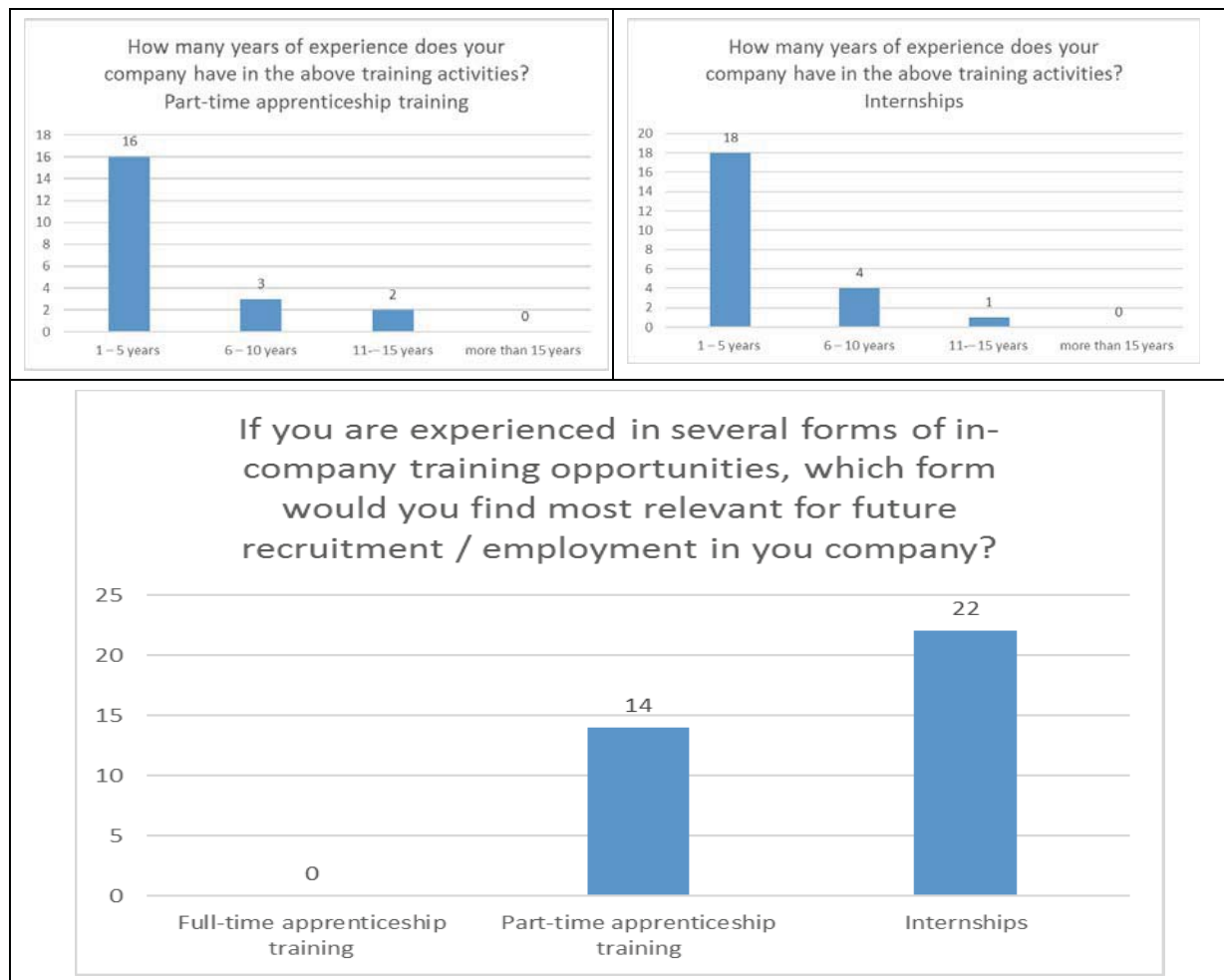
Spain: Experiences in providing in-company training opportunities like internships as part of a double qualifying program or of shorter duration and part of a study program are still of relatively short time. In the majority of all cases, most offers only existed for less than five years, so that only a few cohorts of learners/students have gone through these programs so far. This is also due to the fact that (most of) the programs in question do not have a very long tradition.¹

Asked about the relevance of the two different measures offered (many companies in Spain had offered both types of programs (see Figure 1), the estimations were in favour

¹ Most of the experiences referred to in the Spanish case are based on programs established only in 2012/2013 in cooperation with a local institute located in Elgoibar/ Northern Spain, where all interviews have been made.

of internships – if it comes to future recruitment. Box 4 summarises the Spanish results of these questions.

BOX 4: Experiences with different training programs in Spain



4. Selection of candidates

With regard to the selection processes of candidates trying to find a learning opportunity within a company, most of the companies interviewed in all participating countries were indicating, that they selection mechanisms were in place. Only in some cases these were not relevant (see Figure 2).

When selection procedures were not undertaken in the enterprise, this did not necessarily mean, that candidates haven't been going through a certain selection procedure. For example in the cases of Germany, Ireland and Spain, the company's partner had selected candidates who were not directly chosen by the company. So, in this case, there is a cooperation scheme / partnership contract with another training provider (VET college, university, others) and within such partnership agreement, students or interns are regularly sent by the theoretical training provider. In Germany and Ireland this referred both to 4 in Spain to 8 cases.

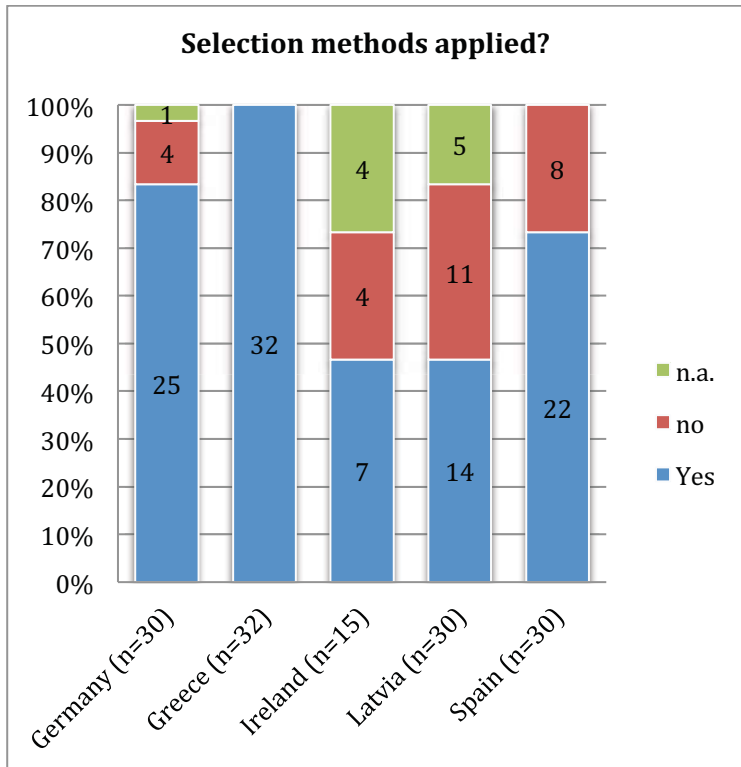


Figure 2: Application of selection mechanisms

For the majority of all cases recruitment was done within the company but these differed a with regard to the different learning opportunities. By far the most common selection instruments were

- a formal application, followed by
- a job interview.

Moreover,

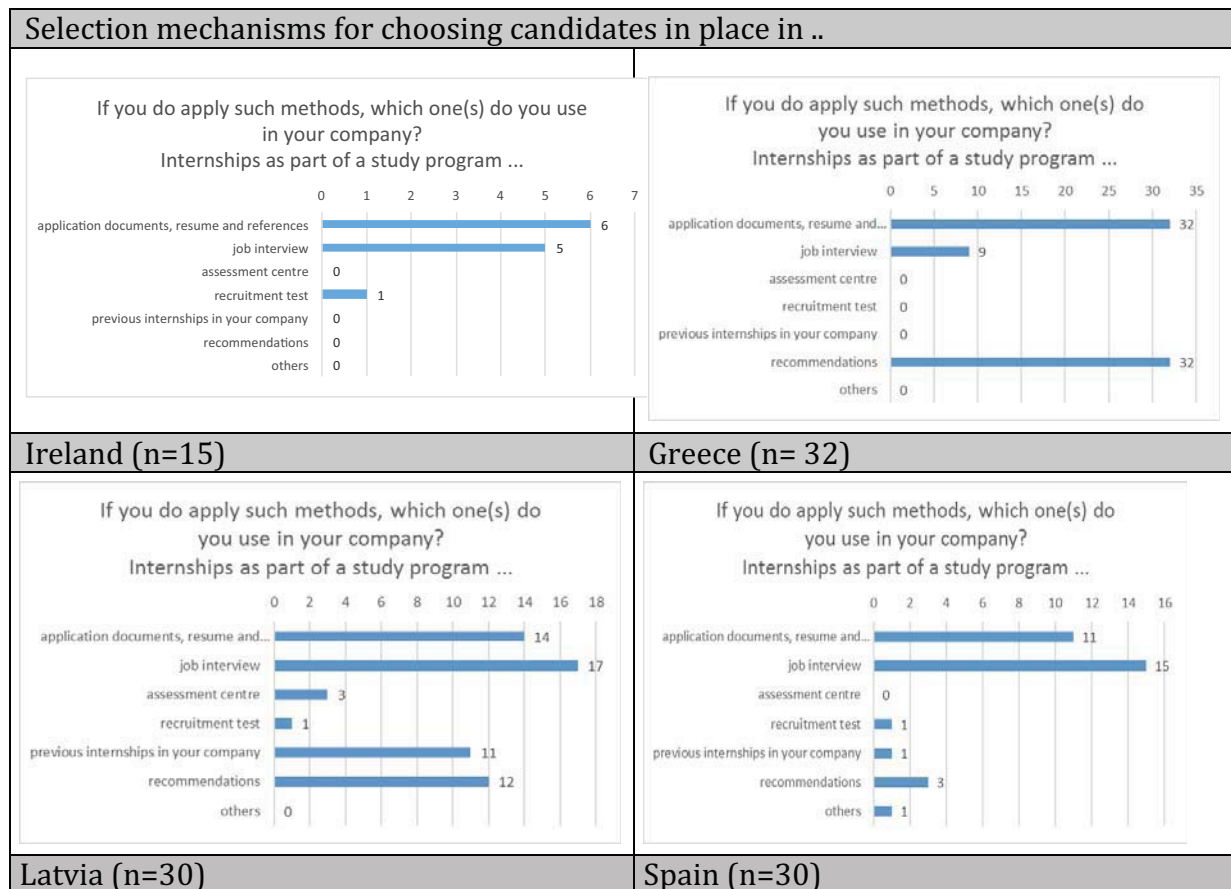
- recommendations and/or a
- previous employment as an intern in the same company

played a significant role for a majority of the participating firms.

The following illustration shows, that in the case of internships as part of a study programme, these methods were the most common in Latvia, Greece, Ireland and Spain. In these cases, employer commitment was linked to programmes of duration less than 12 months.

In addition to this finding, the survey data analysis of the German companies suggest that – to a certain point – companies' behaviour on this issue maybe linked to the extent of commitment necessary in the different programs, which also includes a view the perspectives of employing learners further. For example, in Germany, the most complex mechanisms were in place when it came to or apprenticeships or double qualification programs such as dual studies leading to a bachelor degree and a crafts certificate (see Box 6).

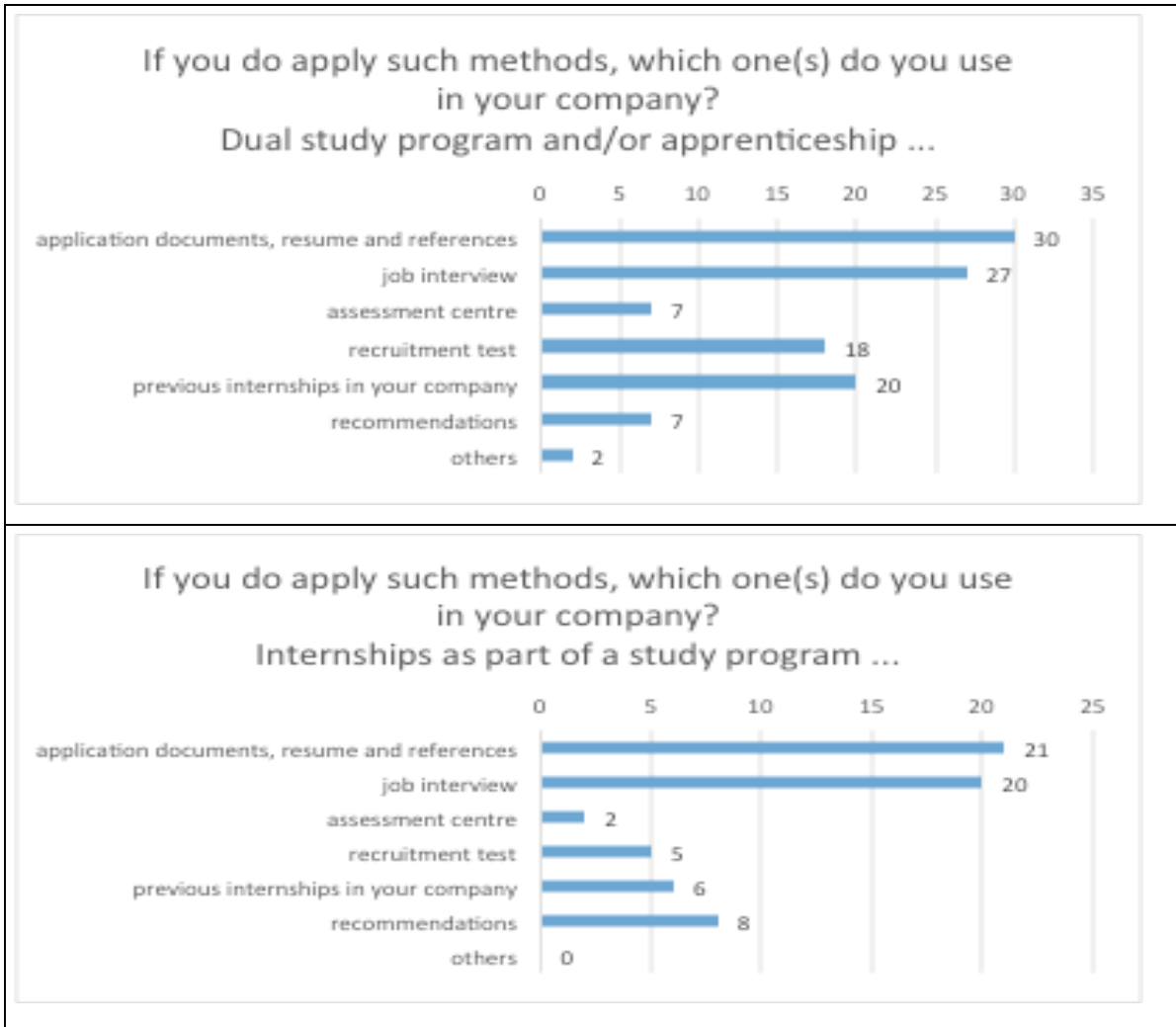
BOX 5 Selection instruments for internships as part of a study programme



From a company's point of view, these courses are the most expensive ones and have to be looked at as a decision for a longer term; in order to make sure that an "investment" into the candidates enrolled in such programs would pay off, selection processes were quite elaborated and often included recruitment tests or assessment centers.

In Germany, selection mechanisms for internships (as part of study programs but not leading to a qualification directly obtained with the training company) were also done with accuracy. Most of the learners had to hand in an application, had job interviews like in the other countries. Assessment centers or other forms of tests on the other hand were less relevant compared to double qualification programs or traditional apprenticeships.

BOX 6: Selection methods applied in Germany



5. Contractual arrangements, employment opportunities and remunerations

In almost all companies employing apprentices or students this relationship was based on a contractual arrangement, whether remunerations were payed or not.

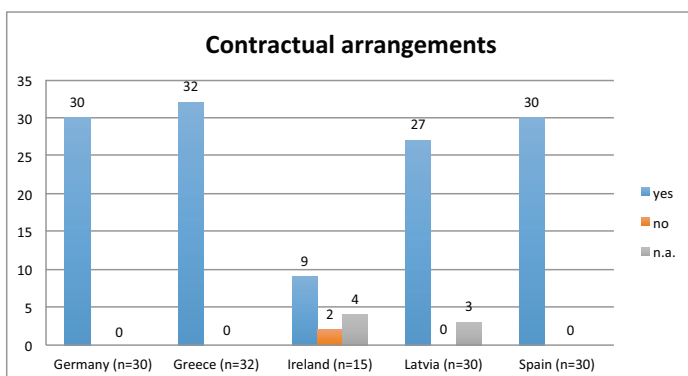


Figure 3: Contractual arrangements between companies and learners

Whereas in some countries contracts were predominantly made between a company and a learner (Germany, Greece and Ireland), in other countries contractual arrangements were made between the three parties: company, learner, and the theoretical training venue. This was the case in Latvia and Spain (see Figure 4).

In Germany, all seven cases in which the company not only had a contract with a learner but also with a theoretical training provider, this was linked to a dual study program that involved a university of applied sciences. The other cases were either traditional dual VET training opportunities, where no contract other than with the learner has to be signed as well as some further cases linked to dual study programs in which no contract with the respective university was necessary.

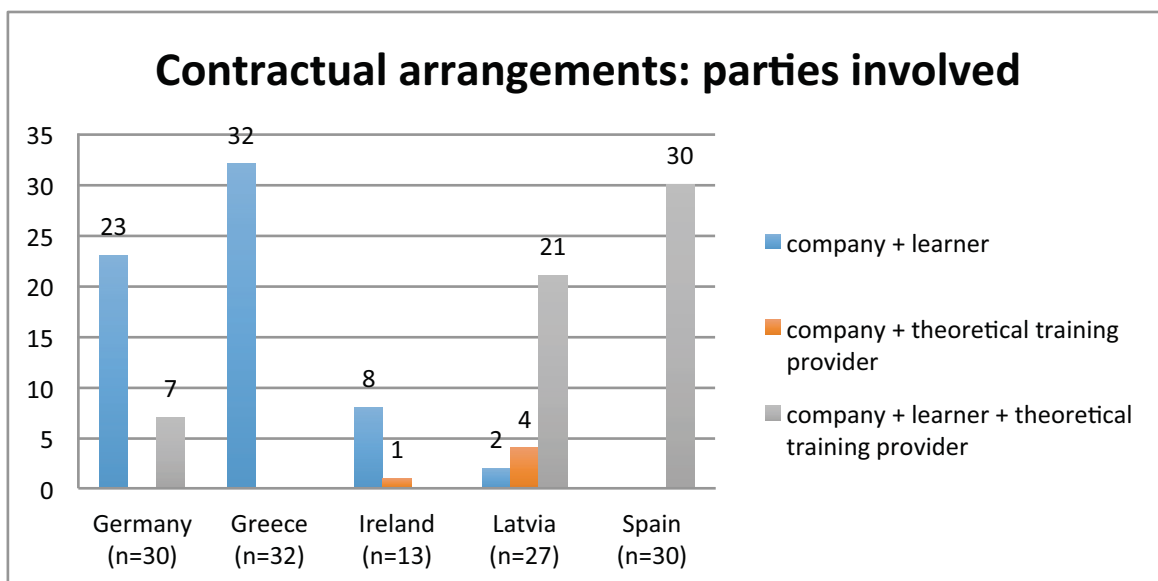


Figure 4: Contractual arrangements and parties involved

In most of the participating countries and regardless of the type of program, firms were paying remuneration to apprentices or interns. (For more details see country specific presentations on the P4LLL-tec company survey results).

Employment opportunities however, were estimated in a different manner. The P4LLL-tec questionnaire referred to general employment opportunities of learners after finishing their program and to employment opportunities within the training company. Figure 5 shows the estimations on general employment opportunities that learners may have after finishing their (different) training programs. This result demonstrates a very positive overall picture. No interviewee indicated that there were no (good) chances to find work after completion of the training. However, in Latvia and in Spain, roughly two thirds of the people interviewed said, that they did not know or could not judge.

If one analyses the data referring to the concrete job opportunities provided by the training company after completion of the training program, the picture turns perhaps a bit more realistic. Figure 6 presents the information on this issue.

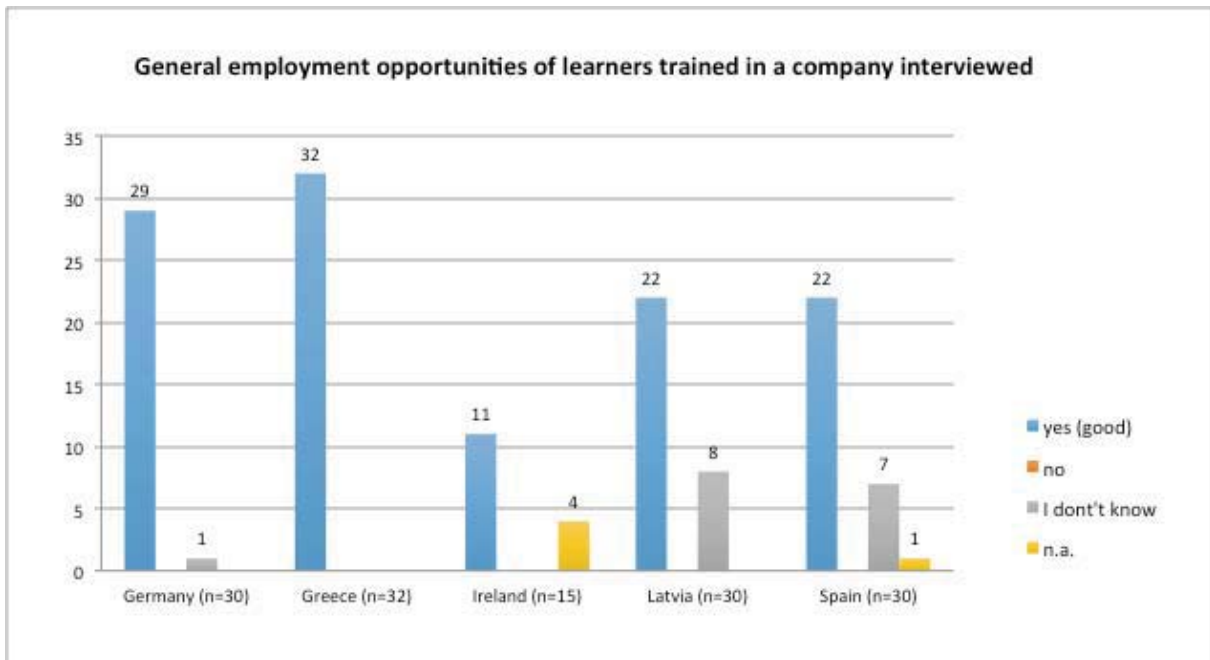


Figure 5: General employment opportunities

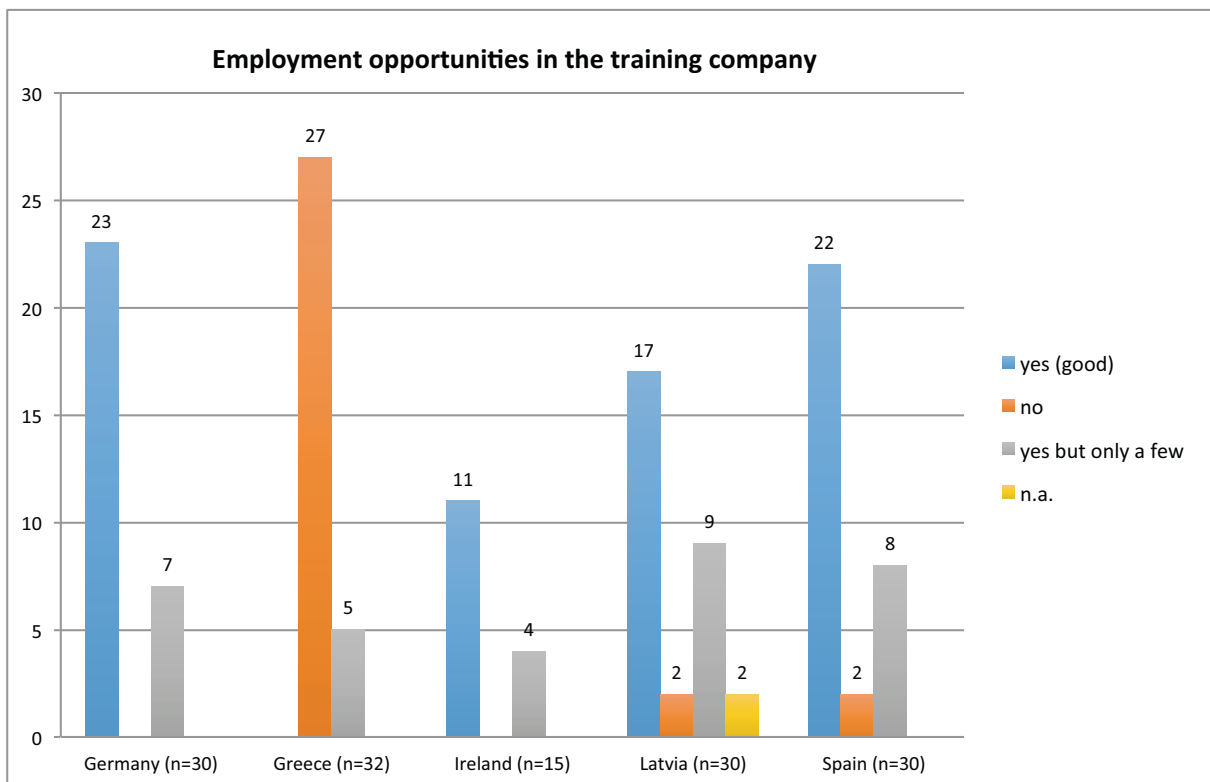


Figure 6: Employment opportunities in the training companies

Very good or good were the situations in German, and Spanish firms where more than two thirds of the persons interviewed stated that employment opportunities in their firms were good, even though approx. one third said, that job offers were possible but not to all learners trained in their company. The reasons for limited opportunities in

these cases were often due to the fact that a company often trained more learners than it could take over after completion of the training program.

If there were no employment opportunities in the training companies this could be linked to a variety of factors, i.e. a lack of vacancies, economic reasons or the quality of a training program (fitness of learners for an occupation after training).

According to the data, it was very seldom due to economic reasons in Germany (2cases) or in Ireland (one case) while this was the central reason for all Greek employers. As a matter of fact, one has to also see this information in the context of the size of firms interviewed in Greece. Here, most of the firms were very small and could not afford employing additional personal (which would be more expensive after the end of a training program).

In general, the database on the question about the reasons for not offering a position after a training program was not good enough to further analyse them, except of the Greek survey. Figure 7 summarises the information on this subject in Greece. Apart from the general economic reasons or the fact that no further personnel was needed, it is interesting to note, that in Greece training providers often did not think, that the potential applicants were already fit for taking over a position in the training company. Training offers in Greece were of rather short term (internships of less than one year), so it may be possible that the lack of competence development, which may have been observed by Greek employers, was rooted in the design of the respective training programs.

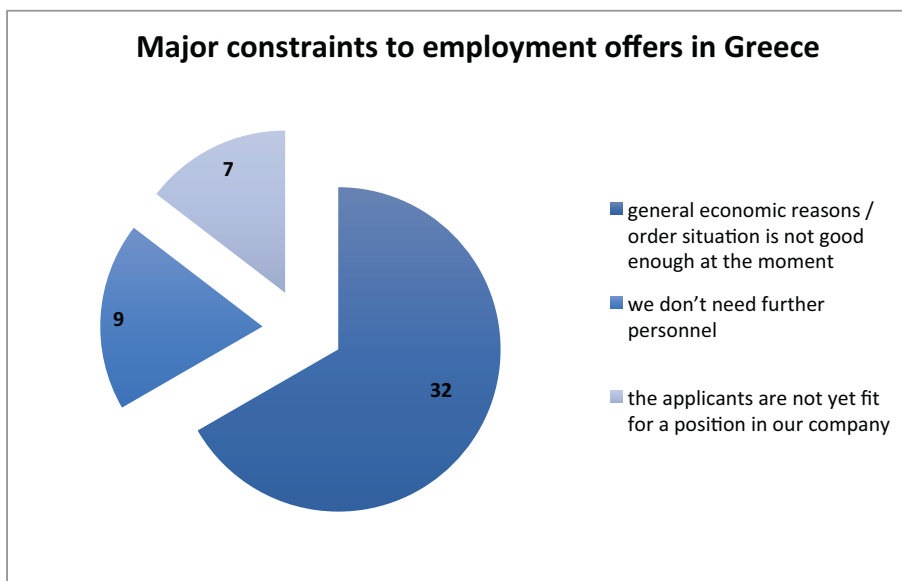


Figure 7: Why Greek training firms do not offer learners a position after training

6. Cooperation between the learning venues

The cooperation between the different learning venues takes place at very different levels. The questionnaire introduced in the P4LLL-tec project addressed the some major issues such as the

- cooperation on training contents

- cooperation on program management issues
- cooperation at teacher/trainer level, i.e. teachers (theoretical training venue) and practical trainers (company)

The questionnaire also covered questions of

- the degree of matching between theoretical and practical lessons
- the theoretical and practical training providers engagement in common (training) projects, and
- regular meetings between theoretical and practical training staff.

In Germany, where companies were able to judge on three different training programs, it was interesting to analyse and compare the degree of learning venue cooperation in the respective programs. The following graph illustrates how intensive the cooperation between the different learning venues is.

It could be observed that the cooperation between the different training providers was strongest in apprenticeships and in dual study programs. This information is supported by the information on the regular common staff meetings or training project run together. Such activities were in place in roughly 50% of all cases, but more with regard to apprenticeship training or dual study programs, where in approx. two thirds of all cases regular meetings and training projects were on the agenda (for the detailed figures see the ppt document on German P4LLL-tec company survey).

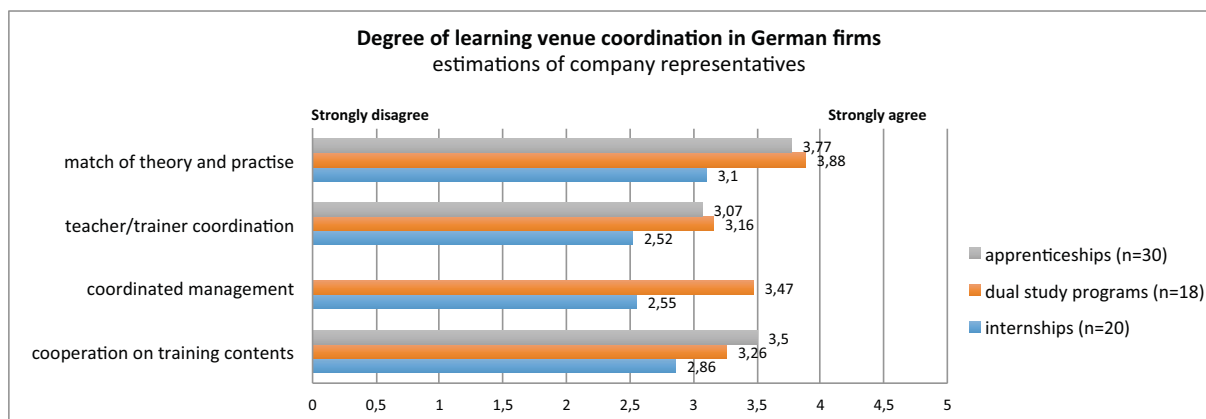


Figure 8: Learning venue cooperation in Germany

In Greece, the only form of company involvement in training programs was via inter-ships as part of a study program. These programs were not based on a learning venue cooperation as intensive as in Germany, but among the criteria addressed in the study, the match between theory and practise was evaluated best. According to the persons interrogated, there were not so effort put on a coordination of program management or a coordination of learning and teaching. Staff meetings between the learning venues did not play a role (in only of the 32 cases such meetings were held on a regular basis), but on the other hand there was cooperation on common training projects (29 out of 32 cases).

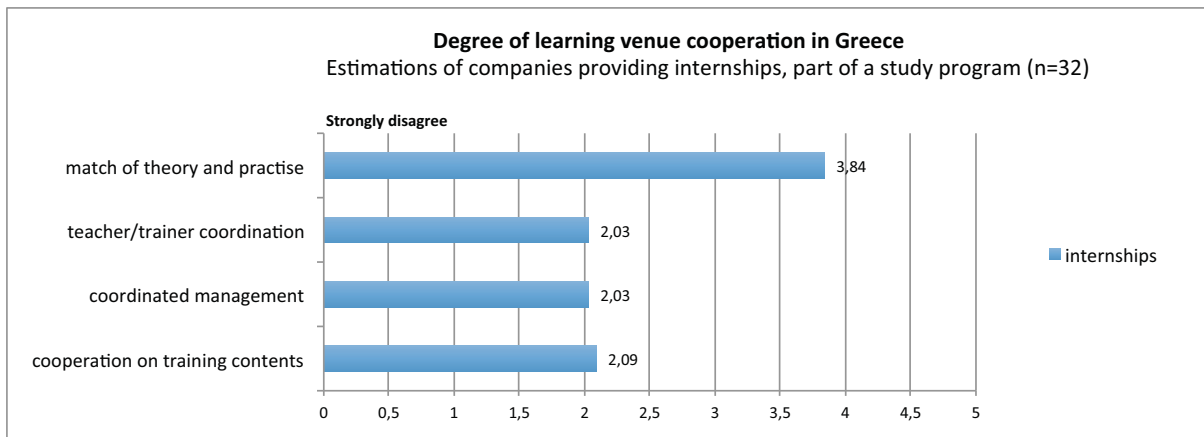


Figure 9: Learning venue cooperation in Greece

In Ireland, only 8 companies provided data on this issue and only with regard to the internships. According to the estimations, the cooperation was well very elaborated in terms of the cooperation on training contents and the match between theory and practise was weighed very positively (see Figure 10). In these two domains, the Irish participants delivered the highest estimates – also in comparison with all other countries’ results. However, it has to be considered that the evaluation is only based on very few voices.

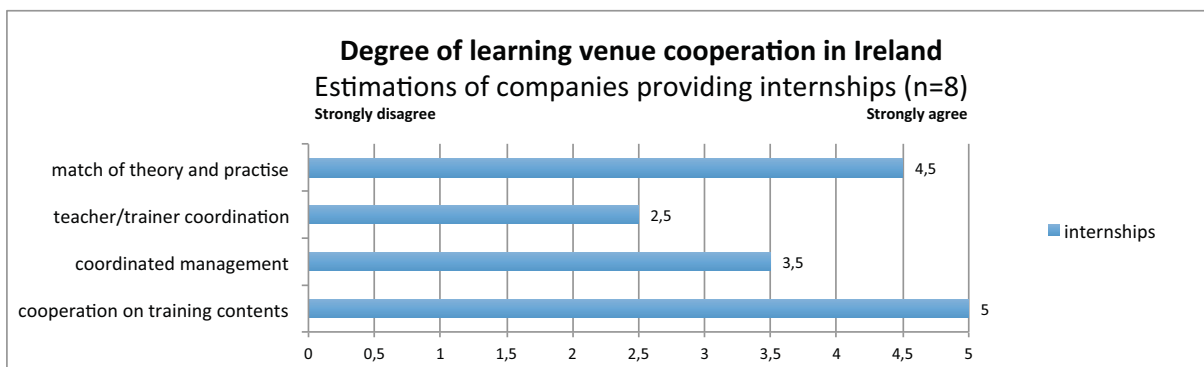


Figure 10: Learning venue cooperation in Ireland

In Latvia, estimates on learning venue cooperation were rather weak in terms of the coordination of management and the cooperation on training contents (internships). Compared to the way internship provision was evaluated, apprenticeships reached the higher marks in all domains where this was measured, but especially regarding aspects related to the cooperation on training contents as well as the match between theory and practise.

As for the information collected about regular common training projects between the different learning venues and also about the question as to whether regular staff meetings between the partners were held, the Latvian questionnaire also used a 5 point scale (as opposed to the questionnaires introduced in the other countries, where this question was only to be answered by “yes” or “no”). The analysis of these questions supports the impression that a cooperation between the learning venues involved in ap-

prenticeship training functions comparatively well, given the fact that training projects are often done in common approach.

Nevertheless, one has to consider that only low numbers of questionnaires (n=6) were providing information on apprenticeships, so that this – as a result – needs to be subject to further explorations.

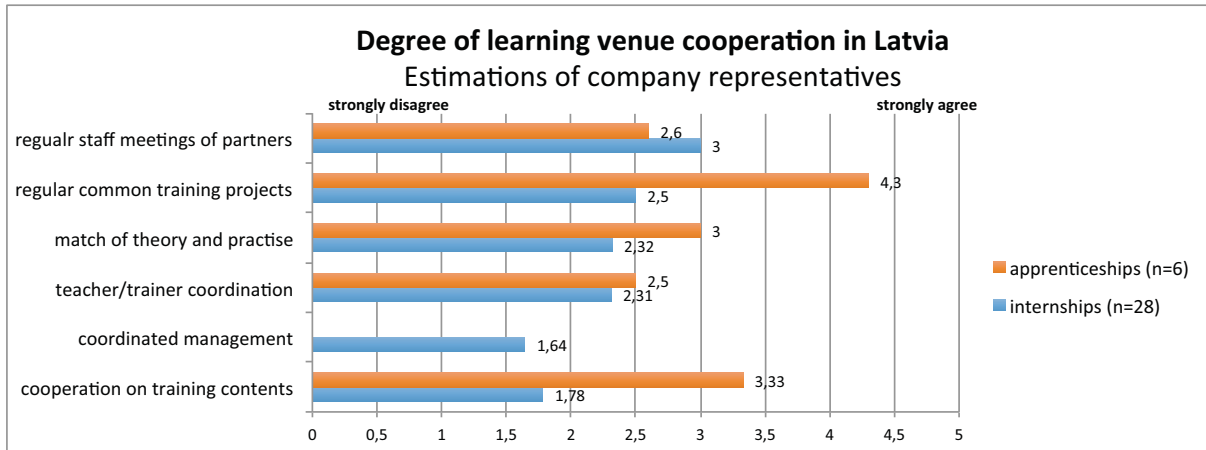


Figure 11: Learning venue cooperation in Latvia

In Spain, the picture also reflects a situation with almost average results in all domains of cooperation between the different learning venues. Like in Latvia, cooperation was evaluated with regard to two different programs, i.e. internships and apprenticeships. Best values were achieved in the participants' views on the cooperation on training contents in apprenticeships, but on the other hand, the programs subsumed as internships received slightly better results in all other domains.

The question regarding regular common training projects or regular staff meetings between the partners were almost equally answered by the company representatives in view of the different training programs offered. Whereas in approx. two-thirds off all cases, meetings were regularly held among the partners, common projects were less relevant, i.e. conducted in about 37% or 38 % of all cases (see Figure 13).

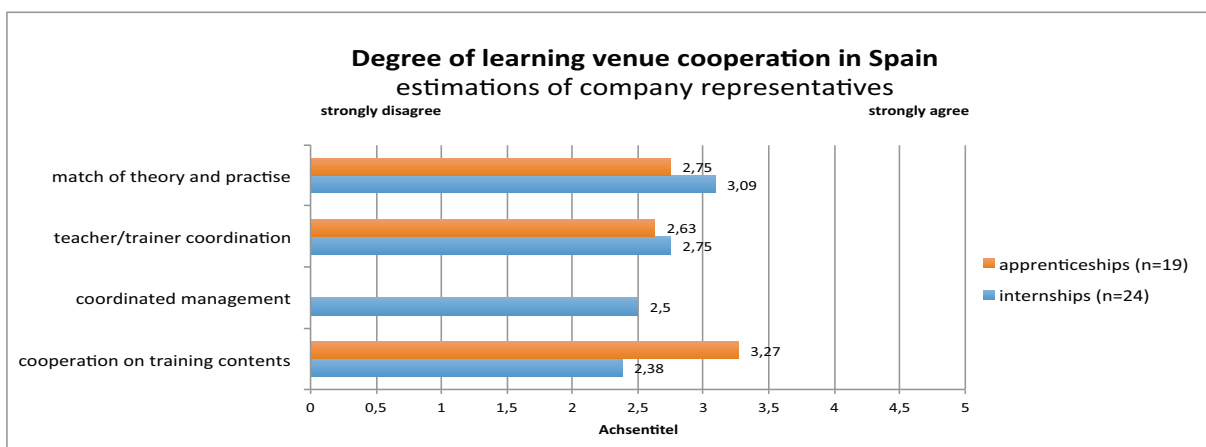


Figure 12: Learning venue cooperation in Spain

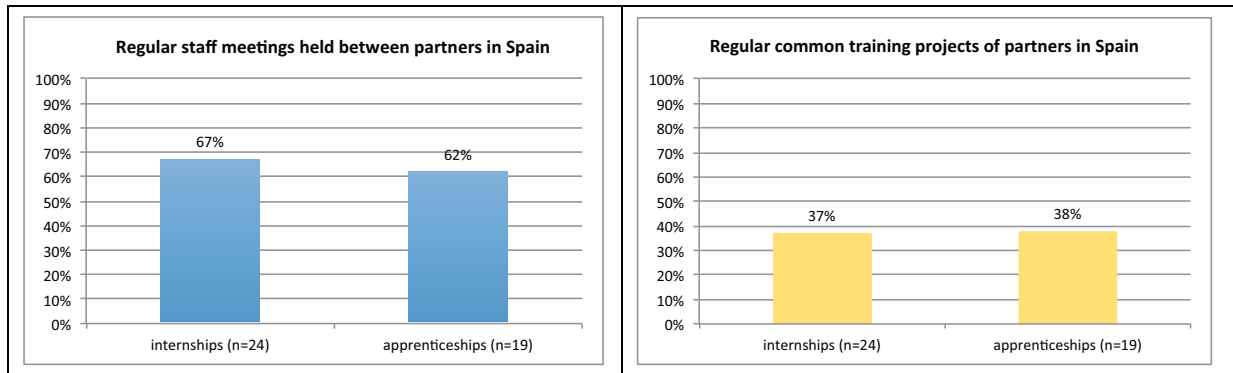


Figure 13: Learning venue cooperation in Spain: Regular meetings of staff and cooperation on common training projects

Concerning this issue, the database only allows for a direct comparison with information provided by the German companies. As figure 14 shows, in German partnerships, it is more often the case that partners conduct training project together. Staff meetings between the partners are also more common, but only in partnerships like dual study programs or apprenticeships. Apparently, internships are not attributed a similar importance, which is no surprise, due to the country's VET systemic background.

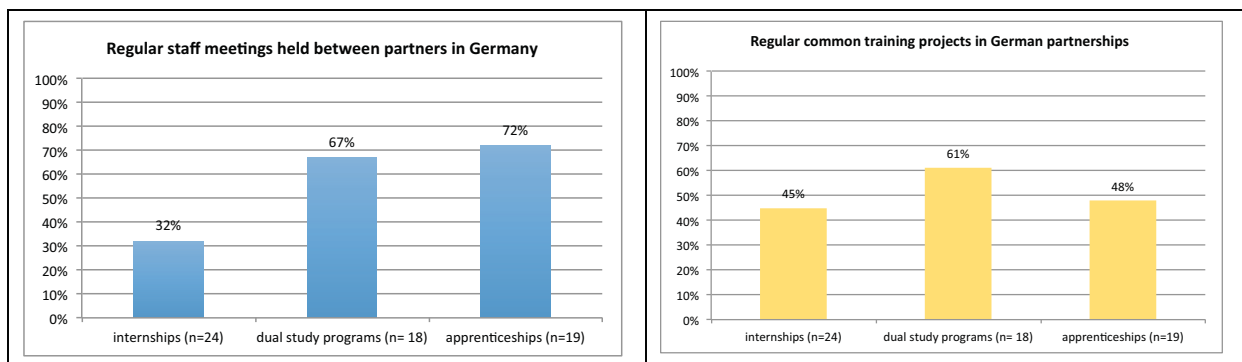


Figure 14: Learning venue cooperation in Germany: Regular meetings of staff and cooperation on common projects

7. The motivation and performance of learners as viewed by training companies

In order to find out about the learner's motivation and performance at work as viewed by their training providers, the P4LLL-tec questionnaire addressed a number of aspects that were to be judged by company representatives - always with regard to a specific program in question: internships, apprenticeships or double qualifying programs (dual study programs). Where employers were able to evaluate different programs, they gave statements on all of them. Figure 15 provides an overview of estimations referring to the different programs. From an employer's view it seems as if the degree of contentedness with their learners was quite high on average. Rather weak or negative estimations, which would be represented by values of 2,5 or lower, were not found for any of the participants in respective programs.

Motivation and performance of learners in different programs as viewed by their employers/training providers

(average values of estimations based on a 5-point scale)

INTERNS / APPRENTICES / STUDENTS...

- ... work relatively autonomously
- ... are highly motivated at work
- ... integrate in our team without greater difficulties
- ... are treated by our employees as future staff
- ... will be fit for work after finishing their program

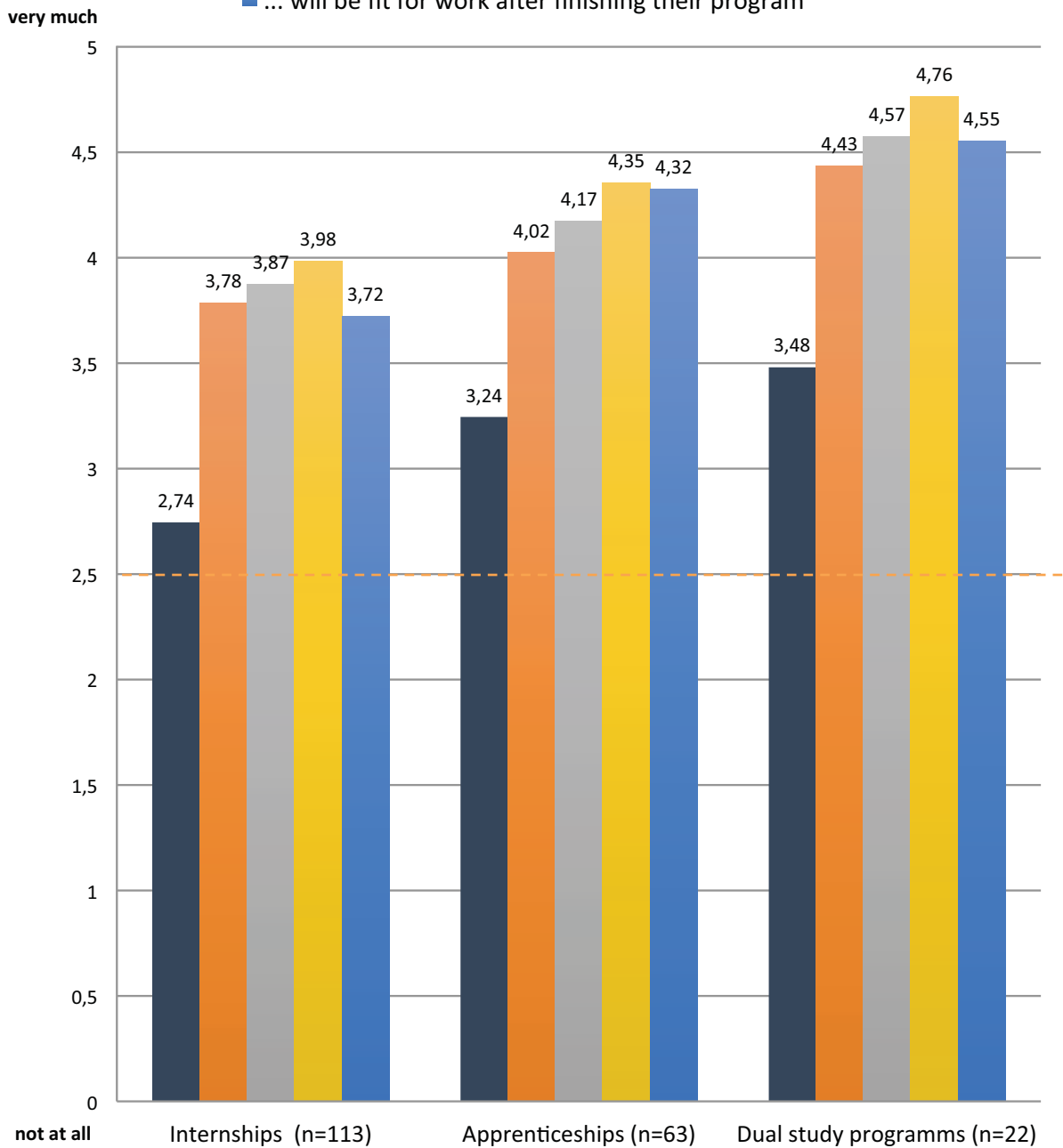


Figure 15: Learning venue cooperation in Spain: Regular meetings of staff and cooperation on common training projects

It seems however, that those enrolled in internships have obtained lower results than others who follow apprenticeships or dual study programs. Yet, one has to point out that the average results presented here reflect the total number of interns in programs in all different partner countries, but – on the other hand students enrolled in dual study programs were only trained in one country (Germany). More detailed information about the overall analysis of this part of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

Summary

The „impact analysis“ of P4LLL-tec based on a company survey has reached 137 companies in the five participating countries. Due to different regional or country specific backgrounds, sizes and branches varied (sometimes considerably). Moreover the systemic background of the programs in question has differed a lot, so that all results and comparisons made in this part of the analysis have to consider this.

For example, in Greece and in Spain, companies were rather small or very small, in Germany, the feedbacks referred to much larger companies; the Irish sample represents a good mixture, but contained only half of the targeted group of 30 participants.

As for the type of training provided, basically three different forms (internships as part of a study program), apprenticeships and part-time apprenticeship training (as part of a dual study program) were evaluated where these were offered. Because training opportunities varied between the countries each country survey addressed a (different set of) training arrangements.

When asked about the relevance of the different kinds of programs in view of future employment opportunities, the answers were interesting, above all in those countries, where different training opportunities were provided. For example, in Germany, apprenticeships were still seen as the program of highest relevance compared to all other options - including double qualifying programs.

In the big majority of the cases, selection methods of candidates were in place, the most important ones being an evaluation of formal application documents resume and references. Recruitment tests or assessment centers were often only relevant in programs of longer duration (apprenticeship or dual study programs) and where assumingly an employer engagement would cover a greater financial budget). But in this case one also needs to consider factors like company size in order to understand why in some countries such methods were not so common.

Most of the arrangements between training providers and learners were based on a training contract, in some cases (notably in Latvia and Spain also involving the theoretical training provider as a third partner. Employment opportunities were judged quite positively in general, also - to a considerable extent - within the training company itself. This finding however does not refer to the Greek survey, basically due to economic constraints but partly also due to a lack of competence learners would have achieved by the end of a program.

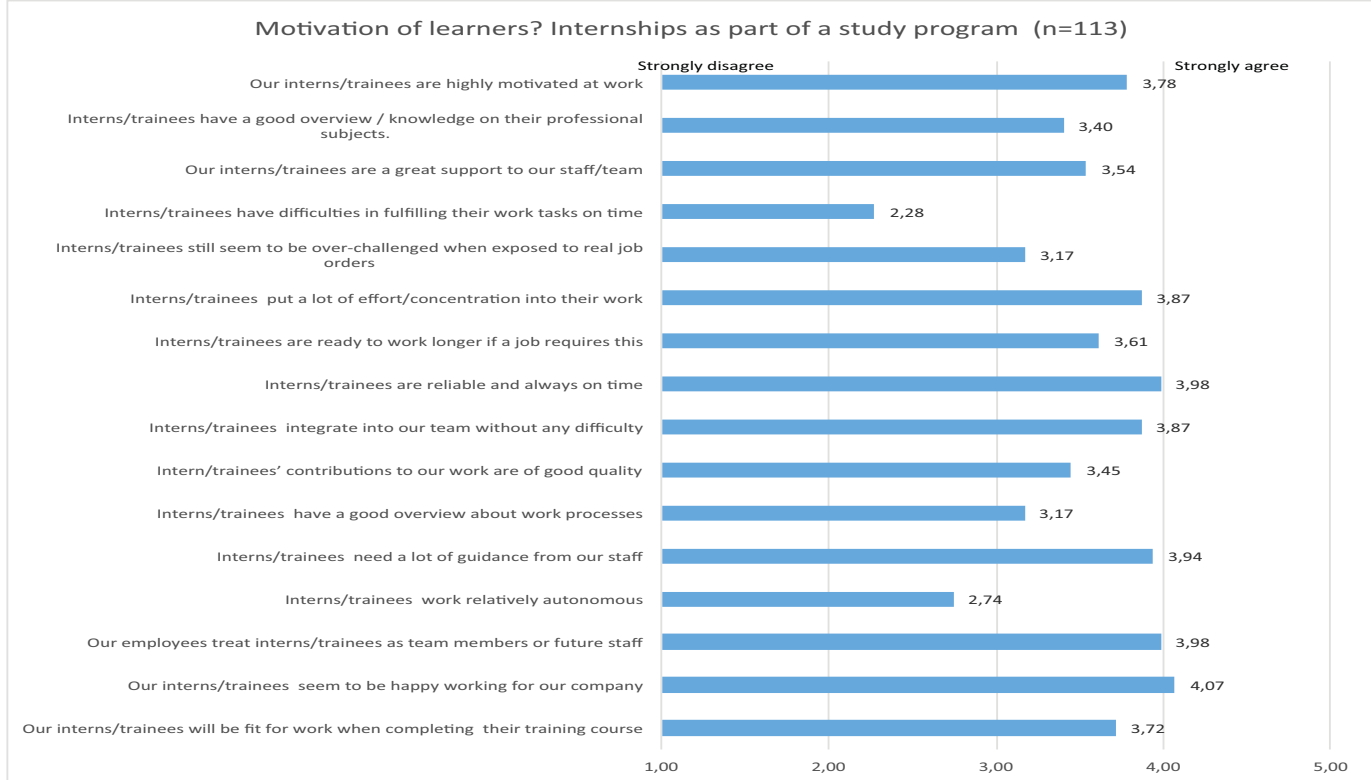
The cooperation of learning venues was estimated with great difference between the participants in the five survey countries. Learning venue cooperation certainly needs to be looked at as a quality criterion of a training program. In Ireland, this cooperation has received highest marks, especially regarding the cooperation on training contents, the coordination of management structures and the match between theoretical and practical training. Internships, as offered for example in Latvia and in Greece were not only received average values, which points to some innovation potential in this regard.

In Spain, the analysis showed some difference between learning venue cooperation in apprenticeships and internships. According to the survey participants, the cooperation between learning venues functioned better in most domains, except for the cooperation on training contents that was better evaluated with regard to internships. Finally, the German sample only showed greater differences between internships on the one hand and apprenticeships or dual study programs on the other. All in all, the results were very good compared to the other samples. One aspect underlying this fact was the frequency of staff meetings between partners and the amount of common training projects conducted together.

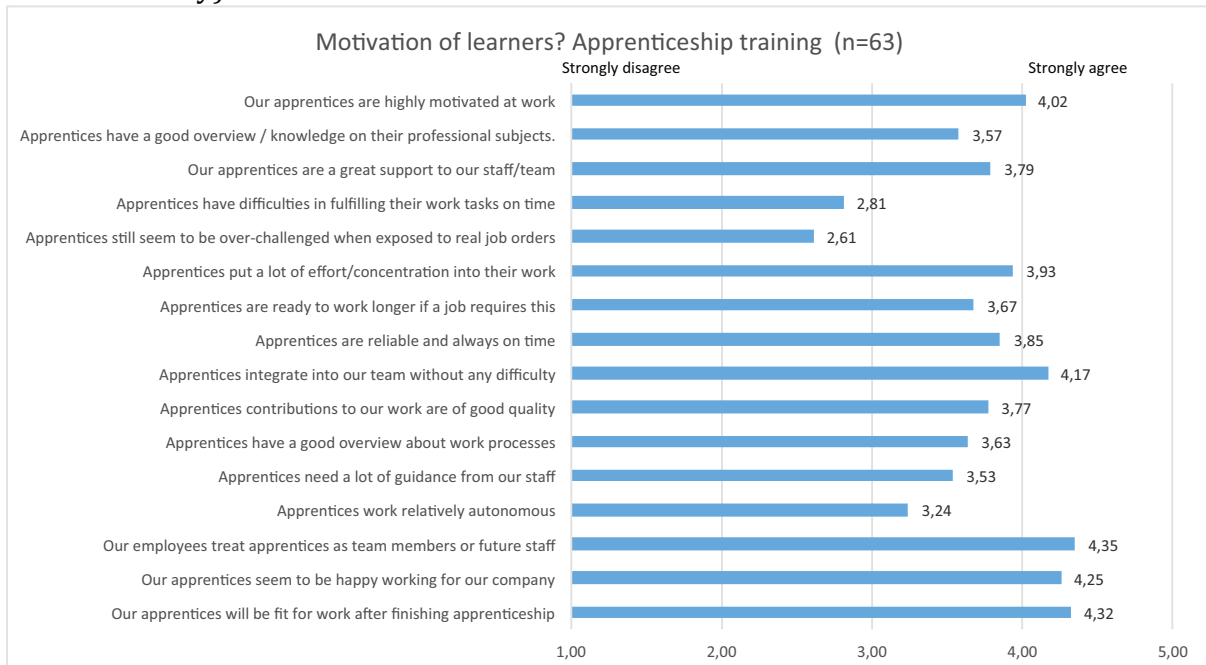
Finally and when looking at the motivation of all learners, the degree of contentedness of the training providers seems to be relatively high. The patterns of answers lead to comparable results, the only difference being that in all aspects commented by the survey participants students enrolled in double qualifying programs received the highest marks. This information however is based on a sample with only one country providing information on this type of learning opportunity.

Appendix: Additional information on motivational questions

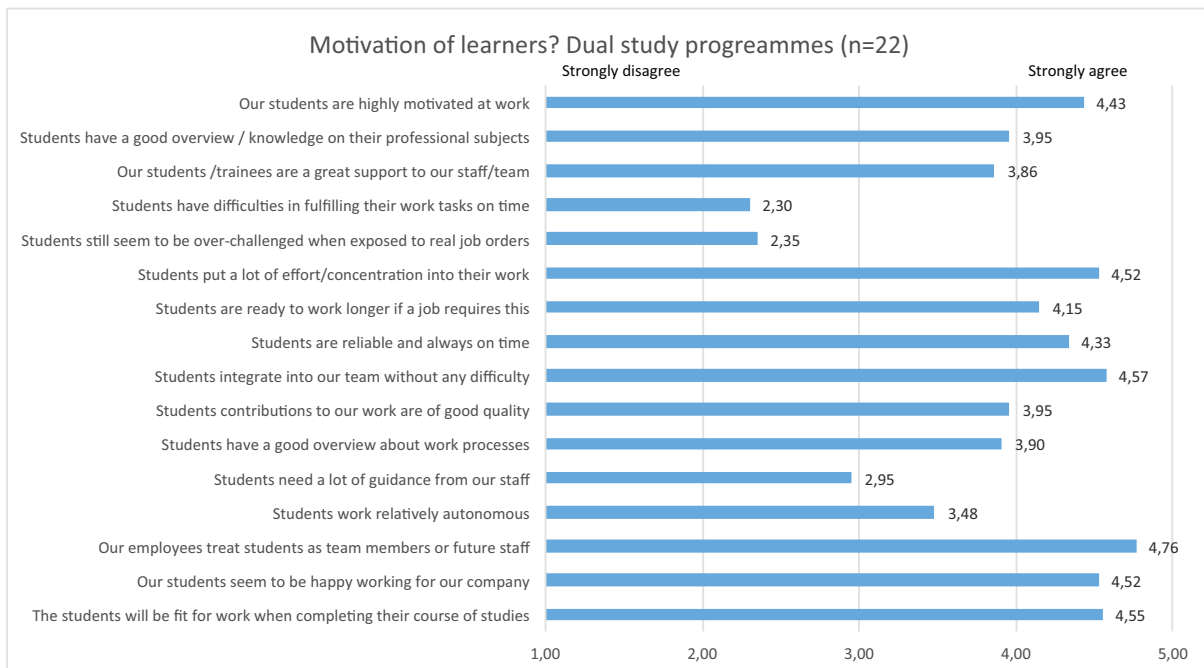
A) Overall result: Internships (information of companies in all partner countries)



B) Overall results apprenticeships (Information composed of data from the Latvian and German survey)



c) Overall results “dual study programs” (double qualifying programs), German survey data only



Germany

1. The motivation of learners is generally considered to be very high to high, with the highest scores for the dual students and the lowest for the interns.
2. The evaluation of the motivation of students of the traditional dual vocational training and participants of a dual study program can hardly be differentiated from each other, all values are allmost the same.
3. Apprentices (traditional programs as well as participants of a dual study program) work relatively autonomously (more than interns) and integrate very well into the team of permanent staff.
4. From the companies' point of view, it is generally assumed that these groups have a high level of job satisfaction in their company.
5. Vocational qualification (fitness for work) is attested equally to vocational students and dual students after completing their training. The values of the trainees (naturally) lag behind.