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National practices in measuring work-based learning: a critical review ILO Department of Statistics



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► Abbreviations

CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CLA	Classification of learning activities
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IAG-TVET	Inter-agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LFS	Labour force survey
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
TVET	Technical vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

► Contents

Abbreviations	2
Introduction	4
Structure of the report	6
Chapter 1. Past and current ILO standards concerning work-based learning	7
Chapter 2. Review of current country practices in collecting data on apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training	8
Chapter 3. Challenges and possible directions for improving statistics on apprenticeship and other forms of WBL	12
Chapter 4. Existing statistical standards	13
Chapter 5. Conceptual Framework for statistics on WBL – preliminary proposal	17
APPENDIX 1.	20
References	25

1. Introduction¹

1. Increasingly, countries around the world, at all levels of development, are putting work-based learning (WBL), particularly apprenticeships high on their policy agenda, recognizing its potential for, improving skills and employability, reducing skills mismatches, enhancing economic competitiveness and social inclusion. WBL can play a crucial role in developing the right skills for the labour market, not only for youth but also for adults in need of up-skilling or re-skilling. Better and more broadly available apprenticeships, and other work-based training opportunities, can reduce youth unemployment, enhance the productivity and competitiveness of enterprises and develop skills that are relevant to a rapidly changing world of work.
2. WBL is complex and multifaceted. It refers to all forms of learning that take place in a real (and/or simulated) work environment². It can take place within formal and non-formal education and training as well as informal learning that can be undertaken throughout a person's lifetime with the aim of improving competences including knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to successfully obtain and keep jobs and progress within individual career pathways. Apprenticeships, internships/traineeships and on-the-job training are the most common types of WBL (ILO, 2017). These types usually – but not always – combine elements of learning in the workplace with off-the-job learning, usually classroom-based.
3. Historically, apprenticeship and other forms of WBL have been considered primarily as a means of facilitating the school-to-work transition for young people. However, in the context of a fast-changing world of work, apprenticeships are allowing both youth and older workers, **in the formal and informal economy**, to acquire new skills, reskill and upskill throughout their working lives.
4. The importance of WBL, as a component of lifelong learning, for economic and social development was emphasized by the international community in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015), in particular:

SDG 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, and its indicator:

- 4.3.1: Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex and

SDG 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its indicator:

- 8.6.1: Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training

5. Skills development and lifelong learning have long been at the heart of the work of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The ILO's mandate for skills, training and lifelong learning is based on its Constitution and has been set out in international labour standards and other instruments that promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity. The ILO has always played a lead role in promoting WBL, especially apprenticeship, as an important tool to deliver skills that are relevant

¹ Prepared by Valentina Stoevska, Senior Statistician, ILO Department of Statistics.

² Learning activities with no on-the-jobs component of learning are excluded.

to the labour market and to individuals' aspirations, ease transitions to labour market, contribute to reducing youth unemployment and support the training of adults.

6. Number of instruments were adopted by ILC such as Apprenticeship Recommendation, 1939 (No. 60) and Vocational Training Recommendation, 1962 (No. 117) which served for decades before being replaced. In June 2023, the ILC adopted new standards, Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208) that sets a clear framework for constituents to regulate and promote apprenticeships.
7. Because of the importance of WBL, and life-long learning (LLL) in general, there is a growing need for reliable and comparable statistics on participation in various forms of WBL (both incidence and trends) that could support the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of specific laws, collective agreements, policies and programmes for vocational education and training, skills development and reskilling of workers.
8. Yet, there is not only an absence of data in many countries, but also a shortage of comparable quantitative data and indicators on participation in WBL. The definitions of WBL vary from one country to another, the boundaries between various forms of WBL are blurred, and as a result there is a lack of clearly distinguished apprenticeship data. But all definitions used by countries and international organisations have many common elements. In all definitions, the notion of learning at the workplace is key.
9. The 21st ICLS therefore may wish to request that the ILO, in collaboration with interested countries, international, regional and subregional organizations, representatives of workers' organizations and employers' organisations, continue methodological work on the measurement of WBL, and report to the 22nd ICLS with a view to the future adoption of international statistical standards, in form of guidelines, that will:
 - Provide statistical definitions and/or taxonomies of various forms of WBL;
 - Provide guidance on measurement;
 - Provide guidance for data sources, data collection, tabulation and analysis;
 - Suggest key indicators needed from the policy point of view.
10. As WBL is also part of a much broader landscape of educational and labour market contexts, any new statistical standards will need to be aligned with the existing statistical standards on education and labour statistics.

2. Structure of the report

11. The preparation of this report is part of ongoing efforts by ILO to strengthen its capacity, and the capacity of its Member States, for the collection and analysis of data on WBL, and provide a starting point for further development of standards in this area of labour statistics.
12. It is intended as a first step in providing an overview of existing standards related to WBL, and proposes a preliminary conceptual framework for identifying and measuring various forms of WBL. It also provides snapshot of the type of information that is currently collected in national LFS and other household-based surveys. As such, it does not discuss all potential sources of data on WBL. Data on enrolment in TVET programmes, that may or may not have a component of WBL, which are provided by education ministries or their equivalents, should complement these data.
13. The report is organised according to the following structure. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the most important ILO standards related to WBL. Chapter 2 describes current country practices in collecting data on apprenticeships and other forms of WBL and discusses issues with the concepts of WBL used across the countries. Chapter 3 discusses challenges in monitoring WBL, and outlines possible directions for improving statistics on apprenticeship and other forms of WBL. Chapter 4 highlights the most important existing statistical standards on education and labour statistics. A preliminary conceptual framework for statistics on WBL, building on existing standards, in particular 19th and 20th ICLS resolutions as well as Recommendation No.208, is provided in Chapter 5. Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix I provide data on the prevalence of apprenticeship and other forms of formal and non-formal WBL per 1000 persons in age groups 15 years and over, and 15-34, based on most recent national LFS or other household-based surveys. Although the prevalence rates presented in these tables are not fully comparable across countries, they provide a first step in estimating the importance of apprenticeship and other forms of formal and non-formal WBL in individual countries.

3. Chapter 1. Past and current ILO standards concerning work-based learning

14. Based on the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by 13th ICLS in 1982 (ILO, 1982) and general guidelines for the statistical treatment of participants in job-training schemes of 14th ICLS (ILO, 1987)³, participants in apprenticeship and various other types of job-training schemes, organised directly by enterprises to train or retrain their staff, or subsidised by the government as a way to promote employment, were considered as employed, regardless of whether they were paid or not.
15. Given the heterogeneity of job-training schemes in terms of nature, modalities of contract, modes of payment, duration of training, etc., no specific other guidelines on the trainees, such as more precise definitions, were formulated.
16. With the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization adopted by the 19th ICLS in 2013 (ILO, 2013), distinction is being made between trainees (apprentices, interns or trainees) who work for pay in cash or in kind and trainees (apprentices, interns and trainees) who work in exchange for training without remuneration. The former are classified as being in employment and later are excluded from employment and classified as “unpaid trainees”.⁴
17. The 19th ICLS resolution also includes a definition for the category “Unpaid trainee workers”.⁵
18. The International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) adopted by the 20th ICLS in 2018 (ILO, 2018) provides a definition for the category “Paid apprentices, trainees and interns”⁶, as one of the statuses in employment.
19. At its 111th Session in 2023, the International Labour Conference adopted the *Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation (No. 208)* (ILO, 2023), based on a strong tripartite consensus.
20. Recommendation No. 208 provides a definition of the term “apprenticeship”, and in one of its provisions, calls for data collection by the competent authority on rates of retention, non-completion and success in apprenticeships, to assess the effectiveness of financing models and incentive schemes in creating quality apprenticeships. It also calls for generation of new knowledge in the field of apprenticeships, carried out in cooperation with relevant partner organizations.

³ See the report of the Working Group on the "Implications of Employment Promotion Schemes on the Measurement of Employment and Unemployment"

⁴ Country approaches vary with respect to the treatment of unpaid trainees. Many countries that have not as yet applied the 19th ICLS resolution in practice still consider apprentices and/or interns as employed even if they are not paid.

⁵ See the 19th ICLS resolution 1, paragraphs 33 to 35.

⁶ See the 20th ICLS resolution 1, paragraphs 55 and 56.

4. Chapter 2. Review of current country practices in collecting data on apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training

21. In order to respond to the need for conceptual and practical guidelines on the measurement of apprenticeship and other forms of work-based training, the ILO Department of Statistics and Skills and Employability Branch have begun work to review country practices in identifying apprenticeship and other forms of work-based training in LFS and household-based surveys. Out of more than 140 national questionnaires, 84 countries were identified as including at least one question regarding work-based training in their LFS. This chapter aims at providing a snapshot of the current practices.
22. The focus of the analysis was the presence of questions/variables about apprenticeships, internship, traineeship in national questionnaires. Questions on current participation in formal education and training were not used as those would capture non-WBL activities, unless one of the response categories, or follow-up questions was apprenticeship.
23. Other forms of WBL such as participation in informal learning, and continuous professional development of employed, such as attending short courses, workshops or seminars, were not investigated. These forms of WBL are also not commonly covered in the national LFS questionnaires.
24. Several questions/variables were used for identifying apprentices and other work-based learners from the national LFS questionnaires. They include:
 - questions investigating the reasons for having a temporary job/a work contract of limited duration in main or secondary job. Among the options available, one captures situations in which the person has a temporary job because his/her contract covers a period of training (as apprentices, trainees, research assistants, etc.).
 - questions about the current employment status of the respondents, which include the term “apprenticeship”, “apprenticeship or internship” or “Internship/traineeship” as an option. Status in both main and secondary job were investigated.
 - questions about the type of employment contract which include “apprenticeship contract” as one of the response categories.
25. Those who report being in an apprenticeship/internship/traineeship in at least one of these questions are considered apprentices/other trainees⁷. Where apprentices were clearly identified as a distinct category in LFS questionnaires, they were coded as such. Those participating in internship, traineeship or learnership were coded as “Other trainees”.
26. For countries that did not include a response category which explicitly identifies paid or unpaid apprentices and other trainees, the distinction between paid and unpaid was made through questions on pay, wherever available.
27. Another step taken involved in identifying apprentices and other trainees that are not reporting themselves as working. For this purpose, questions about their current education and training, current main activity and/or direct questions about participation in any unpaid apprenticeship,

⁷ The group of Other trainees include those participating in internship, traineeship or learnership.

internship or work-based training in the reference period (usually the previous four weeks) were used, wherever available.

28. For those employed, participation in WBL in the current main and second job during the reference week was investigated, while for those not employed, participation in WBL in the previous four weeks⁸ was investigated. Persons who participated in apprenticeship or other work-based training before the previous four weeks were not taken into account. This implies that a student who did not participate in work-based training in the reference period was not taken into account, even if she/he might have participated in WBL in the past (as part of a study/training program) or might do so over the course of the current studies.
29. When processing the data, the derived variable “participation in work-based training” was cross tabulated against the level of educational attainment. However, these data have not been analysed because the variable level of educational attainment is unlikely to correspond to the level of education the trainee might be currently enrolled in. This type of analysis would however provide interesting insights into the prevalence of apprenticeship/other work-based training by the highest level of educational attainment of trainees.

⁸ In some countries the reference period was the previous week.

5. Main findings

30. Some of the main findings of this review were as follows:

- The data are often not available or, when available, are not suitable for cross-national comparison. The terms “apprenticeship”, “Internship/traineeship” might mean different things in different countries.
- There is a significant variation in identifying apprentices and other work-based trainees - they identified among “employed”, “unemployed” or “outside the labour force”, depending on the country. Some countries only ask relevant questions to those currently in employment, while others also ask of those not currently employed meaning apprentices could be identified among those unemployed or outside the labour force also.
- The table in the annex presents figures on the number of apprentices and other trainees, based on data collected in national LFS and other household-based surveys. It offers an estimate of how many apprentices and other trainees, there are in different countries given the coverage of their questionnaire, without the ambition of providing comparable data across countries.
- There is no single, standardized definition of apprenticeship and other forms of work-based trainees used across countries. In many countries the boundaries are blurred.⁹
- Some countries interchangeably use terms refereeing to different forms of training such as apprenticeship, traineeship, internship, in the same survey.
- Only 12 out of 84 countries make the distinction between apprenticeship and other trainees, whether paid or unpaid. In most cases (60 out of 84 countries) only one response option is used where apprentices are grouped together with interns and other trainees.
- Not all countries distinguish between paid and unpaid trainee work.
- 6 countries cover only apprenticeship, paid or unpaid, in their surveys.
- Distinction between paid and unpaid trainees was made in 37 out of 84 countries either because their questionnaire clearly asks for “paid” trainees or “unpaid” trainees, or the data on pay¹⁰ were derived from another question.
- At least five countries distinguish between “formal” and “informal” apprenticeships (Lesotho, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Vietnam), taking account of the fact that some apprenticeships occur through “formal” arrangements and are recognized within a country’s qualification system, and others are “informal”, i.e., occur through traditional or informal arrangements and do not lead to formal qualifications.¹¹

⁹ For similar and more detailed observations, and discussion of boundaries between different forms of WBL see “Overview of apprenticeship systems and issues” (ILO, 2012), Table , and Hadjivassiliou et al., 2012, p. 52.

¹⁰ Based on the ILO statistical standards, “pay” includes remuneration in cash or in kind.

¹¹ For more information about characteristics of “informal” apprenticeship see: [Skills for Employment Policy Brief - Upgrading Informal Apprenticeship Systems \(ilo.org\)](#), [Upgrading informal apprenticeship - A resource](#)

- The number of countries that collect info about the duration of training is limited.
- A small number of countries, in addition to data on participation in apprenticeship, traineeship or learnership in the previous week or previous four weeks, also collect info about apprenticeship, traineeship or learnership in a past job, in the previous 12 months, or ever.

► **Table 1. No. of countries that collect data on apprentices, and other trainees, paid or unpaid (out of 84)**

Apprentices - paid	20
Other trainees -paid	13
Apprentices and/or other trainees - paid	72
Apprentices - unpaid	8
Other trainees- unpaid	4
Apprentices and/or Other trainees - unpaid	35

31. Other issues with the data include:

- There can be a misunderstanding of the questions by respondents due to context-specific understanding of apprenticeship and other forms of training, which can affect respondents' self-identification as apprentices, interns or trainees and lead to underreporting. Possible reasons can include local nomenclatures for traditional apprenticeships not included in questionnaires, or blurred lines between apprenticeship and other forms of training.
- Quality of translations of terms from national language into English, French or Spanish also create further sources of misunderstanding when processing the data.
- There are various other reasons why the estimates in the annex may not be robust estimates for all trainees as broadly defined. These can include small samples, the fact that these activities may involve relatively few individuals at any point in time and that measurement through surveys is always subject to some form of error.

6. Chapter 3. Challenges and possible directions for improving statistics on apprenticeship and other forms of WBL

32. The main challenges in measuring WBL include.

- Harmonising the concepts and definitions, and developing common methodological approaches to WBL measurement.
- Improving the availability of data on different forms of WBL.

33. Based on the analysis of current practices in measuring WBL, the following possible improvements emerge:

- Improving coverage of data by ensuring that, as a minimum, WBL that is part of formal education and non-formal education and training is covered. .
- WBL, including apprenticeship in the informal economy¹² should be included.
- Given the high demand for data on apprenticeship, as well as to improve the comparability of statistics across countries, there is a need to separately define, identify and measure apprenticeship and other forms of WBL such as internship and traineeship that may be part of the non-formal education and training. While international statistical standards do not distinguish between apprentices, interns or trainees, the ILO considers apprenticeship as a distinct forms of WBL. Recommendation No. 208 also calls for a separate statistic on apprentices.
- Given the existing standards on labour statistics, there is a need to make distinction between participation in paid WBL, among those in employment, and unpaid WBL among those not in employment.
- In order to align the concept of participation of WBL with the concepts of labour force status, it would be more appropriate to focus on participation in WBL in a short reference period (a week or four weeks) rather than in a long reference period or any period in the past.
- Given the existing standards on educational statistics, that acknowledge that participation in WBL, could be part of formal education but also part of non-formal or informal learning, there is a need to separately identify participants in WBL that are currently enrolled in TVET programs. This would facilitate the analysis, and complement the data derived from administrative sources.
- The data on WBL derived from household surveys should be complemented with data derived from administrative sources (e.g. enrolment in TVET), and establishment-based surveys (e.g. apprentices).

¹² Draft proposal for new statistical standards on informality to be discussed by the 21st ICLS is available at <https://ilostat ilo.org/about/standards/icls/icls-documents/>

- The identification of participants in all forms of WBL requires inclusion of additional questions/variables/modules¹³ in LFS or other household-based surveys.
- To test the statistical feasibility of proposed improvements to measuring apprenticeship and other forms of WBL through household-based surveys, data-collection tools have to be developed and tested in a few countries.

6.1. Chapter 4. Existing statistical standards

34. A number of existing standards can be used to as a reference point to develop a conceptual framework for statistics on WBL.

35. Based on ISCED 2011¹⁴ classification (UNESCO, 2012a), education and learning programmes are classified into four broad categories: formal education, nonformal education, informal learning, and random/incidental learning. They are defined as follows:

- **Formal education.** Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies and – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education authorities or equivalent authorities, e.g., any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national education authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education. Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognised as being part of the formal education system.
- **Non-formal education and training¹⁵.** Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/ or complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals. It is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all. It caters to people of all ages but does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway-structure; it may be short in duration and/or low-intensity, and it is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. Non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all. Non-formal education can cover programmes contributing to adult and youth literacy and education for out-of school children, as well as programmes on life skills, work skills, and social or cultural development.

¹³ Examples of such questions/modules include: EU LFS modules on Life long learning 2003, ILO School to work transition survey, EU Continuing vocational training survey, EU LFS, EU [Adult education survey](#).

¹⁴ ISCED 2011 is currently being revised.

¹⁵ ILO, CEDEFOP and OECD define non-formal education and training as organised and systematic learning activity often organised outside the formal education system. Non-formal education may take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to individuals of all ages. It is organised in informal environment that can be adjusted to individual needs. It emphasizes activities directly associated to work. For details see Glossary of key terms on learning and training for work (ILO, 2006), and Learning begets learning: adult takes place out participation in lifelong education (OECD, 2014).

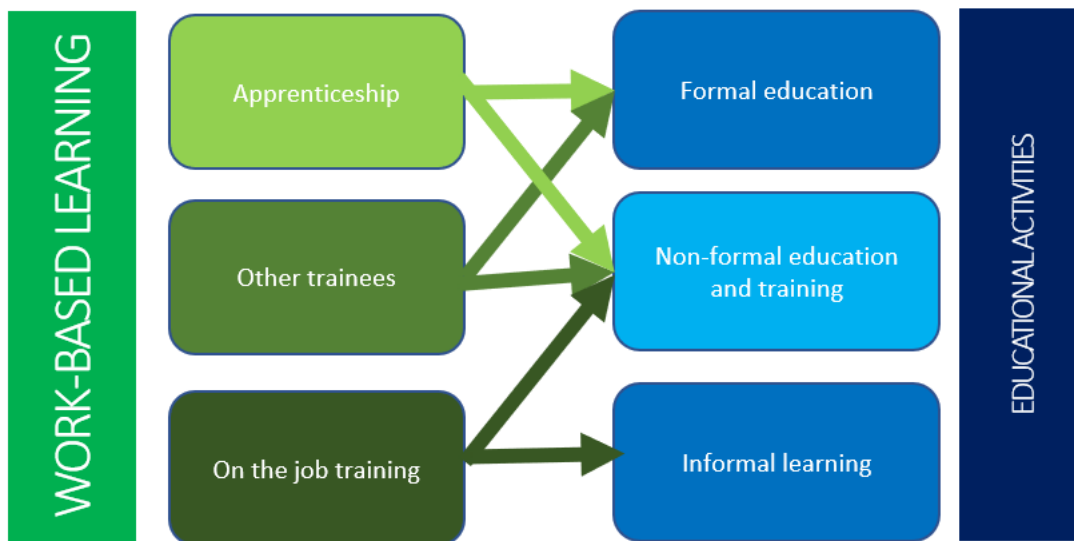
- **Informal learning**¹⁶ is defined as forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate but are not institutionalised. It is consequently less organized and less structured than either formal or non-formal education. Informal learning may include learning activities that occur in the family, workplace, local community and daily life, on a self-directed, family-directed or socially directed basis. Like formal and non-formal education, informal learning can be distinguished from incidental or random learning.
- **Incidental or random learning**, i.e., various forms of learning that are not organized or that involve communication not designed to bring about learning. Incidental or random learning may occur as a by-product of day-to-day activities, events or communication that are not designed as deliberate educational or learning activities. Examples may include learning that takes place during the course of a meeting, whilst listening to a radio programme, or watching a television broadcast that is not designed as an education programme.

Random learning is excluded from statistical observation because it is not intentional.

36. ISCED 2011 classification (UNESCO, 2012a) defines work-based education as educational activity which takes place in a work environment, usually in the context of vocational education programmes. The aim is to achieve specific learning objectives through practical instruction and participation in work activities under the guidance of experienced workers or trainers. It can be a part of any educational activity whether formal, non-formal or informal.
37. **Classification of learning activities (CLA)** (EUROSTAT, 2016) was developed to cover all types of learning opportunities and education/learning pathways. The CLA introduces four types of learning activities, in a similar way as ISCED 2011: formal, non-formal, informal and random. A key criterion to separate the first three forms from the fourth is the “intention to learn”. In formal, non-formal and informal learning the 'learning' is intentional while for the random learning it is incidental. The CLA focuses on intentional learning, i.e., formal and non-formal education and training and on informal learning.

¹⁶ The ILO, CEDEFOP and OECD define informal learning as learning that is never organised, has no set objective in terms of learning outcomes and is never intentional from the learner's standpoint. Often it is referred to as learning by experience or just as experience. It is unstructured training that is a result of activities undertaken at home or during leisure time for instance. For details see Glossary of key terms on learning and training for work (ILO, 2006), and Learning begets learning: adult participation in lifelong education (OECD, 2014).

► **Figure 1: Relationship between WBL and educational activities**



38. With the Resolution adopted by the 19th ICLS (ILO, 2013), distinction is being made between work-based trainees (apprentices, interns or trainees) who work for pay in cash or in kind and work based trainees (apprentices, interns and trainees) who work in exchange for training without remuneration. The paid ones are considered as employed, and those who are not paid are considered to not be in employment and classified as unpaid trainee workers (Figure 2).

Unpaid trainee work includes persons in:

- a. traineeships, apprenticeships, internships or other types of programmes according to national circumstances, when their engagement in the production process of the economic unit is unpaid; and
 - b. unpaid skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes, when engaged in the production process of the economic unit.
39. The classification of status in employment ICSE 2018 adopted by the 20th ICLS (ILO, 2018), provides an explicit definition for paid apprentices, interns and trainees.

“Paid apprentices, trainees and interns are employees who perform any activity to produce goods or provide services for others, in order to acquire workplace experience or skills in a trade or profession and receive payment in return for work performed. Acquiring “workplace experience or skills” may occur through traditional, formal or informal arrangements whether or not a specific qualification or certification is issued. They are usually remunerated at a reduced rate compared to fully qualified workers.

They include persons involved in:

- paid formal or informal traineeships, apprenticeships, internships or other types of programmes, according to national circumstances; and
- paid skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes, when engaged in the production process of the economic unit for which they work.”

1. Based on Inter-agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (IAG-TVET) (ILO, 2017), WBL refers to all forms of learning that take place in a real (or simulated) work environment. It provides individuals with the skills needed to successfully obtain and keep jobs and progress in their professional development. Apprenticeships, internships/traineeships and on-the-job training are the most common types of WBL. These may – but do not always – combine elements of learning in the workplace with off-the-job learning, usually classroom based.

40. The Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation (No. 208) (ILO, 2023), adopted by 111th session of ILC in 2023 provides the following definition of apprenticeship:

“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”.

41. This definition incorporates five key features of quality apprenticeship¹⁷:

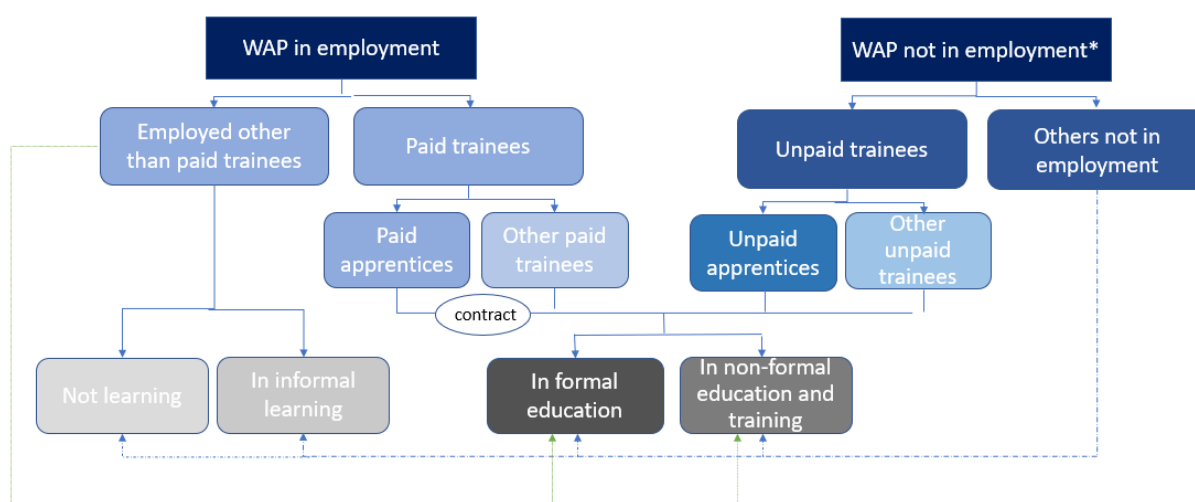
- is based on an agreement defining the rights and obligations of the apprentice, the employer and, where appropriate, the vocational education and training institution,
- learning is structured as part of a defined programme,
- combines learning in education or training institutions and learning in workplaces,
- leads to recognised qualifications, and
- the apprentice is being paid or otherwise compensated for the work-based component of training.

¹⁷ For many apprentices, especially those engaged in the informal sector, at least one of these features may not be present.

7. Chapter 5. Conceptual Framework for statistics on WBL – preliminary proposal

42. Based on the existing standards, and two main characteristics of WBL, payment and type of education and training, as well as the need to separately identify apprentices from other work-based learners, the following conceptual framework for statistics on work-based learning could be derived:

► Figure 2. Conceptual framework for statistics on work-based learning



- - - (dashed line)- Elements excluded from the scope of work-based learning because they do not involve work-based component of learning.

... (dotted line) – May or may not include work-based component of learning

*- Refers to unemployed, unpaid trainees, own-use production workers, volunteers, other forms of work and exclusively in non-productive activities

8. Definitions

43. The following preliminary definitions may reinforce further data collection on apprenticeship and other forms of WBL.

- **WBL** refers to all forms of learning that take place in a real work environment. It can provide individuals with the skills needed to successfully obtain and keep jobs, and progress in their professional development.¹⁸ It may – but does not always – combine elements of learning in the workplace with off-the-job learning.
- Persons in **paid trainee work** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, performed any activity to produce goods or provide services for others, in order to acquire workplace experience or skills in a trade or profession and receive payment in return for work performed.
- Persons in **unpaid trainee work** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, performed any activity to produce goods or provide services for others, in order to acquire workplace experience or skills in a trade or profession and do not receive any remuneration.
- **In formal education** refers to WBL that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies. It leads to nationally recognised qualifications.
- **In non-formal education and training** refers to WBL that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider, an agency, a body or an employer. It is often organised outside the formal education system, and may take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to people of all ages. It is an addition, alternative and/ or complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals and does not necessarily apply a continuous pathway-structure. Non-formal education and training mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all.
- **In informal learning**¹⁹ refers to WBL that is intentional or deliberate but not institutionalised. It is less structured and can happen throughout an individual's working life within the normal work environment. It is also called experiential learning.
- **Apprenticeship** refers to structured work-based training usually provided *over longer period of time*²⁰ that enable the learner to acquire all of the competences required to

¹⁸ Based on IAG-TVET (ILO, 2017)

¹⁹ Participation in informal work-based learning may not be of interest in some countries. Informal learning is also not covered in SDG Indicator 4.3.1: Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex.

²⁰ Should the duration of training be a part of the definition?

practice a particular trade or occupation. Substantial parts of the training take place within the premises of an employer in real work environments.²¹

- Other trainees include **traineeships, internships, learnerships and placements**. It refers to work-based learning experience that is *usually shorter in duration*¹⁴, and enable the learner to gain general experience in a type of work or offering an opportunity to practice skills already acquired.
- **Apprenticeship in formal education** refers to WBL that is part of a formal educational programme, combines elements of learning in the workplace with classroom-based learning, and leads to formally recognised qualifications. Apprenticeship in formal education can be paid or unpaid. It may be a subject to a contract/agreement between the employer and the apprentice and/or the institution representing the apprentice.
- **Apprenticeship in non-formal education and training** refers to WBL outside of the formal education system. This includes apprenticeship in traditional forms of training offered at artisan workshops owned by master craftspeople. These forms of training usually prepare participants for trades, such as carpentry, masonry, auto-mechanics welding, foundry, photography, tailoring, dressmaking, cosmetics, etc. Apprenticeship in non-formal education and training can be paid or unpaid.
- **Quality apprenticeship** as per the ILO's Recommendation No.208 is a subset of apprenticeships in formal education that is paid and subject to apprenticeship contract/agreement.

²¹ For statistical purpose a wider definition of apprenticeship is proposed than the one adopted by 2023 ILC. It does not include the payment criteria.

9. APPENDIX 1.

► Table 2. Apprentices and other trainees²² per 1,000 persons in age group 15 years and over

Country	Apprentices - Paid	Other trainees - Paid	Apprentices - Unpaid	Other trainees - Unpaid	Trainees- Paid	Trainees - Unpaid
Afghanistan(2021)					8.9	
Albania(2019)*			101.0		0.6	
Argentina(2021)					2.5	
Armenia(2021)					0.2	
Austria(2020)	15.2	5.4	0.3		20.6	0.3
Bangladesh(2017)					0.7	1.5
Barbados(2019)					0.1	
Belarus(2022)					77.4	
Benin(2018)					14.2	
Bosnia and Herzegovina(2022)	2.0	0.8			2.8	
Botswana(2022)					9.1	
Brazil(2022)						0.4
Brunei Darussalam(2021)					4.9	
Burkina Faso(2018)					8.5	3.2
Burundi(2020)					12.8	
Cambodia(2019)					0.7	7.8
Cameroon(2014)					13.7	0.1
Chad(2018)					11.9	
Colombia(2022)					2.1	1.3
Comoros(2021)	9.1	4.0			13.7	5.5
Congo(2009)					6.9	18.4
Congo, Democratic Rep. of the(2012)					65.7	
Côte d'Ivoire(2019)	20.2	3.6	14.2	3.0	28.2	17.2
Cyprus(2021)	0.4	1.0			1.4	
Czechia(2020)*						89.4
Djibouti(2017)					0.4	
Ethiopia(2013)	0.2					
Fiji(2016)					2.2	1.9
France(2021)	12.1	11.1		5.5	23.2	5.5
Georgia(2020)					0.7	
Ghana(2017)	1.9		17.8			

²² The group of Other trainees includes those participating in internship, traineeship or learnership.

Greece(2020)	0.4	1.3			1.7	
Guinea(2019)					10.8	5.9
Haiti(2012)					5.1	
Iran, Islamic Rep. of(2021)					0.5	0.5
Iraq(2021)					0.8	0.0
Italy(2022)	4.9					
Jamaica(2020)	0.0					
Jordan(2021)	0.4					
Kenya(2021)	0.5		2.1			
Kiribati(2019)					3.5	0.4
Kosovo(2021)					25.2	0.0
Lao People's Democratic Rep.(2017)					3.6	0.8
Lebanon(2019)					0.8	0.1
Lesotho(2019)					1.0	
Liberia(2017)					4.7	
Madagascar(2015)						2.0
Malawi(2013)					1.9	
Maldives(2019)						8.8
Mali(2020)					3.6	19.4
Marshall Islands(2021)					12.8	2.4
Mauritania(2017)					2.2	1.2
Mongolia(2022)					2.2	
Montenegro(2021)		11.3			11.3	
Nauru(2021)					3.5	2.1
Nepal(2017)					0.9	
Nicaragua(2012)					0.5	
Niger(2017)					4.4	
Nigeria(2019)					37.0	
North Macedonia(2022)					0.2	13.7
Pakistan(2018)	1.8					
Peru(2022)					1.3	0.1
Poland(2020)**					130.4	
Rwanda(2022)					0.3	
Samoa(2017)					0.5	
Senegal(2019)	35.8	3.4	0.4	0.0	39.3	0.4
Seychelles(2020)					0.9	
Sierra Leone(2014)					10.5	129.1
Slovakia(2021)	0.0	0.2			0.2	
Spain(2022)	3.9	0.8			4.7	
Suriname(2016)					0.7	0.8

Switzerland(2022)	25.3	5.0	0.6	0.1	30.3	0.6
Tanzania, United Rep. of(2020)					5.3	
Timor-Leste(2021)					1.0	10.5
Togo(2017)					16.5	
Tonga(2021)					6.6	
Tunisia(2017)					0.5	
Türkiye(2022)					5.3	
Uganda(2021)					0.6	3.3
United Kingdom(2022)	9.5		0.3			
Vanuatu(2019)					16.2	
Wallis and Futuna Islands(2019)					0.7	
Zambia(2021)	4.9	0.6			5.5	
Zimbabwe(2021)					2.0	8.2

*- Incl. students

** - Incl. vocational and other training

► **Table 3. Apprentices and other trainees²³ per 1,000 persons in age group 15-34**

Country	Apprentices - Paid	Other trainees - Paid	Apprentices - Unpaid	Other trainees - Unpaid	Trainees- Paid	Trainees - Unpaid
Afghanistan(2021)					12.0	
Albania(2019)*			270.6		1.0	
Argentina(2021)					5.5	
Armenia(2021)					0.6	
Austria(2020)	53.0	16.5	1.1		69.5	1.1
Bangladesh(2017)					1.1	2.8
Barbados(2019)					0.4	
Belarus(2022)					75.2	
Belize(2021)					7.3	
Benin(2018)					19.7	
Bosnia and Herzegovina(2022)	6.1	2.8			8.9	
Botswana(2022)					18.8	
Brazil(2022)						0.9
Brunei						
Darussalam(2021)					9.6	
Burkina Faso(2018)					12.3	5.1
Burundi(2020)					15.2	

²³ The group of Other trainees includes those participating in internship, traineeship or learnership.

Cambodia(2019)					1.1	16.9
Cameroon(2014)					22.4	0.1
Chad(2018)					12.6	
Colombia(2022)					5.1	3.2
Comoros(2021)	12.8	6.0			19.8	9.5
Congo, Democratic Rep. of the(2018)	22.4				22.4	
Côte d'Ivoire(2019)	30.1	5.4	23.0	4.8	41.2	27.8
Cyprus(2021)	1.2	3.1			4.3	
Czechia(2020)*						328.2
Djibouti(2017)					0.4	
Ethiopia(2021)			0.4			
Fiji(2016)					2.8	2.6
France(2021)	43.1	39.1		19.5	82.3	19.5
Georgia(2020)					1.5	
Ghana(2017)	3.2		32.3			
Greece(2020)	1.5	4.6			6.2	
Guinea(2019)					17.9	10.5
Haiti(2012)					8.2	
Honduras(2020)					0.7	
Iran, Islamic Rep. of(2021)					1.2	1.1
Iraq(2021)					1.1	0.1
Italy(2022)	20.1					
Jamaica(2020)	0.0					
Jordan(2021)	0.8					
Kenya(2021)	0.6		3.2			
Kiribati(2019)					5.1	
Kosovo(2021)					32.9	0.1
Lao People's Democratic Rep.(2017)					4.5	1.5
Lebanon(2019)					1.8	0.2
Lesotho(2019)					1.2	
Liberia(2017)					3.7	
Madagascar(2015)						2.4
Malawi(2013)					2.2	
Maldives(2019)						11.9
Mali(2020)					6.9	28.9
Marshall Islands(2021)					11.5	2.4
Mauritania(2017)					3.4	2.2
Mongolia(2022)					3.1	
Montenegro(2021)		22.4			22.4	
Nauru(2021)					3.3	3.0

Nepal(2017)					1.6	
Nicaragua(2012)					0.7	
Niger(2017)					6.5	
Nigeria(2019)					57.8	
North Macedonia(2022)					0.4	25.3
Pakistan(2018)	3.0					
Peru(2022)					2.8	0.2
Poland(2020)**					93.8	
Rwanda(2022)					0.4	
Samoa(2017)					1.0	
Senegal(2019)	60.3	5.3	0.7	0.0	65.6	0.7
Seychelles(2020)					1.9	
Sierra Leone(2014)					11.2	128.4
Slovakia(2021)	0.1	0.5			0.6	
Spain(2022)	14.3	3.0			17.3	
Suriname(2016)					1.9	1.9
Switzerland(2022)	90.9	16.3	2.0	0.2	107.2	2.3
Tanzania, United Rep. of(2020)					6.8	
Timor-Leste(2021)					0.7	13.2
Togo(2017)					28.1	
Tonga(2021)					8.3	
Tunisia(2017)					1.1	
Türkiye(2022)					14.0	
Uganda(2021)					0.9	5.4
United Kingdom(2022)	24.9		0.5			
Vanuatu(2019)					18.2	
Wallis and Futuna Islands(2019)					0.4	
Zambia(2021)	3.8	0.4			4.3	
Zimbabwe(2021)					2.5	10.6

*- Incl. students

** - Incl. vocational and other training

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Contact details

International Labour Organization
Route des Morillons 4
CH-1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland

T: +41 22 799 8631
E: statistics@ilo.org