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### ENCOURAGING MORE APPRENTICESHIPS IN SMEs

- BUSINESSSEUROPE advocates the principles of work-based learning and the strengthening of dual-learning elements in Member States' existing systems. This is a prime example of partnership between employers and education and training providers.
- Young people's transition from education to employment can be facilitated by expanding access to dual-learning systems, such as in the form of apprenticeships.
- The partnership approach can also be translated into cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to share the responsibility and costs of training an apprentice, which can be advantageous for the apprentices and the SMEs.
- An example of partnership is the UK pilot project for the "Employer Ownership of Skills". This is a competitive fund open to employers to invest in their current and future workforce in England, either individually or working with colleges or other businesses in innovative partnerships.
- The fund seeds the development of these clusters in the hope that they will then become self-financing over time.
- Employers are invited to develop proposals that raise skills, create jobs, and drive enterprise and economic growth. Government backs projects in which employers are prepared to commit their own funds in order to make better use of the combined resources.
- An example of projects within this initiative is General Electric (GE) Aviation, which has been struggling in recent years to attract young people and graduates with a background in STEM-related skills.
- GE Aviation's approach to addressing the shortage of qualified STEM workers involves young people at school and college, teachers and lecturers, and young employees and trainees. It combines STEM subject promotion with early career development, and aims to deliver certified manufacturing training in areas increasingly outsourced from the UK.
- GE is establishing an in-house enhanced apprenticeship programme, offering additional accreditations and experience for 35 apprentices at advanced and higher levels.
- The delivery of this project is a shared cooperation. GE Aviation is leading on it and working with other local employers (SMEs) in shared skills areas.
- GE is contributing around £2 million to this project over 2 years, which is being matched by the Employer Ownership Pilot.