



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
COURT OF AUDIT

AUDIT REPORT

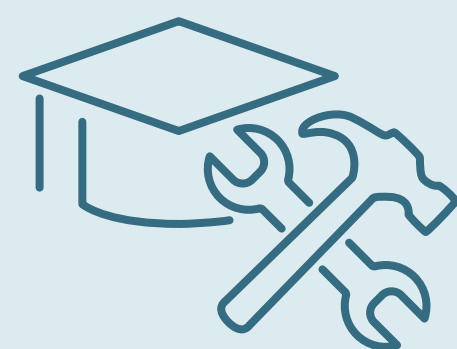
Awarding incentives for enhancing practical training of pupils and students at employers

Performance audit

Audit period: 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2021



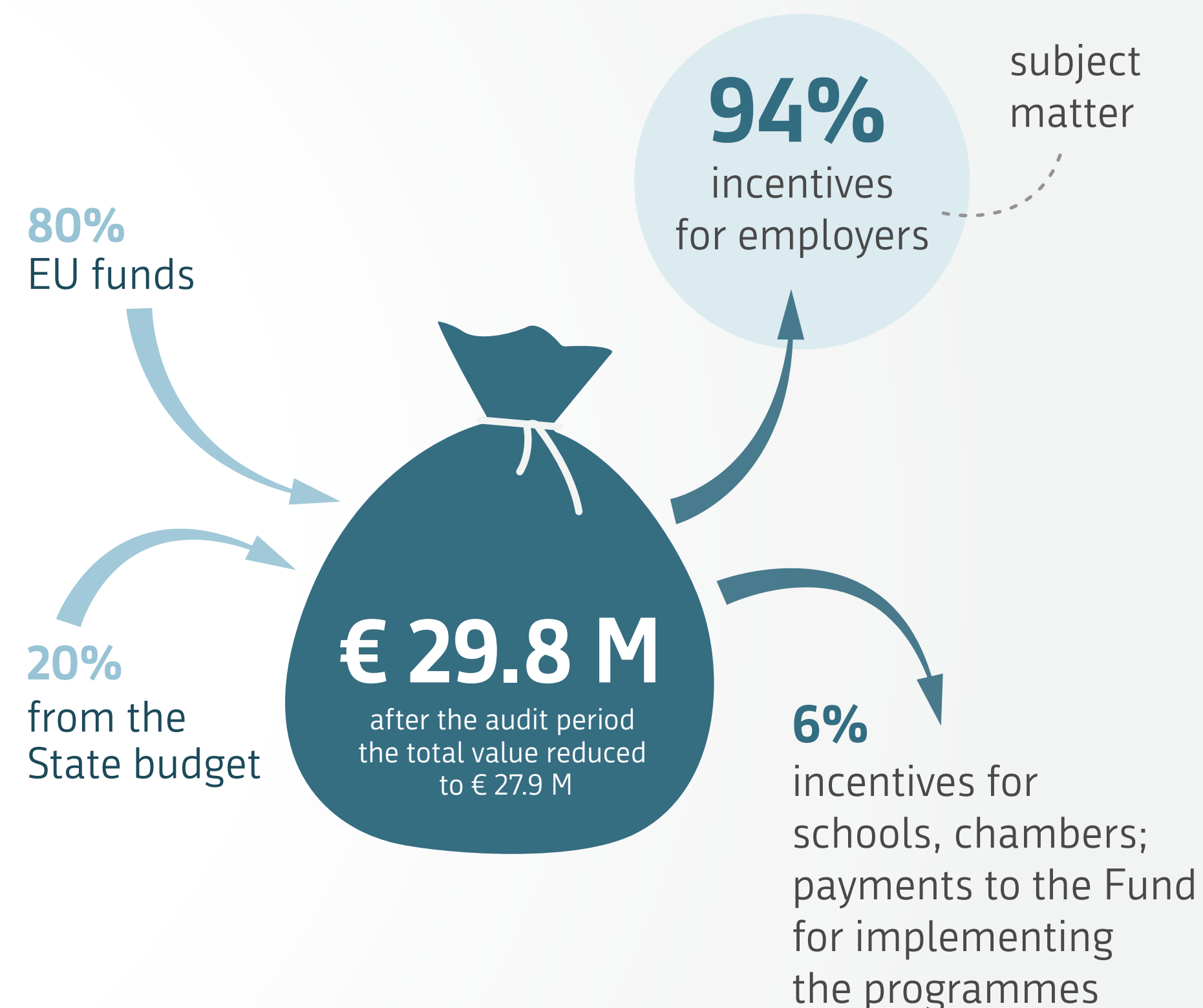
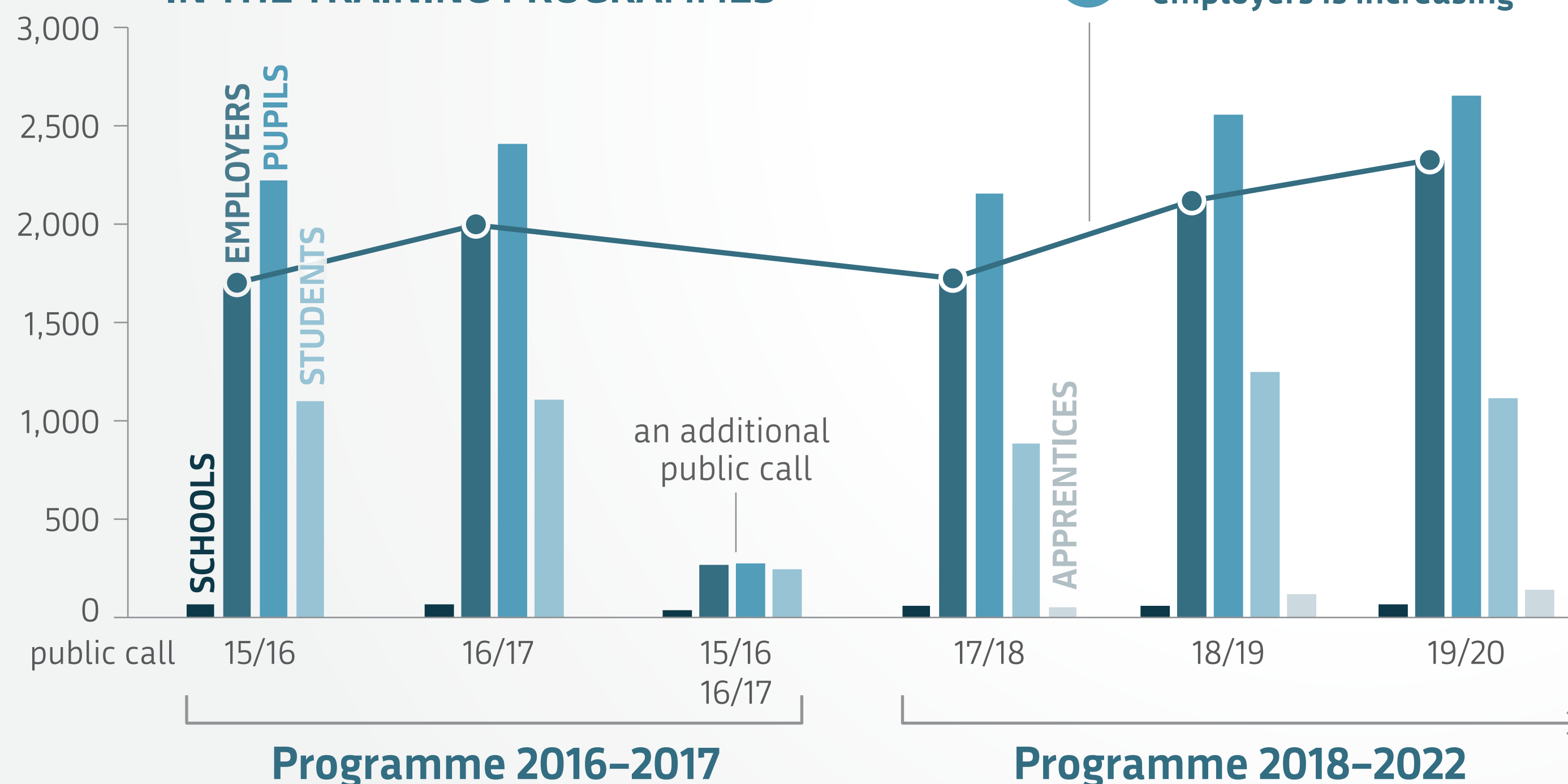
Efficiency of awarding incentives for enhancing practical training (practical training with work programmes 2016–2017 and 2018–2022)



Purpose of the training programmes

Providing better links between the system of vocational education and the needs of the labour market for secondary vocational school pupils and higher vocational education students.

THE NUMBER OF INCLUDED IN THE TRAINING PROGRAMMES



Auditees:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Sport
- Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia

Planning of the practical training with work programmes

Objectives



better **practical skills and employability** of pupils and students and **earlier labour market entry**



strengthening of cooperation between the employers and social partners



introducing different and pursuing established approaches of vocational education and training

ABSENCE OF IMPORTANT INDICATORS



indicators originate from **programming documents** for EU funds absorption



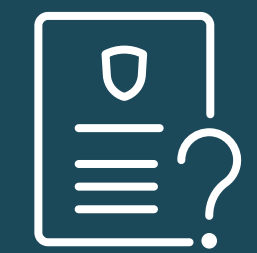
but there are **no indicators for measuring all objectives and impacts** of the supported training programmes



the Ministry **adopted the methodology for measuring the indicators behind time** (programme 2016–2017 was already concluded)



the Ministry and the Fund **defined timeline and financial plan** as well as **procedures of implementing the programmes and public calls**



but the Ministry failed to formally state **which regulation should be followed by the Fund** when implementing the public calls



planned payments of the programme 2018–2022 were **postponed towards the end** of the programming period



when calculating funds related to each public call the Fund did not follow the established needs, since it failed **to consider the data on the number of pupils and students who were targeted by the incentives in the previous years**

Granting incentives

Incentives are **granted** to the employers by the Fund **on the basis of the public calls**.

- ✓ the subject matter and tendering conditions were **linked to the objectives of the public calls**
- **but there were some weaknesses related to conditions** (i.e. proving the professional qualifications of mentors and appropriateness of the working post)

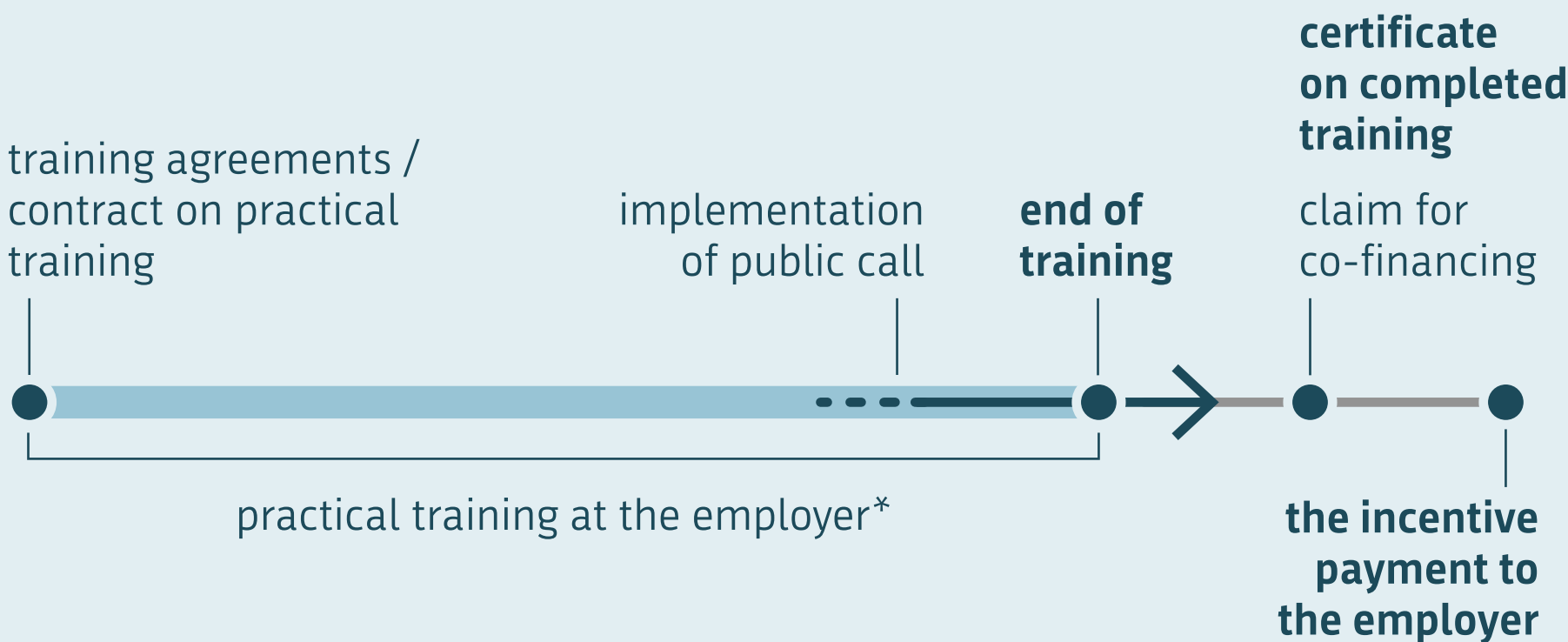
Programme 2016–2017

- ✓ the Fund **published public calls mainly in planned time** and financial frames

Programme 2018–2022

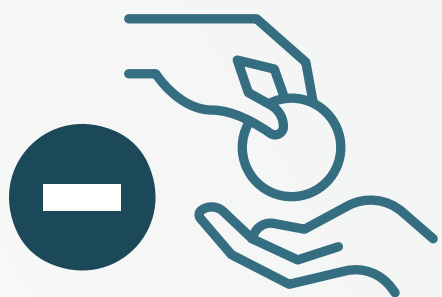
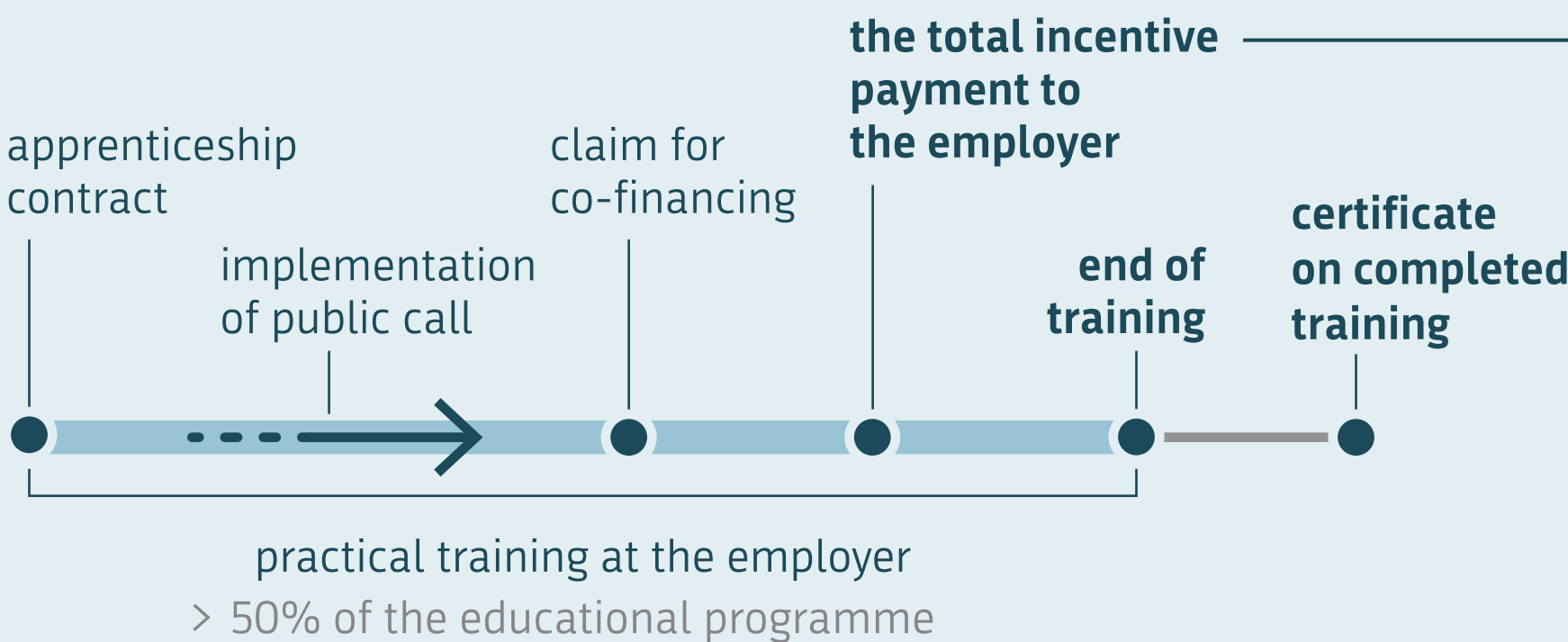
- **delays in implementing public calls**

SCHOOL-BASED FORMS OF TRAINING (for both programmes)



* 2-year higher education: 20 weeks
3-year vocational education: at least 24 weeks, but no more than 50% of the educational programme

APPRENTICESHIP-TYPE OF TRAINING (in the first three public calls within training programme 2018–2022)



More demands for recovery of payments due to early termination of apprentice contracts

Not defined when the Chamber or the employer must inform the Fund on the termination of the contract, thus the Fund was not timely informed – **long period from assessed irregularity to the recovery of funds.**



In April 2021, the arrangement of payment to apprentices changed

The employer does not receive the funds in advance, but according to actually undertaken practical training in certain school year.

Realisation of the programmes was not as planned



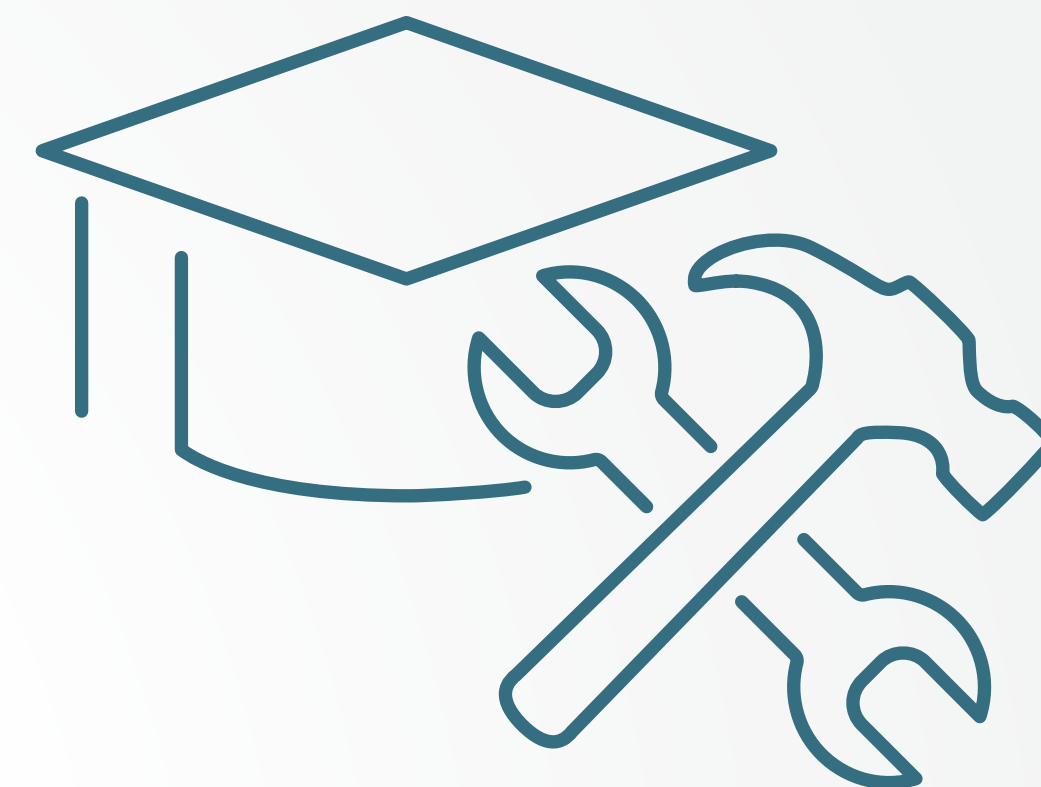
Monitoring of the incentives implementation

- the Fund **reported** to the Ministry **on achieved indicators and on participants**
- the Fund **reviews the claims for co-financing**, some controls of the data are built in its information system
- the data from the monitoring of the programmes shall not suffice the Ministry upon the conclusion to verify whether the allocated funds actually helped to achieve **better practical skills, smoother transition into the labour market and reduction of the gap on the labour market**

OPINION OF THE COURT OF AUDIT



The Ministry and **the Fund** were **partially efficient** in awarding incentives for enhancing practical training of pupils and students at employers as part of strengthening the link between vocational and professional education and the labour market needs.



The Court of Audit proposed to the auditees several recommendations to improve their operations, among others:



the Ministry should in its future programmes **define indicators which shall be used for measuring the achievement of all objectives and effects of practical training with work programmes.**