

VET Trends 2019



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Dear reader,

Let me take you on a tour of some current trends in vocational education and training. Over the past months, we have compiled a number of interesting contributions regarding research findings and practical experience published in our journal "Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis – BWP" (Vocational Training in Research and Practice). In this edition, we would like to present them to an international community.

Keeping the VET system competitive and attractive

One of our motives for compiling this special edition is the continuing international interest in dual VET and apprenticeship "made in Germany". At the same time, the need for skilled labour is becoming a global and increasingly urgent challenge. In this edition, you will learn more about current VET reforms in countries like Paraguay, South Korea, and Slovakia. Their governments have attempted to introduce dual training models or establish elements of dual VET adapted to their specific needs and conditions. What inspired these reforms? Primarily, they sought to improve the quality and demand-orientation of vocational education and training, enhance participation of companies and their demands in the development and implementation of VET, and increase collaboration between the government and the private sector. These considerations are crucial to keeping VET attractive and competitive.

Maintaining the VET system's viability and appeal remains a challenge in Germany, too. In particular, the successful transition from school to work is a topic of enduring interest – after all, an apprenticeship lays the foundation for a solid professional career. Vocational orientation supports young people in mastering this transition. Family and friends or the considerations of costs, benefits, and career opportunities highly influence young people's decisions and the career choices they take. A closer look at these influencing factors is therefore worthwhile. Confidence in VET needs to become stronger.

Digitalisation: challenge and opportunity

The majority of the selected articles tackle the impact of digitalisation on the world of work and employment. The digital transformation is a rapidly unfolding development and the increased deployment of computers, robots, and artificial intelligence is radically reshaping our world. The pace of this shift will continue to accelerate in the future and there will be far-reaching effects on VET.

This development affects all areas of initial and continuing vocational education and training. It influences the structure of training occupations, the relevance of continuing training, and essential core competencies for staff as well as for teachers and trainers that must thrive in a high-tech working environment. In this context, I would like to draw your particular attention to the results of the project "VET 4.0 – Qualifications and competencies of skilled workers for the digitalised work of tomorrow" initiated jointly by the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and BIBB. Our findings show that the changes brought about by the digital transformation can also mean opportunities to boost innovation, lifelong learning, and the attractiveness of vocational education and training in the eyes of young people.

The world is moving quickly and innovation cycles are speeding up. Correspondingly, taking time to discover research-based information and good practice is becoming increasingly valuable. So, without further ado, please enjoy this issue!

*Yours,
B. Thomann*