

Qualifying trainers for the future world of VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 GERMANY

Timeline



ID number 28147

Background

According to the Vocational Training Act, an in-company trainer should possess the professional skills, knowledge and abilities as well as the pedagogical skills, knowledge and abilities required to impart the contents of the training. A completed vocational training or course of study in a field corresponding to the training occupation can demonstrate professional aptitude. Professional qualification of trainers also includes vocational and occupational pedagogical knowledge. Any company carrying out apprenticeship has at least one employee who is the designated responsible trainer and has proven his aptitude to take over this task by successfully passing the examination according to the AEVO.

This training aptitude test is carried out by the chambers, who also provide 'training of trainers' preparatory courses offered in different formats (attendance, distance learning or blended formats). The BIBB recommends taking a 115-hour course to prepare the AEVO examination. In 2009, the Board of the BIBB has published a framework curriculum with details of the knowledge to be imparted in the AEVO preparatory courses.

Needs analyses have been carried out since the 1960s mostly by the BIBB to monitor the up-to-date competences needed by trainers, ensure the quality of IVET and CVET in companies and adapt the train-the-trainer course offer accordingly. One example was the BIBB research project 'Digital media in VET - media appropriation and media use in the everyday practice of company-based training staff' (DiMBA; 2015-17), which investigated the challenges faced by company-based training staff in this regard.

Objectives

In-company trainers need to be qualified to be up to the challenges of in-company training processes (regarding digitalisation, sustainability, demographic development, heterogeneity). the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), monitors the up-to-date competences needed by trainers as well as the Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO) and corresponding framework curriculum, thus contributing to quality assurance in the training of trainers. Accordingly, the policy measures described below aimed at developing and providing (additional) qualifications for in-company trainers to improve their skills as well as their ability to adapt the content of the training process to the

future of VET (e.g. media and digital skills; sustainability and green skills).

Description

Since 2015, BIBB has funded eighteen 'VET for sustainable development' projects (BBNE). They experimented and evaluated relevant curriculum concepts, digital teaching, learning materials and examination questions on green skills for initial and continuing VET, e.g. on energy saving and energy efficiency, carbon and water footprint, or thinking about resources.

In 2016, new funding guidelines also relevant for the continuing professional development (CPD) of trainers were covered in the framework of the BMBF initiative, Digital media in vocational training. The guidelines focused on:

- (a) promoting critical media competence in vocational qualifications;
- (b) promoting the use of open educational resources;
- (c) training trainers who could act as multipliers;
- (d) promoting digital learning networks in VET (DigiNet), especially among SMEs.

For example, the funded projects Competence workshop toolbox and the Perspective 2.0 tutorial course also contributed to in-company trainer CPD. The toolbox focused on providing conceptual and digital support to training in companies, in vocational schools and at inter-company vocational training centres. Under the title Training in a practically oriented way, it has made a cross-media series of instruments available to training staff and teachers. Perspective 2.0 is developing an online tutorial course in social media addressing trainers, educators and consultants working in the field of job application and career entry.

Based on research on the implications of digitalisation and industry 4.0 for workers' skill needs and teachers' and trainers' competences, BIBB developed a model of media-pedagogical competence for training personnel. It was developed in cooperation with trainers and defines the expertise that trainers could use to deliver and develop vocational media and IT competence.

2016 Design

2017 Design

2018 Design

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the funding programme 'VET for sustainable development' (BBNE) continued. For example, to keep the topic of sustainability present in the minds of trainers and apprentices all year round and throughout the entire training period, the '5-minute talks' were developed as a learning support measure by the project ANLIN 'Apprenticeship promotes sustainable places of learning in industry'. They are particularly suitable for starting a teaching unit or ending a teaching day without interfering with the daily work and learning routine. They allow a regular, short exchange between the trainers and their apprentices. Furthermore, the Digital change Q 4.0 initiative was launched in 2019 to set up and test innovative continuing education and training concepts. These concepts aim to improve the media and IT skills of in-company trainers and their ability to adapt the content of the training process to digital changes. The funding initiative offers two sub-programmes:

- (a) Network Q 4.0: the programme considers regional and sector-specific aspects and focuses on cooperation between learning places;
- (b) MIKA seminars: the programme follows a more general approach, independent from the specifics of the training place.

The qualification initiative will last until 2022 and is implemented by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), which cooperates with the German

Economic Institute, the training providers of the economic sector and the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB). At the final stage, the BMBF and its project partners will decide in which format the developed qualifications will be introduced. The funding volume for the Q 4.0 initiative is approximately EUR 30 million (2019-22).

2020 Implementation

A transfer programme for training staff followed the BBNE programme to support in-company trainers to develop green and sustainable skills. Consortia with experienced partners of the BBNE pilot projects were selected in summer 2020 with seven collaborative transfer projects for training staff, which started in November 2020 for two years. One example is the BBNE sustainability project ANLIN, which now has a successor: the transfer project ANLIN2 Trainers and apprentices become sustainability experts.

In 2020, regional and industry-specific qualification needs of vocational training staff were surveyed, a digital learning management system was set up and the first qualification formats were designed and tested in the two sub-programmes of Q 4.0 (MIKA seminars and Network 4.0).

The German Economic Institute (IW) set up a new website netzwerkq40.de in May 2020, presenting the sub-programme Network Q 4.0 and its partners. The Network Q 4.0 aims to establish contacts with other VET partners for learning location cooperation and will be funded until the end of 2022. The network provides new training and discussion formats guiding in-company trainers, including using design thinking and boot camps as well as frequent online meetings, Q 4.0 talk, Q 4.0 meet or Q 4.0 work. The website offers an online media library, featuring own studies, publications and videos, and a newsletter and is present on social media.

The MIKA seminars were tested at five locations in cooperation with several chambers of skilled crafts as well as chambers of commerce and industry. The seminars focus on six learning fields:

- (a) understanding the digital world;
- (b) protecting data and acting safely;
- (c) communicating and collaborating;
- (d) searching for and processing content;
- (e) creating and sharing content;
- (f) solving and reflecting on problems.

Since the seminars for the trainers mostly take place alongside their jobs, the MIKA seminars are offered in the so-called 'blended learning format', i.e. a combination of face-to-face events and webinars. The self-learning phase, in which the trainers inform themselves autonomously about the learning content and acquire basic skills, is particularly important. The MIKA learning world, developed by the BIBB and available from mid-2021, is intended to support the self-learning phase and supplement the previous offer in the BIBB's trainer portal, foraus.de. The seminar concept followed the format of the 'flipped classroom' and thus was directly oriented towards the everyday work of the participants. The content was conveyed over a period of 10 to 12 weeks. After completing the seminar, the participants receive a certificate.

2021 Implementation

At BIBB, the MIKA seminar concept project was completed and the developed seminars on the digital development of trainers are offered now nationwide. In January 2021 NETWORK Q 4.0 in Bavaria created a digital reference work on the content of IT occupations. In May 2021, NETWORK Q 4.0 participated in DIGITALTAG 2021, where around 2000+ actions took place in virtual space and on site. In June 2021, NETWORK Q 4.0 organised an expert conference on the topic of Training 4.0 - fit for the digital now.

In a study published in 2021, BIBB concluded that the qualification of trainers should

be modernised and further developed. The recommendations for action relate to further training courses and adjustments to the content of examination methods and practice to meet increased requirements (digitalisation, heterogeneity, inclusion and sustainability). The results are now being incorporated into further consultations between the Federal Government and the social partners.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the Network Q 4.0 programme carried out many CPD offers for trainers, as well as a roadshow and a blog directly linked to their work processes. MIKA offered CPDs for trainers to develop their digital media skills, which is now threefold:

- (a) the learning platform MIKA-Campus,
- (b) the CVET offer MIKA-Seminars (in blended learning format),
- (c) the training for future seminar leaders (MIKA trainer).

The BBNE transfer programme for in-company trainers was ended in 2022. The new funding programme 'Sustainability training for trainers' (NIB), supports projects that deliver further training programmes to qualify training staff in sustainability topics, thereby anchoring of BBNE in training practice. The first funding guidelines were published, with submission due by 17 April 2023.

The BBNE-Survey on sustainability in initial and continuing vocational education and training / indicator 'Training staff and sustainability IndAuNa in the BIBB company panel on qualification and skills development' started (duration: 2022-2026; funding volume: approx. EUR 108 000).

2023 Implementation

BIBB monitors the Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO) as well as the competences needed by trainers in companies. The review and updating process of the framework curriculum for preparing the AEVO examination was completed in July 2023.

Training and examination staff in VET are now being supported by the new Leando portal, launched on 20 November 2023. Leando (previously foraus.de) serves as a central contact platform and provides information and CPD on daily training practice and the examination system.

Further, the qualification initiative Digital Change Q 4.0 carried out many CPD measures for trainers in 2023, as well as a roadshow and a blog directly linked to their work processes (Network Q 4.0 project). Another project of the initiative, Media and IT competence for training personnel (MIKA), was threefold in 2023: learning platform MIKA-Campus, CPD offer MIKA-Seminars and training for future seminar leaders (MIKA-Trainer).

In 2023, three roadshows of the transfer campaign 'Digital media in everyday VET' took place in Nürnberg, Rostock and Bonn. The one-day events offered space for dialogue, networking and trying out digital tools and concepts, accompanied by the project managers. The roadshows addressed training staff from companies from companies, inter-company training centres, vocational schools and educational institutions.

To follow up the BBNE funding programmes, the education ministry BMBF published a new funding guideline in 2023: the 'Sustainable at work - future-oriented training (NIB)' funding programme (with ESF Plus co-financing). The funding period ends in 2027 with a total funding budget of approx. EUR 43 million. A centre set up at BIBB on behalf of BMBF promotes the transfer of results and networking with VET initiatives and stakeholders. A total of three funding guidelines are planned. The first funding guidelines (for 2024-26) were published in 2023 and focus on projects strengthening professional competences of training staff in sustainability and establishing BBNE offers in more VET institutions.

To support national monitoring and reporting on the anchoring of education for

sustainable development in VET (BBNE), the BIBB company panel on qualification and skills development, funded by the BMBF, is investigating the importance of sustainability in training and the extent to which companies have provided their training staff with further training on the topic of sustainability/BBNE. Between March 2023 and February 2024, around 3 400 companies from all sectors and company size categories took part in the survey.

2024 Implementation

Initial results are included in the BIBB data report 2024. A further survey is planned for 2025.

In 2024, all information on the former web portal of the Digital media in VET initiative (qualifizierungdigital.de) and of the former trainer platform foraus.de were integrated into the new Leando portal for training and examination staff.

In 2024, the new roadshow 'Leando on Tour - Tools for Training Practice' organised by the BIBB visited five locations (Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and twice Berlin). The roadshow presented the central services of the Leando platform for training and examination staff: Inform - Network - Qualify. In parallel workshops, participants had the opportunity to try out specific topics and methods for organising their own training practice, using suitable tools.

The MIKA qualification offer for training staff was expanded mid-2024 with three services: MIKA-Game (educational game in quiz format testing knowledge in digitalisation and media education), MIKA-VR (easy-to-use virtual reality application for company training staff) and MIKA-Do (digital pinboard for VET teachers and trainers with learning and work tasks).

The Network Q 4.0 established contacts in all regions with other VET partners in the sense of cooperation between learning venues. The training organisations of the business community and the respective local partners are collaborating. For example, the training organisation of the business community in North-Rhine Westphalia (BW-NRW) updated daily its catalogue of Network Q 4.0 training courses for training staff in 2024-25, including courses to obtain the Ausbildung 4.0. certificate. Participants could cumulate various courses to achieve up to three certificate levels.

The first NIB funding guideline were published in 2023, focusing on the qualification of training personnel. The programme has since then selected 21 implementation projects, which started in 2024. The funded projects directly involve 54 organisations from vocational training practice and research as well as over 150 associated practice and strategy partners. Their common goal is to train a total of 12 000 skilled workers (who work as in-company trainer) from different sectors and professions in sustainability-related skills. To this end, they implement customised analogue and digital Train-the-Trainer courses, which are often modular in structure - from low-threshold taster courses to comprehensive certificate courses.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, the 21 NIB funded projects for qualifying training personnel in sustainability-related skills continued their work. One example is the NBAU project on sustainable construction, which offers Train-the-Trainer courses and community building for vocational training in sustainable development in the construction industry in Berlin-Brandenburg. Another example is the NAWiGaLa project, which offers qualification for sustainable training and management in gardening, landscaping and sports field construction.

In 2025, the roadshow 'Leando on Tour - Tools for Training Practice' visited four locations (Nürnberg, Siegen, Köln and Gera). With Leando Live 2025, the BIBB invited training staff, examiners and other vocational training professionals to Bonn on 30 October. Under the motto 'All AI or what?!' the focus was on interactive workshops, inspiring impulses and collegial exchange on all aspects of AI in training.

In 2025, the Learning World on the Leando portal gave practical support for training and examination staff: Here they had access to learning and information paths on job-specific topics as well as general content such as personal development, inclusion, sustainability, artificial intelligence, and the MIKA-THEK and MIKA-KI offers. All further MIKA offers, which have been extended in 2025 (e.g. MIKA-Storys), are on the Leando portal. In 2025, the Leando Toolbox provided 24 digital tools, and the podcast series 'Leando Talks' highlighted current topics in vocational education and training in interviews with various guests.

In 2025, Network Q 4.0 for training staff continued to offer flexible and tailor-made continuing education formats to make training future-oriented: background knowledge, lectures, workshops, online courses, blended learning training and learning nuggets. One of the main topics addressed was artificial intelligence and how to successfully integrate it into VET (AI compass). Another main topic addressed in the CPD of trainers was training marketing, recruiting, pre- and on-boarding and retaining skilled workers (e.g. online-workshop on 5 November 2025).

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) (until 2025)
- Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)
- German Economic Institute (IW)
- Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ) (since 2025)

Target group

Education professionals

Trainers

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Further developing national quality assurance systems

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for green transition and sustainability

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

Osnabrück Declaration

Sustainability - a green link in VET

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Leando portal for training and examination staff](#)

[Leando learning world: Practical support for training and examination staff](#)

[MIKA - Media and IT skills for training staff \(on Leando portal\)](#)

[Network Q 4.0 website - CPD offers for training staff \(IW\)](#)

[BIBB framework curriculum for AEVO examination updated \(2023\)](#)

[NIB funding programme \(2023-27\)](#)

[BBNE transfer programme for green skills of training personnel \(2020-22\)](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Supporting SMEs to provide future-proof VET

Under the umbrella initiative, VET 4.0, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) initiated a special funding line (Initial and continuing vocational training in the economy 4.0 – Support structures for SMEs in the adaptation process of in-company training) within the JOBSTARTER plus

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Digital education and upskilling of VET teachers

Under its *Digital pact for schools* programme (2019-24), the Federal Government aims to fund the digital infrastructure in all German schools, including vocational schools, to promote the uptake of digital skills.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Completed

Long-term quality initiative for teacher training

The Federal Government and the Federal States (represented by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs KMK) have launched a joint programme, the Quality initiative for teacher training (*Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung*, QLB), a funding competition scheme

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Completed

Digital media and innovative technology in VET

The web portal, Digital media in VET, has provided information since 2015 on the use of digital media in VET and selected project findings.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Alliance for initial and further training

The 2015-18 Alliance for initial and further training was agreed between the Federal Government, Federal States, business and industry, the unions and the Federal Employment Agency at the end of 2014.

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Type of development

Strategy/Action

plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Sustainable development in VET

In 2015, the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB) started 12 pilot projects in VET aiming to ensure a sustainable development (*Berufsbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung BBNE*). With the EUR 12 million budget, the projects intend to develop vocational competences in sustainability.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2022 Completed

VET 4.0 project: effects of digital innovation on vocational training

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), in cooperation with the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB), started the initiative VET 4.0 for the period from February 2016 to April 2018. The initiative is based on three pillars.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

Pact for vocational training

The Pact for VET (*Der Berufsbildungspakt*) includes the following measures, partly addressing work-based learning:

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

“ … ” **Cite as**

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