

Promoting dual VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 GERMANY

Timeline

2016 Implementation	2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation
2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation

ID number 28114

Background

During recent years, demographic changes and an increasing attractiveness of academic education caused a fall in the number of apprentices. For example, the number of young people searching for an apprenticeship place for the school year 2018/19 was lower than the number of available training places (549 000 versus 578 200).

Objectives

Securing the future skilled workforce by promoting VET.

Description

Given the increasing trend towards academic education, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs (BMWi) have set up a joint campaign to present dual VET (apprenticeship) as an attractive option. The campaign, You + your apprenticeship - Practically unbeatable! addresses more specific target groups. Its allocated budget is EUR 6 million per year. A motivational message is broadcast through various media channels such as cinema, press, social media tools and events, positioning dual vocational training as a realistic and attractive option for a successful education pathway. In 2017, the information roadshow included 105 stops in all regions of Germany and around 5 800 vocational guidance sessions and 70 workshops took place in schools, at youth and vocational training fairs.

An evaluation tailored to the campaign was conducted, which examined the vocational guidance modules of the roadshow. The evaluation showed that the young people received the campaign measures very well.

BMBF, BMWK, BMAS, the employment agencies (BA), the chambers and all key actors in VET will continue to develop promoting initiatives for dual VET. In general, many policy initiatives are also working towards making dual VET more attractive, e.g. the Alliance for initial and further training, initiatives on VET excellence (e.g. InnoVET, support of advanced VET), initiatives to modernise VET (digitalisation, green skills, new contents of IVET with

updated training regulations and new occupations) and promoting international mobility of VET learners.

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2018 and 2019, the information roadshow continued in all regions of Germany. Vocational guidance sessions and workshops took place in secondary schools and at youth, vocational and training fairs.

2020 Implementation

The information campaign, *The dual - VET with a system*

To increase the enthusiasm of young people and their advocates for the dual VET (apprenticeship) pathway, BMBF launched the broad-based information campaign 'the dual - VET with a system' (*Die Duale*) in August 2020 (funding volume: EUR 3 million). The campaign and its dedicated website highlight the diverse career prospects of dual VET (using testimonial portraits with individual career paths) and explain the novelties of the amended Vocational Training Act BBiG (using explanatory films). This will make the attractiveness of dual VET even more apparent to the public. The BMBF cooperates with the other partners of the Alliance for VET for this campaign. The new website is a referring platform, which can redirect the user to more targeted websites, e.g. on advanced VET or the website mentioned below addressing school leavers.

The information campaign: *You + your apprenticeship - Practically unbeatable!*

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, young people were given career guidance through virtual information tours at digital training fairs.

2021 Implementation

The information campaign, *The dual - VET with a system*

The campaign continued along the same lines as in 2020 with various events, initiatives and information. Its homepage cross-references service offers and information, such as the #AusbildungSTARTEN initiative, part of the Alliance for initial and further training (2015-21).

The web portal Berufenavi was developed on the initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and was launched in October 2021 by BIBB. Berufenavi.de gives school leavers tips on training and occupations that perfectly match their respective interests and talents. Young people receive guidance based on the respective level of interest they show. They can choose between three focal points. Those who want to get a first orientation, will find an overview of useful talent and career identification tests, information on voluntary services, internship exchanges and local guidance centres. Taking the branch towards the desired occupation, they can choose between different fields of interest such as creative, technical or numerical, where suitable occupational fields are then listed. If they have already decided on a career, users can find under 'training opportunities' directly whether the training they want is available in their area. In addition, *Berufenavi.de* leads to the personal advisors which are available on site.

The information campaign, *You + your apprenticeship - Practically unbeatable!*

Also in 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, career guidance for young people continued through virtual information tours at digital training fairs. In addition, a wide variety of professional portraits were presented on the homepage under the title Diversity of professions.

2022 Implementation

The information campaign, *The dual - VET with system* Influencer Aaron Troschke made it big with dual training: for one day, the YouTube star tested different, exciting apprenticeships. In his new video on Die Duale web portal (April 2022), he revealed which apprenticeship he likes best and why dual training is worthwhile.

In 2022, the Alliance for initial and further training continued to promote dual VET with its good labour market and earning opportunities - highlighting the very good prospects for all young people of finding a training place (e.g. Week and Summer of VET campaigns). The alliance website was relaunched and its thematic contents were updated with many new links and videos addressing training companies and young people.

The project 'Apprentices as digitalisation scouts' in companies aims to make dual VET more attractive and to identify potential for digitalisation in companies. The Digiscouts® expand their digital skills, work together on a digital platform, expand their knowledge with e-learning and gain experience in project management. Digiscouts® companies, trainers and apprentices are accompanied by experienced coaches. Several companies with Digiscouts® projects in one region exchange information and learn from each other. For example, the Digiscouts® projects in the entire Stuttgart region were relaunched in 2022 (with an additional focus on ecological sustainability) in 10 companies. The Digiscouts® projects are awarded prizes at the end, and all participants receive a certificate of participation.

Every year, around 3 000 graduates of the 130 skilled crafts vocational training programmes compete against each other in the Performance Competition of the German Skilled Crafts. With a grand closing ceremony on 9 December 2022, the national winners of the vocational competition *Professionals achieve something! (PLW)* were honoured in Augsburg. The 2022 website features two success stories of women winners. The competition aims at highlighting the advantages of in-company training, strengthening the reputation of vocational work in skilled crafts and advertising for skilled crafts.

2023 Implementation

From 2023, the campaign for dual VET has been part of the Excellence in VET umbrella initiative, which was launched by BMBF in December 2022. '*Für das DU in Ausbildung*' - the 2023 video spot for the campaign shows that dual vocational training is innovative, future-proof and can be individually designed. The campaign's website highlighted the diverse and attractive career prospects of dual VET.

The campaign, *You + your apprenticeship - Practically unbeatable!*, continued to focus strongly on digital communication to convince young people of the benefits of vocational training, particularly through social media. In addition to constant advertising, there was also target group-orientated video content.

The Alliance for initial and further training between the main VET actors has been relaunched for 2023-26 to support the school-to-work transition and promote an inclusive VET. Its Summer of VET 2023 initiative supported the VET market with events and campaigns nationwide. Young people were given insights into occupations and are brought together with training companies. Training seekers without placement receive support in finding opportunities. Along these lines, in July 2023, the German parliament has passed the Act to promote initial and further training including the Training guarantee, introducing a subsidised vocational orientation internship, a mobility grant, and making participation in introductory training easier.

The social partners promote VET with their own initiatives, such as the annual German Craft Skills Championships (DMH) with around 3 000 VET graduates in 130 trades competing for the national title. In December 2023, the 119 winners of the performance competition received their medals at the closing ceremony in the Berlin Congress Centre.

By November 2023, more than 500 companies with over 1 700 apprentices had taken part in the Digiscouts® project. On average, a team consists of three apprentices, and the Digiscouts cover more than 70 different training occupations. On average, eight companies in a region took part.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the campaign, *You + your apprenticeship - Practically unbeatable!*, was merged with the information campaign *Die Duale*, which was renamed to 'The dual - your training, your profession' (former: the dual - VET with system).

The campaign *The dual - your training, your profession* and its dedicated website continue to highlight the diverse career prospects of dual VET, adding new testimonial portraits with individual career paths (almost 30 testimonials). Further, it describes the options for financial support during and after a dual training. The pilot scholarship programme for talented apprentices and skilled workers (BAFF) started in 2024. This is a double innovation: on the one hand, scholarship funding for talented professionals now also includes the early phase of training. Secondly, the organisations for the promotion of gifted academic students are opening up to vocational training.

For the fourth time in a row, the Alliance for initial and further training launched its *Summer of VET* on 2 May 2024 under the motto: Those who start training today are shaping the future as skilled workers! The partners of the Alliance advertised and informed between May and October 2024 online (#AusbildungSTARTEN - Start an apprenticeship!) and in face-to-face formats on the various topics, e.g. prospects of an apprenticeship, searching for and finding a training place, funding opportunities.

In 2024, around 3 000 VET graduates in 130 trades competed again for the national title of the German Craft Skills Championships (DMH). But it is not just manual performance that counts: Creative minds are in demand in the creative competition *Die gute Form im Handwerk - Handwerker gestalten* (The good form in skilled crafts - craftspeople are designing). In over 30 different trades, about 150 graduates in a skilled crafts apprenticeship could demonstrate their love of experimentation with unusual design solutions. The winners of both competitions were honoured in December 2024.

At the start of 2024, five regions with 38 companies and over 120 new apprentices were running the Digiscouts® project, with more regions set to start over the course of the year. The digiscouts.de website features numerous examples of practice in 2024.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK)
- Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) (until December 2021)
- Chambers of industry and commerce (IHKs)
- German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH)
- Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Lifelong guidance

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

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

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[BMBF portal promoting dual VET](#)

[Scholarships for talented apprentices and skilled workers \(2024\)](#)

[Alliance for initial and further training \(2023-36\)](#)

[Act to promote initial and further training, incl. training guarantee \(2023\)](#)

[Berufenavi.de, a vocational guidance platform](#)

[Performance competitions of the German skilled crafts \(DMH\)](#)

[Project Apprentices as digitalisation scouts in companies](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

International cooperation in VET

The subject of bilateral VET cooperation is usually the intentions of a partner country to reform its VET system. Project funding in international VET cooperation serves to make expert knowledge and implementation competences from Germany available to the partner countries.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

The Excellence Initiative for VET

With the Excellence Initiative for VET policy projects are combined into an overarching agenda. Individual activities will be launched successively during 2022 to 2026. Over EUR 750 million have been earmarked for this purpose.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Promoting international mobility of VET learners

Outgoing mobility:

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 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.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Strategy/Action

plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Expanding vocational guidance and support from school until completion of training

Nationwide standard support measures anchored in the Social Code (e.g. SGB III) cover the transition from school to work, for example with various forms of vocational preparation and continuous support during training.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2021 Completed

Pact for vocational training

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

 GERMANY

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Promoting dual VET: Germany. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

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