

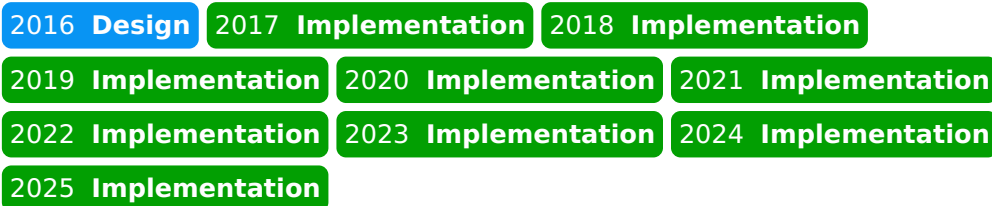
Modernising VET qualifications

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 GERMANY

Timeline



ID number 28112

Background

According to the Vocational Training Act (BBiG), the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB) is responsible for the dual training regulations and their updating. For example, the BIBB investigated whether the dual training programmes for four IT occupations had to be modernised: preliminary investigation took place from February 2015 to April 2016; followed by an online survey in 2016 and a final recommendation report in December 2016. The target audience comprised company managers, human resources managers and training staff, skilled IT workers, apprentices, workers' councils, bodies representing young people and apprentices and vocational school teachers.

From 2016 to 2018, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and BIBB jointly supported the research initiative, Skills, qualifications and competences for the digitised work of tomorrow. The study examined systematically the influence of digitalisation on 14 selected occupations, including agricultural services specialist, designer of digital and print media, and plant mechanic for sanitary, heating and air conditioning systems. The focus was on work processes, tasks and qualification needs.

Objectives

The updating and restructuring of training occupations ensures the quality and competitiveness of dual training in Germany. Training regulations are revised at regular intervals and new ones are created, if needed, so that qualifications meet the current demands of the economy, policy and society. In order to ensure the quality of vocational training, the standardised national training regulations set out qualifications, examinations, the structure of training and training requirements.

Description

The regulated qualifications of apprenticeships and advanced training occupations are based on examinations with nationwide uniform examination regulations. The training

regulations and the learning fields of the school-based part of dual VET that are coordinated with them are oriented to company work and business processes. They therefore ensure that the vocational qualifications are highly relevant to the labour market. The design of the training content for the creation of new or updating of existing training occupations by the experts of the social partners with the support of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) ensures that current labour market and technological developments (especially in the context of digitalisation and the energy transition) as well as the goals of sustainable development are taken into account. The inclusion of research results also makes an indispensable contribution to the early identification and of adaptation needs and skills developments. This regulatory work at BIBB is partly based on skills anticipation research. Most skills identification and anticipation projects in Germany build on the BIBB-IAB Qualification and Occupation Projections (QuBe). The macroeconomic forecast and simulation model used in the QuBe project can be used via alternative scenarios to analyse the consequences of transformation and national responding strategies on economic development, the labour market, as well as on sectors, occupations, qualifications and skills requirements.

In 2017, 13 IVET training regulations and 19 CVET regulations, and an additional 24 IVET regulations in 2018, were modernised with significant involvement of the social partners to ensure up-to-date qualifications that correspond to the current and foreseeable development of technical standards. Digitalisation of work, data protection and information security have become integral components of training in the industrial metal and electrical occupations and in the IT occupations.

In some industries and for certain fields of activity, new job descriptions are emerging. An example is the one relating to the job of management assistant in e-commerce, a new cross-sectoral dual training occupation for the booming online trade sector. The corresponding training regulation was drawn up by BIBB, social partners and experts in 2017 and came into force in August 2018. The social partners also intend to develop advanced training regulations with a view to creating further career pathways for management assistants in e-commerce.

2016 Design

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, four IVET regulations, 11 national advanced VET regulations and 31 advanced VET regulations from the Chambers were updated.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, 11 IVET regulations, 12 national advanced VET regulations and 21 advanced VET regulations by the Chambers were updated or new.

Eleven updated apprenticeship occupations came into force on 1 August 2020, such as:

- (a) bank clerk,
- (b) housekeeper,
- (c) IT occupations (four training occupations),
- (d) management assistant for wholesale and foreign trade management,
- (e) media designer for image and sound.

In addition, vocational training in the laboratory field (chemistry, biology and paint) was adapted to current requirements through an amendment ordinance for three training occupations.

The BIBB publication series *Designing Apprenticeship* provides detailed information on new or modernised training occupations. With its concrete tips and practical instructions, the series directly addresses training practice and supports training staff

in their daily work with apprentices.

Eight new advanced training qualifications coming into force in 2020 (in line with the implementation of the BBiG changes in further training regulations according to § 53 BBiG and § 42 HwO):

- (a) *Betriebswirt/in* nach dem BBiG – master professional in business management in accordance with the Vocational Training Act,
- (b) accountant – bachelor professional in balance sheet accounting,
- (c) certified specialist in purchasing – bachelor professional in procurement,
- (d) master of industry – print media – bachelor professional in print,
- (e) business administrator in accordance with the HwO – bachelor professional in commercial management in accordance with the crafts code,
- (f) media specialist – bachelor professional in media,
- (g) master craftsman in event technology – bachelor professional in event technology,
- (h) restorer in the skilled crafts – master professional for restoration in the skilled crafts.

2021 Implementation

In February 2021, four modernised so-called standard occupational profile items (*Standardberufsbildpositionen*) were agreed by all actors involved in training regulatory work. From August 2021, they will be included in all newly regulated dual training occupations, through which apprentices will acquire cross-occupational competences. Digitalisation and sustainability will become compulsory for apprentices.

In 2021, 9 IVET regulations, 4 national advanced VET regulations and 35 advanced VET regulations by the chambers were updated or new.

One new apprenticeship occupation, electronics technician for building systems integration, came into force in 2021.

Eight updated apprenticeship occupations came into force in 2021:

- (a) brewer and maltster;
- (b) electronics technician for machines and drive technology in accordance with the Vocational Training Act;
- (c) electronics technician for machines and drive technology under the Crafts Code;
- (d) electronics technician;
- (e) vehicle interior mechanic;
- (f) hairdresser;
- (g) information electronics technician;
- (h) painter and varnisher.

The four updated or new national advanced VET regulations were:

- (a) dairy laboratory technician – bachelor professional in dairy laboratory science
- (b) dairy master craftsman – bachelor professional in dairy technology
- (c) master masonry and terrazzo contractor
- (d) master bicycle mechanic.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the modernisation of initial and continuing training regulations, master craftsman's examination ordinances, educational plans (including in-company training plans, vocational school curricula and inter-company apprentice training plans) was continued: 14 IVET regulations, 3 national advanced VET regulations and 28 advanced VET regulations by the chambers were updated or newly set up.

The two new regulations for dual training occupation in 2022 were inland navigation captain and kitchen specialist. Twelve apprenticeship regulations were updated: Inland navigation operator; Railwayman in operational service locomotive driver and

transport; Railwayman in train traffic control; Specialist in catering; Specialist for restaurants and event catering; Specialist for system catering; Hotel management specialist; Management assistant in hotel management; Insurance and financial investment clerk; Cook; Dental assistant; Dental technician. The three updated or new national advanced VET regulations were: Master hearing aid acoustician, Master woodwind instrument maker, Master sign and light sign maker.

The implementation of the standard occupational profile items 'Environmental protection and sustainability' and 'Digitised world of work' in all dual VET courses at both places of learning (training company and vocational school) was continued in 2022. Further, BIBB published a competence module with specific examples of formulations to help integrate international professional competences such as 'International specialist competences', 'Intercultural competences' and 'Foreign language competences' in IVET regulations.

The following tasks concerning higher VET qualifications were continued as well in 2022: reorganisation of advanced VET regulations; further implementation of the degree designations Bachelor Professional and Master Professional; development of a structural ordinance for continuing professional development; development of a checklist for quality assurance of advanced VET regulations prepared by the chambers; expansion and ensuring continuation of offers for the acquisition of higher VET qualifications (both in parallel with training and in vocational training courses that build on such qualifications).

2023 Implementation

Six initial VET regulations (including a new one: immersive media designer) and 35 advanced VET regulations were updated or newly set up in 2023. The mandatory integration of the new cross-occupational training standards 'Environmental protection and sustainability', 'Digitised world of work', 'Safety and health at the workplace' and 'Company, VET, labour and tariff law' in all dual VET courses at both places of learning was continued in 2023.

This regulatory work at BIBB is partly based on skills anticipation research. The H2PRO research project is investigating which qualification needs of skilled workers will arise through the use of green hydrogen. Three factsheets with sectoral analyses (hydrogen production, chemical and refining industry, mobility sector) have been published in 2023. BIBB is also developing the occupation and competence radar, a data-based information portal (funded by the education ministry). It combines retrospective data (since 2000) and forecast data (up to 2040) from various data sources to open up new analysis and information possibilities at sector and occupation level and to give orientation for actors from labour market and VET politics, research and companies, employees and apprentices. By the end of 2023, the data have been collected, processed and harmonised to document the existing base and develop it continuously. Parallel to this and building on it, the online portal for users is being developed, tested and will be put into trial operation by the end of 2024.

To boost the attractiveness of dual VET, the BIBB board adopted in July 2023 a recommendation that supplements on-site dual vocational training with planned remote training and learning. The BIBB board emphasises that dual VET should continue to take place mostly on-site / in-person in compliance with all legal regulations. However, this could be effectively supported by forms of remote training and learning provision.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, 8 initial VET regulations (including environmental technologists with 4 different specialisations) and 28 advanced VET regulations were updated. The mandatory integration of the four new cross-occupational training standards in all dual VET courses at both places of learning was continued in 2024.

The provision of dual training is to become more digital – and thus more attractive to apprentices and training companies. To this end, numerous amendments to the

Vocational Training Act (BBiG) were passed in July 2024 as part of the Vocational training validation and digitisation act (BVaDiG). They apply from 1 August 2024 and can therefore already be used for the new training year. Companies and chambers were enabled to implement an end-to-end digital process, primarily by eliminating written form requirements. To this end, the digital training contract, possibility of digital remote training and increased digital communication are planned.

The comprehensive modernisation of the IT advanced training system (IT-WBS) entered into force in November 2024 and opened up new prospects for IT specialists. In view of the ongoing shortage of skilled labour and the dynamic digital transformation, the new system sets standards and offers innovative approaches to further vocational training in the IT sector. The new advanced training regulations improve career opportunities and offer attractive career paths to graduates of vocational training in the IT sector as well as lateral and side entrants.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, seven initial VET regulations were updated (e.g. florist) and BIBB published the corresponding *Designing Apprenticeship* guides, providing detailed information, concrete tips and practical instructions on new or modernised training occupations for training staff in their daily work with apprentices. The mandatory integration of the four cross-occupational training standards in all dual VET courses at both places of learning since 2021 was continued in 2025. Further, 22 advanced VET regulations (e.g. master optician) were updated.

In February 2025, five new QuBe dossiers based on the 8th wave of the baseline projection (2024) were published.

Bodies responsible

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

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Further developing national quality assurance systems

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
Expanding VET programmes to EQF levels 5-8
Acquiring key competences

Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes

Integrating digital skills and competences in VET curricula and programmes

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

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

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

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

VET underpinned by a culture of quality assurance

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Sustainability - a green link in VET

European Education and Training Area and international VET

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[IVET regulations updated or new \(by year\)](#)

[Advanced VET regulations updated or new \(by year\)](#)

[Modernisation of IT advanced training system \(IT-WBS\)](#)

[Modern VET standards for all training occupations](#)

[BIBB publication series Designing Apprenticeship \(Ausbildung gestalten\)](#)

[Information on Vocational training validation and digitisation act \(BVaDiG\)](#)

[BIBB-IAB Qualification and Occupation Projections \(QuBe\) - 2025 dossiers](#)

Related policy developments

2025 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

2025 Implementation

Adapting vocational qualifications to progress in digitalisation

The preliminary examination of the potential restructuring of IT occupations carried out by the Federal Institute for VET (BIBB) in 2015-16 and the subsequent research initiative 'Skills, qualifications and competences for the digitised work of tomorrow' on 14 occupations (2016-18) touched upon d

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

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.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

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.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

Amendment of Vocational Training Act

The legislative process for amending the Vocational Training Act started in November 2018. Several key changes to be introduced:

Introducing a minimum training wage for apprentices.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Partial qualifications to support the low-qualified and unskilled

Partial qualifications (*Teilqualifikationen, TQ*) are educational offers, which allow learners to gain vocational qualifications through systematic, successive qualifications based on the dual training regulations.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Monitoring VET system - BIBB annual Data reports

BIBB annual Data reports supplement the VET report published each year by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) by providing additional in-depth information and analysis on the current situation and the newest developments in VET. The reports have a yearly special focus:

 GERMANY

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:

 GERMANY

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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