



STRATEGIES FOR CREATING AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY FOR ALL

An International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship.

AUSRA WELLS

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Table of contents

1. Acknowledgements	3	4. Fellowship Learnings	10
Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)	3	Key learnings	11
Fellowship Sponsor - Jobs Victoria	4		
Personal Acknowledgements	4	5. Personal Professional and Sectoral Impact	18
2. Executive Summary	5	6. Recommendations and Considerations	19
3. Fellowship Background	7	7. References	21
Fellow Biography	7		
Fellowship Aims	7	8. Appendices	22
Australian Context	8	PowerPoint Presentation	22
Abbreviations/Acronyms/Definitions	9		

1. Acknowledgements

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Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

The ISS Institute plays a pivotal role in creating value and opportunity, encouraging new thinking and early adoption of ideas and practice by investing in individuals.

The overarching aim of the ISS Institute is to support the development of a “Smarter Australia”. The Institute does this via the provision of Fellowships that provide the opportunity for Australians to undertake international skills development and applied research that will have a positive impact on Australian industry and the broader community.

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- » Hans Dietrich IAB Research Department “Education, Training, and Employment over the Life Course”
- » Angela Rauch IAB Research Department “Labour market integration of people with severe disabilities “
- » Lodewijk Berkhout Dutch Department of Social Affairs & Employment
- » Liz Sayce
- » Dr Peter Smith Centre for Disability, Employment, Research and Practice
- » Lindsey Ricker Policy Analyst LESI Program OECD
- » Epp Reedik Head of Inclusion and Competitiveness Unit, Estonian Youth Work Centre
- » Fabian Almuth Theresia - BiZ-Koordinatorin der Regionaldirektion Bayern
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- » Paulius Serapinas Coordinator of International Affairs Lithuanian Youth Council
- » Roger Hessel Att. at Law; International Expert ‘Skills Development, Vocational Education, Employment Policies’ Lecturer, German University of Applied Administrative Sciences, Brühl/Cologne
- » Angela Rooney | Careers Service | Department for the Economy | Jobs & Benefits office Northern Ireland
- » Peter DeNatris – Strategic Advisor at National Disability Insurance Agency
- » Yvonne Bösel – Advisor for Youth Policy, dbb youth, dbb beamtenbund und tarifunion

2. Executive Summary

The world of work is undergoing a number of changes brought on by advances in technology, automation and artificial intelligence. These rapid developments in technology can cause disruptions to established jobs, but also offer new opportunities through enhancing current roles and the creation of new industries.

Existing employment programs within Australia are focused on assisting job seekers to secure job placements with a high focus on employment outcomes measured at 26 weeks. With the rapid development of new technology impacting on many industries, the assistance young people require is changing, and their experiences are often very different to that of their parents, employers and those providing education and employment services.

An increasing number of 'traditional' entry level jobs are being reduced or replaced by technology.¹ This can be seen in a number of industries with the increasing adaption of 'self-serve kiosks' replacing cashiers and front of house staff. This is only one example of an increasing transformational change to service related industries. It has been said that the 'digital revolution' and AI will replace tasks, not jobs,² in a similar way to robotics in the manufacturing industries. However, the entry requirements for those starting out in service related industries continues to increase both in soft skills and educational qualification.

From a simplistic view point, supporting youth to remain in education is a step in the right direction as it builds relevant skills for a changing labour market. However, several cohorts may not always remain in school for a variety of reasons. In addition, disengaged youth or youth with disability can often be left behind those who are academically inclined. In the past, jobs or tasks that didn't require high levels of education assisted many young people to develop their skills in the work force.

For many LGA's a high level of unemployment for youth cohorts is already a concern with several national, state and local policies and programs aimed at improving employment pathways having various levels of success.³ Given recent and pending changes to various industries and related jobs, much work needs to be done to ensure the employment divide for disengaged youth is not widened. The policy drivers and program parameters to do this effectively are not entirely clear as future trends are inherently difficult to predict. What is clear however, as the world of work becomes more fluid, employment and educational programs and policies need to adapt in order to address current challenges and create an equal employment pathway for all.

1 The Verge.com, 'Automation threatens 800 million jobs, but technology could still save us, says report', Vox Media, James Vincent, 2017, p.1, <https://www.theverge.com/2017/11/30/16719092/automation-robots-jobs-global-800-million-forecast>,

2 Forbes.com, 'Artificial Intelligence Will Replace Tasks, Not Jobs', Forbes magazine online, Joe McKendrick, 2018, p.1, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gilpress/2019/04/22/ai-startup-zebra-medical-vision-enlists-deep-learning-to-save-lives/#632a97b21035>,

3 The National Academies Press, 'Communities In Action, Chapter 6 - Policies to Support Community Solutions', The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, 2017, p.335, <https://www.nap.edu/read/24624/chapter/8>,

The Fellowship was designed to gain an international perspective on the following:

1. How do European youth employment services enable jobseekers in environments with increasing refugee populations to secure and sustain employment? And how can the risk of their continued long-term labour force exclusion be reduced?
2. Identifying best practice government intervention in delivering employment support to jobseekers facing barriers to employment. The Fellow travelled to Germany and surrounding countries to investigate government support programs in environments where youth employment rates are much lower than Australia.
3. Identifying innovative approaches, strategies and practices that engage employers in the delivery of employment support to jobseekers facing barriers to employment. The Fellow met with European networks to gain understanding of how they prepare their workforces for current and emerging technological change.

3. Fellowship Background

Fellow Biography

The Fellow, Ausra Wells has worked in the Employment Sector for 20 years. In that time, she has been involved with the development of a number of innovative employment programs to support disadvantaged young people and transition them into the workforce. The Fellow has completed an undergraduate degree in Psychology and holds a Certificate IV in Arts Therapy. The Fellow's educational interests have always focused on empowering others to achieve their goals. Over the last ten years the Fellow's work has been focused in the City of Greater Dandenong. The city, and its surrounding areas including Doveton, is one of the most disadvantaged in Victoria. It is the second highest LGA for Youth disengagement in the state,⁴ and is a major focus for various social and economic programs to increase participation amongst young people.



The Fellow's work in developing and delivering youth employment programs targeting CALD youth and youth with disability has provided a solid foundation for understanding the barriers within existing employment programs being offered to Australian disadvantaged youth. The Fellow continues to explore solutions for increasing youth engagement and employment outcomes and build more inclusive parameters in program design.

Fellowship Aims

The Fellowship aims were to:

1. Understand how a broad overarching framework such as 'The Youth Guarantee'⁵ is implemented within different locations, and how this supports local approaches to youth education and employment.
2. Exploring the various European employment systems that collaborate and support youth employment pathways.
3. Research future trends in employment model design in relation to underemployment and the changing nature of work due to technology disruption.

The aims were achieved by meeting with various organisations and government agencies involved in supporting disengaged youth with employment participation in Europe. These included:

1. European Commission (European Union) Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - Elodie Farzi, Team Leader on Youth Employment.
2. European Trade Union Confederation - Ignacio Doreste Advisor

⁴ Statistical Data for Victorian Communities <http://www.greaterdandenong.com/document/18464/statistical-data-for-victorian-communities>

⁵ Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion European Commission <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en>

3. Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (IAB) - Hans Dietrich Research Department "Education, Training, and Employment over the Life Course" & Angela Rauch Research Department "Labour market integration of people with severe disabilities"
4. OECD - Lindsey Ricker Policy Analyst LESI Program
5. Berufsinformationszentrum - Fabian Almuth Theresia - BiZ-Koordinatorin der Regionaldirektion Bayern
6. Lithuanian Youth Council - Paulius Serapinas Coordinator of International Affairs Lithuanian Youth Council
7. ENTK (Estonian Youth Work Centre) - Epp Reedik Head of Inclusion and Competitiveness Unit
8. Eesti Töötukassa Karolin Kõrreveski Advisor on international cooperation
9. Dutch Department of Social Affairs & Employment - Lodewijk Berkhout (Phone confenece call)
10. Liz Sayce former Chief Executive of Disability Rights UK
11. Roger Hessel Att. at Law; International Expert 'Skills Development, Vocational Education, Employment Policies' Lecturer, German University of Applied Administrative Sciences, Brühl/Cologne (Email Correspondence)
12. Angela Rooney | Careers Service | Department for the Economy | Jobs & Benefits office Northern Ireland
13. Committee Youth in Europe, dbb jugend (Bund) - Yvonne Bösel Referentin für Jugendpolitik & Carolin Wohlgemuth Sekretariat

Prior to travelling to Europe, the Fellow contacted the European Youth Forum. The European Youth Forum is an umbrella organisation that operates across a number of youth organisations within the EU. The information gained through this contact assisted in identifying organisations that would aid in meeting the goals of the Fellowship.

Australian Context

The current youth unemployment rate for Victorian 15-19 years old is 20.5%. Within the City of Greater Dandenong the unemployment rate increases to 30.2% (Census 2016). The employment rate for people with disabilities within the LGA is lower still; currently 4.9% compared to 52.3% for those with no disability (Census 2016). In addition, the LGA is one of the most culturally diverse areas, furthering the need for targeted early intervention due to language barriers and socio-economic barriers. Despite multiple programs aimed at increasing employment participation for disadvantaged participants within the Dandenong area (Project 3177 & 3175 is a recent example) the high unemployment and disengagement rates remain.

The challenges of improving youth employment and engagement in the City of Greater Dandenong and its surrounds is being tackled on various fronts by various programs. The Fellow believes that the segregated nature of these programs is not improving engagement for vulnerable youth, and that early intervention is critical to break the cycle of welfare dependency. Linkages between the support programs offered by schools and those offered by employment services need to be strengthened in order to reduce disengagement. In addition, such programs need to be updated and adaptable in order to meet the demands of the modern workforce. This is particularly important for disadvantaged youth that may have limited access to resources.

Employment supports often overlap with education during the last 12 months of school only, as offering employment support at an earlier stage may encourage young people to leave school. For many young people with disadvantages,

employment education is often too late as they may have already left school. Further to this, these cohorts often lack positive role models at home. Many of their parents don't work, or have never considered joining the workforce. By the time traditional employment programs begin to service these cohorts, they are more likely to be disengaged and have often been unemployed for several months.

Over recent years the Fellow has been involved in developing a number of programs aimed at increasing economic participation for disadvantaged youth, with a strong focus on strengthening early intervention, and offering employment pathways following education.

These programs included Interactives Work Experience aimed at increasing employment pathways for students with significant disabilities, and two projects within the Jobs Victoria Employment Network⁶- Youth Jobs Now! aimed at increasing employment pathways for CALD youth, and Youth2You aimed at supporting disengaged youth by implementing a peer-based mentoring support in conjunction with employers.

Abbreviations/Acronyms/Definitions

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
EU	European Union
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGA	Local Government Area
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ROI	Return On Investment
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
VR	Virtual Reality

4. Fellowship Learnings

The Fellow conducted visits between September – October 2018 to the following locations:

1. Germany - Nuremberg – IAB and Youth Information Centre (3 visits).

Purpose: To speak with employment experts from youth and disability departments in order to gain a greater understanding of the German system, and explore similarities and differences to Australia.

- » Germany has a strong Vocational training linkage with school
- » Employers/Industry groups meet with school aged students directly
- » Focus on a longer-term return on investment
- » Industries in Germany have the capacity to employ workers across age groups.
- » 60% of newly arrived asylum seekers have sought protection in Germany⁷

2. Paris – OECD.

Purpose: To gain a broader view of Employment programs through a global lens. Discussions regarding programs that are working around the world. Collaboration and ways to improve holistic outcomes.

3. Belgium – European Union – European Employment Commission & European Trade Union Confederacy.

Purpose: To learn more about the employment programs and systems delivered within the European Union and the Youth Guarantee. Discussions covered statistics that show improvements to the unemployment rate, and the need for support systems to address under employment. Discussions also covered a range of topics including employer behaviour, incentives to hire apprentices, the assimilation of a growing refugee population and the challenges and opportunities this creates.

4. Germany - Berlin – Youth Trade Union.

The Fellow was invited to participate in a Youth council meeting. Discussions surrounded the current employment situation(s) impacting the youth and the government systems providing support. National Youth Council supports youth participation across several areas and brings youth issues to the attention of politicians and policy makers.

5. Estonia – Employment department and Youth Organisation ENTK .

Purpose: To compare youth employment programs within a smaller EU country, and investigate its high-tech reputation in relation to youth employment.

7

ETUC, CEEP, EUROCHAMBRES (2018) Labour-int: Integration of migrants and refugees in the labour market through a multistakeholder approach. Brussels. 2017 p6 <https://www.etuc.org/en/publication/labour-int-integration-migrants-and-refugees-labour-market-through-multi-stakeholder>

6. Lithuania – Youth Council.

Purpose: To investigate a smaller EU country's approach within the Youth Space. Lithuania has a very high youth engagement for school attendance.⁸ While youth engagement is high, the country has the highest suicide rate in the world, particularly for males.⁹

7. Northern Ireland – Careers Counselling / Department of Economic Development.

Purpose: The Northern Irish youth career counselling program¹⁰ was recommended as a program that was providing strong results.

8. England – Meeting with Liz Smythe – Former Chief Executive of Disability Rights UK .

Purpose: The Fellow was referred to Liz Smythe to discuss engagement strategies focusing on people with disabilities.

In addition to the physical visits, a number of contacts were made via phone/skype or email leading up to and during the time in Europe:

1. Lodewijk Berkhout Dutch Department of Social Affairs & Employment – review of youth employment and practices to improve transition from school to work
2. Roger Hessel Att. at Law; International Expert 'Skills Development, Vocational Education, Employment Policies' Lecturer, German University of Applied Administrative Sciences, Brühl/Cologne; documentation from Germany's system for youth employment

3. Zuzana Vaneckova, board member of the European Youth Forum responsible for social and economic inclusion

Key learnings

The opportunity to meet with numerous organisations across many European countries provided the Fellow with great insights, and a broader view of the European youth employment sector. The Fellowship offered a first-hand look into the programs and strategies implemented in these countries to improve youth employment, and their approach to challenges surrounding the changing dynamics of work compared to Australia.

Priority Areas

Although current Australian growth industries include construction, and health and social services,¹¹ there are still challenges in attracting new workers to these professions. Given the geographic isolation of Australia, the impact of competition for workers is not as pronounced as many other countries. A number of growth industries within countries such as Germany are able to offer a life-time career to many workers. Viewing employment from a career perspective, and taking a longer-term view of a participant's career pathway, supports industry as workers can build on existing skills and remain engaged in their sector. The Fellow believes that the current Australian employment services and policy parameters inhibit this long term industry engagement and growth.

During the Fellow's research on European models that can support innovation in Australian employment services, some priority areas were identified.

8 Education in Lithuania OECD Review of National Policies for Education 2017 p.4 <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/Education-in-Lithuania-2017-highlights.pdf>

9 World Health Organisation 2018 Global Health Observatory data repository; Suicide rate estimates, crude estimates by country <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.MHSUICIDE>

10 NI direct Government Services. How the Careers Services can help you <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/how-careers-service-can-help-you>

11 Open Colleges What will you do in 2022? Australia's growing industries 2017 Jessica Hamilton <https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/blog/2017/10/09/ca-2022-australias-growing-industries/>

- a. The benefits of an overarching framework to engage young people with education and employment
- b. Local approaches provide meaningful outcomes rather than a 'one-size' fits all approach
- c. The importance of early intervention for employment pathways
- d. Career counselling to support all stages of career progression
- e. Support for parents, employers and associated stakeholders to have up to date career information/labour market information.
- f. Collaborative KPIs that reach across departments/teams
- g. Evolution of employment programs to meet the growing needs of 'under-employment' and the 'gig economy'
- h. Embracing technology developments that are changing the employment landscape
- i. Changing demographics of the available workforce
- j. Tailored incentives to support employment outcomes.
- k. Potential impacts of political decisions and policy drivers

(a) The benefits of an overarching framework to engage young people with education and employment

The Youth Guarantee was implemented across the EU following the GFC. The focus of the scheme was initially to support employment placements and related training to assist improvements to local economies. The overarching framework of the Youth Guarantee allows flexibility for initiatives to target local labour market conditions while supporting broader targets for participating countries. Additionally, the Youth Guarantee and the broader Employment Commission can collate data from various implemented models to support continuous learnings.

Since its implementation, the Youth Guarantee has supported the increase of participation in employment and education across a number of countries. The European Commission reports that "Since January 2014, 14 million young people have entered national Youth Guarantee schemes."¹² Experts for engaging vulnerable young participants have recommended the following measures¹³

1. Providing individualised support to keep engagement and facilitate re-engagement
2. Supporting early activation and engagement of young people
3. Facilitation of transitions
4. Measuring success – quantitative kpis only show part of the story. There is a need to also measure the 'distance travelled' by the participant accessing supports, rather than a sole focus on the outcomes achieved.

Over the course of the Youth Guarantee's implementation, new adaptations to the scheme have been made as unemployment rates have decreased. The

¹² European Union Fact Sheet 2016 http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-3215_en.htm

¹³ Activation measures for young people in vulnerable situations – Experience from the ground. 2018 p2 European Commission

underemployment of youth is an emerging concern across many countries and is not always adequately reflected in unemployment rate figures.

The Youth Guarantee Study¹⁴ has included new recommendations including:

- » the creation of a national Youth Guarantee coordination committee
- » more flexibility regarding the provision of offers
- » holistic service provision for young people
- » pro-active outreach
- » early career-guidance
- » additional indicators
- » better tracking systems

(b) Local approaches provide meaningful outcomes rather than a ‘one-size’ fits all approach.

There is great variability in the needs and requirements of participants amongst countries and within local areas. Adapting services to provide flexible service delivery to local employment needs not only provides better outcomes, but also creates more meaningful engagements across multiple sectors of local communities. This allows grassroot movements to create change such as targeting local skill shortages and education needs, and supports change within the mindset of local communities, aiding in managing their expectations of employment. This is especially the case for vulnerable youth such as people with disability or those from a CALD background.

The European Disability Strategy has been adapted by the European Commission and focuses on broader policy to make Europe ‘barrier-free’ and has recommended

greater coordination of the Strategy with the European Economic Strategy (Europe 2020) and the European Economic Governance (European Semester).¹⁵

In Estonia there is a campaign to change mindsets of people with disabilities and barriers to employment through exploring work as a pathway. From the meeting with Eesti Töötukassa the local approach has been more effective than a broader national campaign in changing communities’ perceptions of people with disabilities.

Meeting with Liz Sayce discussed the success of local employment projects leading up to the London Olympic Games. The focus was to increase local employers hiring local residents, many of whom were disadvantaged and often overlooked by organisations traditional hiring processes.

The implementation of a National or State level framework may assist with the broader vision, but will require flexibility when implementing strategies at the local level to have real reach and impact.

(c) The importance of early intervention for employment pathways

Preparing young people for the world of work while they are still at school is considered pivotal in a number of countries. The well-established VET system in Germany is strongly supported by cooperation between government and businesses (particularly strong, small and medium sized enterprises (SME's)). There is strong involvement from employers and industry peak bodies in supporting young people in building robust skills, focusing on a longer-term return on investment.

A key recommendation from the Youth Guarantee: Provide work-related skills to match labour demand through an expansion of VET and work-based learning,

¹⁴ 13 Activation measures for young people in vulnerable situations – Experience from the ground. 2018 p 2-33 European Commission

¹⁵ European Disability Forum – Disability Strategy Europe 2020 <http://www.edf-feph.org/disability-strategy-europe-2020>. Accessed May 2019

and improve collaboration between public and private stakeholders. A first key policy lever in this respect is the introduction of practical or work-based learning at all levels of the education and training system to address the lack of work-related skills demanded by the private and public sector.

At the time of the Fellowship a pilot program being conducted in the Netherlands indicated that providing a variety of practical work placements assists young people's journey into employment. An interview with Mr. Berkhout discussed providing information to students about careers with practical experience and not just relying on data.

The VET system in Germany is well supported by employers and industrial peaks who are encouraged to engage with school students. Through these connections, young people gain up to date information regarding local industries. Additionally, the dual VET system in Germany provides the benefits of gaining work experience while still in education.

(d) Career counselling to support all stages of career progression.

Estonian youth services have a strong focus on providing support through all stages of career progression. Ongoing counselling and support is offered through school, to jobseeker, worker and employer. Data is attained on areas with skill shortages and growth areas are identified to inform education and employment pathways.

Similarly, Northern Ireland provides career counselling to young people, supported by skilled staff. Support service staff undergo professional development training that requires spending time with employers to understand local business and labour market conditions. This type of 'on the ground' training for career counsellors and transition coaches who are assisting school students, teachers

and parents is invaluable as it ensures the information they provide is current and reflects local needs. With the nature of work becoming more variable and changeable as industries adapt to new technologies, career guidance will rely on such accurate information..

(e) Support for parents, employers and associated stakeholders to have up to date career information/labour market information.

Ongoing support for stakeholders is vital. Ensuring that parents of young people are included in the support network and updated with information about the labour market, employment conditions and career prospects may be critical to their success. Keeping parents informed is a critical part of the support process as their views and opinions about work greatly shape those of their children. Parent's views on career pathways are often based on their own personal experiences which may not reflect the current labour market pathways. As the world of work changes due to globalisation and technological advancement, labour markets and job requirements will also evolve. Current career prospects and related information needs to be accessible to all stakeholders.

Traditional apprenticeships are often compared to traditional white-collar roles, with the latter being more desirable. Employment pathways are constantly evolving, with many jobs now containing different skill sets and growth options that were unavailable in previous generations. During interviews with the IAB, ETUC, and the Berufsinformationszentrum, skill shortages in various apprenticeship industries were noted. Many industries reported having trouble attracting young people to these occupations due to negative perceptions when compared to other career paths. The latest data indicates that 80 million workers in Europe are mismatched in terms of qualifications.¹⁶

Given the strong likelihood of young people having more than one career in their lifetime,¹⁷ support to assist stakeholders in recognising the value of transferable skills is needed. The same point can hold true for employers and industry peak bodies. Providing such relevant information about career progression through different jobs can assist in creating more demand amongst skill shortage areas. Having seen the competitive nature of employment faced by various countries in Europe, the Fellow believes that utilising technology to reach a younger cohort could be an effective way to promote local and international industries, particularly those with shortages, and deliver up to date information.

(f) Collaborative KPIs that reach across departments/teams

In Northern Ireland the Outcome Delivery Plan 2018-19 is focused on achieving 12 collaborative outcomes across various government departments, focusing more on social impact than siloed departmental structures.¹⁸

Collaborative KPIs can provide support for a longer-term view of government and program supports and the ROI these can provide concerning disadvantaged youth cohorts.

In addition, the use of similar 'language' across different support programs can create confusion. For example, depending on the programs and supports being accessed, the same person may be referred to as a jobseeker, student, participant, refugee or disengaged individual. This lack of continuity can further segregate the systems and goals of different departments, rather than creating a whole of life approach that each program attempts to deliver. Collaborative approaches can assist with breaking down administrative boundaries and support a holistic methodology as long as similar terminology is used, and long term outcomes are agreed upon.

(g) Evolution of employment programs to meet the growing needs of 'under-employment' and the 'gig economy'

Following from the success of the Youth Guarantee and various programs throughout Europe, discussions at the European Commission and at the OECD detailed the need to support programs that combat the growing cohorts of youth who are considered 'under-employed'. The Fellow believes that a shift is needed to develop Australian labour market programs that move from being job placement centred to having a stronger focus on career progression. Various job placement models can support many cohorts to find employment but often do not offer support to increase their hours, improve their working wage or provide training opportunities.

This approach is in direct contrast to a career pathway as it creates an ongoing cycle of job seekers requiring more hours, money and support as they move through their life cycle.

Additionally, while providing many opportunities, the growing 'gig' economy may not provide an ongoing career path for some young people. These types of jobs can provide greater flexibility and are often seen as a positive for those commencing their working career or transitioning to new industries. However, these industries provide employment that is often transient, and may not always offer the job security that more traditional industries can. This is due, in part, to the different government regulations around the types of employment offered. Within the gig economy, this work is often reliant on the jobseeker's ability to self-manage, gain their own training and experience and secure a number of short-term contracts. The Fellow believes that supporting young people to become more entrepreneurial is a necessary approach to assist them in gaining the most

17 The New Work Mindset 2017 P6 The Foundation for Young Australians <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/The-New-Work-Mindset.pdf>

18 Outcomes Delivery Plan 2018-19 The executive Office June 2018 p3 <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execoffice/outcomes-delivery-plan-2018-19.pdf>

benefit from these growing areas. Currently, the majority of Australian government funded employment programs do not focus on these skills.

(h) Technology developments are changing the employment landscape

It is no surprise that the growing use and accessibility of technologies is radically changing the employment landscape. Rapid advancements in technology have altered multiple areas of our lives and their pace is expected to increase with the further development of AI. Automation is changing tasks rather than jobs, and while some industries are evolving faster than others, there are opportunities for technologies to assist people in their current roles – i.e. heavy lifting or remote servicing. This kind of technological assistance can offer greater diversity in the workforce such as increasing employment opportunities for workers with disabilities. To support this, greater education and support is required to assist employers to look at hiring from a more diverse cohort of people.

The use of technology to assist young people in gaining work experience and an understanding of different careers is also being implemented in countries like Estonia. For example, the use of VR to gain experience in various realistic scenarios is being used to support students to learn about the medical sector, which was discussed at the ENTK (Estonian Youth Work Centre). This provides critical experience, and in conjunction with education, can offer relevant career guidance.

While technology is providing new opportunities to learn, more traditional methods are being used in conjunction. An additional technique used at the ENTK involved a mobile career van that visited local schools. The need for services and information to be flexible and mobile can provide a bridge between traditional forms of information and the use of technology which is likely to increase in coming years.

It is also important to recognise that as technology weaves its way further into our daily lives, languages and actions can take on new meanings. During the Fellow's

visit to Eesti Tootukussa, it was noted that young people may not immediately recognise the technological skills they possess, such as their competence with apps, smart phones and tablets. The opposite may be true of older people that may struggle with social media or various applications yet are skilled in Microsoft office.

The Fellow firmly believes that Australian employment programs and related government agencies need to take these changes into consideration when developing programs to ensure current technological skills are being appropriately delivered. As the necessary skills required of jobseekers change, the application of current and emerging technologies will become increasingly more important in determining the participants success.

We can expect that people will continue to find new ways of using technology, however, the effects of this will only be known as time goes on. It will become the responsibility of employment services, education providers and government agencies to support these transitions and provide participants with an adequate understanding of how technologies are used within particular industries. As developments in AI and other technologies are rapidly introduced, many challenges in providing employment paths will surely arise. We do know the only constant is change, the Fellow believes that young people will need guidance from all stakeholders to understand the role technology may play in their career path in order to maximise positive outcomes.

(i) Changing demographics of the available workforce

Europe is currently in the midst of a changing workforce. Across a number of countries the Fellow noted growing challenges in attracting people toward employment in skills shortage areas.

Several universal factors were identified as the reason for this. It should be noted that individual countries were experiencing challenges in a variety of ways.

From interviews with the European Commission, IAB and Information Centre, the OECD and ETUC the main demographic changes discussed were:

- » Growing number of jobseekers from overseas countries
- » Competition with other countries to attract workers
- » Support required for employers to look at diverse demographics that (often) under-represented in the local labour markets.
- » Increasing need to have support networks to assist young people once employed

Importance of information sharing versus the importance of individual privacy – middle ground must be found.

Several counties identified a number of industry areas that are experiencing difficulty attracting enough workers. Competition to attract and retain workers in different European countries is requiring new ways of hiring. Developing techniques to support local vulnerable youth can be challenging to employers.

(j) Incentives to support employment outcomes

There are a variety of techniques to support employment of disengaged or disadvantaged youth. Broadly, incentives take the form of:

- a. subsidies for employers
- b. training assistances to target skill shortage areas
- c. Use of quotas and 'targets' for a proportion of employment for different demographics

There are positives and negatives for each of the above. It is important to understand the potential negative implications in setting up incentives. During discussions, the Fellow noted that in order to engage vulnerable cohorts, support programs must adapt strategies to align with local labour markets, and tailor the implementation to best fit the desired outcomes.

(k) Potential impacts of political decisions and policy drivers

During the Fellow's time in Europe, the impact of the Brexit decision was highlighted on multiple occasions. While the decision was focused on the UK, it was surprising and to hear the potential implications this political decision was expected to have on a variety of youth programs and employers. This included the funding of the Youth Guarantee and the local programs its funding supports, the access to employers for employees, and the participants accessing these supports.

Given the context of this labour market and new and emerging technologies, what constitutes work is being constantly redefined, the impact of seemingly unrelated political and social decisions needs to be thoroughly understood.

The decision of Brexit was a decision made by the people of the UK, and while policy decisions are not always put to public vote, similar implications can occur when changes are made from the viewpoint of one, isolated sector.

Due to the increasing interconnectivity of the world, it is more important than ever before to take a broader context into consideration.



5. Personal Professional and Sectoral Impact

Undertaking the Fellowship has given the Fellow a broader understanding of European models of youth employment, as well as a variety of strategies to increase engagement.

The opportunity to meet with industry professionals has also highlighted several similarities and challenges currently faced within employment sectors, particularly in increasing engagement for vulnerable youth.

Through researching overseas models, the Fellow has encountered strategies to incorporate European best practice, and trial new innovations that support youth transitioning into employment. This includes increasing collaboration between stakeholders, applying for funding to support ongoing career guidance, and assisting young people and employers to become proactive with skill development.

The Fellow has previous experience with grant funding from The Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation and The Ian Potter Foundation that aided in increasing employment participation for students at Special Developmental Schools. There were a number of barriers that inhibited an increase in work experience and employment options for students with disabilities. This included low expectations and differences in requirements between the education and employment departments. The Fellow aims to utilise the learnings gathered from her European experiences to support innovations in these areas here in Australia.

In addition, the Fellow returned with a greater appreciation for the innovations currently being implemented in Australian employment services systems. There are a number of current practices which are unique to Australia and Victoria which give a strong foundation to build upon. The Fellow aims to use this experience to help shape future policy frameworks to increase economic participation for disadvantaged jobseekers, now and into the future.

6. Recommendations and Considerations

The challenges impacting the increased engagement of vulnerable youth in Australia have many similarities with those experienced by European support services.

Considering the strategies applied in Europe, the following areas are recommended for consideration for future Australian program servicing as well as inclusion into future policy frameworks:

1. Development of an overarching support youth framework
2. Introduce additional indicators that reach beyond job placement and employment outcomes
3. Support for flexibility of key deliverables to better align with local area needs
4. Greater integration between education and employment sectors
5. Greater integration of employer/industry groups to support future directives of training and education needs
6. Greater training for career counselling to support not only school students but also support for existing workers
7. Increase the use of technology to support pathways to employment and career development.

The Youth Guarantee has provided an overarching framework whilst allowing individual countries to apply local strategies and programs to achieve the

agreed aims of youth engagement. It was evident to the Fellow that targeted local approaches were imperative to tackling local employment challenges. It is recommended that the development of an overarching framework includes strategies to capture more qualitative measures and move beyond the traditional employment statistics.

The usual measurement of focusing largely on 26-week outcomes often means that the incremental improvements to jobseekers are not captured. For many employment programs there is additional competition between providers to focus on speed and quantity of placements and outcomes. This often leaves participants who are perceived as needing more support over a longer period of time being ignored.

The development and introduction of KPIs relating to the participants' journey would support outcomes for disadvantaged groups such as CALD youth, long-term unemployed and those with permanent disability, all of whom currently remain under represented in employment participation within Australia.

Greater integration and flexibility across future policy and service delivery is an important consideration, including between government departments, community agencies, service providers, and employers. Greater flexibility in program structures and increased funding will support local communities to deliver effective, tailored outcomes.

Supports for younger people must be consistent and have a long term view across their lifespan as they change careers, new industries develop, and older industries disappear. Improving access to and sharing up to date information for

all stakeholders, including employers, parents, service providers and government departments is necessary in an environment of constant change.

Improving employment participation and engagement for young people is an essential government priority.

Yet, only looking at engagement into employment or education doesn't provide the whole picture. The transformational and disruptive changes the labour market is experiencing due to AI, automation and technology advancements require a longer-term focus, to ensure adaptability and support for participants as they mature.

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8. Appendices

PowerPoint Presentation

Dual VET - Vocational Education and Training in Germany

Dual VET - Vocational Education and Training in Germany

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- ▶ Advising
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Dual VET



Vocational Education and Training in Germany

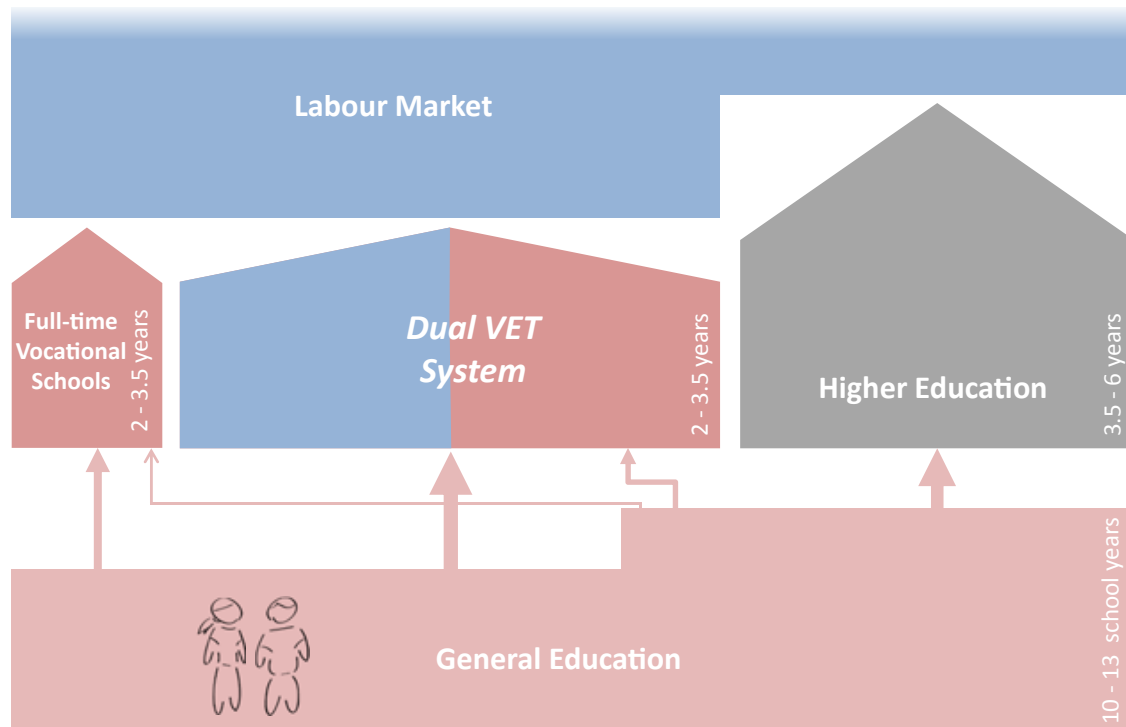
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Content

- I. Overview
- II. How *Dual VET* works
- III. Benefits and current challenges
- IV. Conditions: why *Dual VET* works in Germany
- V. The bottom line: *5 VET Quality Features*
- VI. Further information

I. Overview – Dual VET: for young people a common path to work



I. Overview – Dual VET performance

Trainees



- 55,7% of age cohort enters Dual VET, 44,2% of age cohort graduates from Dual VET
- 1.4 m trainees in 330 recognised training occupations
- 5,6% of all employees are trainees
- High employment security (95% Dual VET graduates employed, only 80% employed among untrained)
- 43,8% of Dual VET graduates continue working in same occupational field
- Receive average training allowance of about 795 € per month as trainee

Employers



- 450.000 of 2,1 Mio. companies train (21, 3 %), most of which are medium-size and large companies
- Train more than 500.000 new trainees every year
- Hire 60% of Dual VET trainees as employees after training
- Employers invest on average 18.000 € per apprentice per year (62% of which is training allowance)
- 76% of investment is refinanced by productive contributions of trainees during training period

Government



- Shares expenses for VET system with employers
- Public expenditure for Dual VET: 5.9 bn €
- 3.2 bn € for 1,600 public vocational schools providing part-time VET,
- 2.7 bn € for steering, monitoring and further supporting measures)
- EUR 5.6 bn € contribution by employers (overall net cost of Dual VET; gross cost = 23.82 bn €)

Contributes to

National Economy / Society

- Strong SME competitiveness on international markets
- Relatively low youth unemployment in Germany (7.4%)



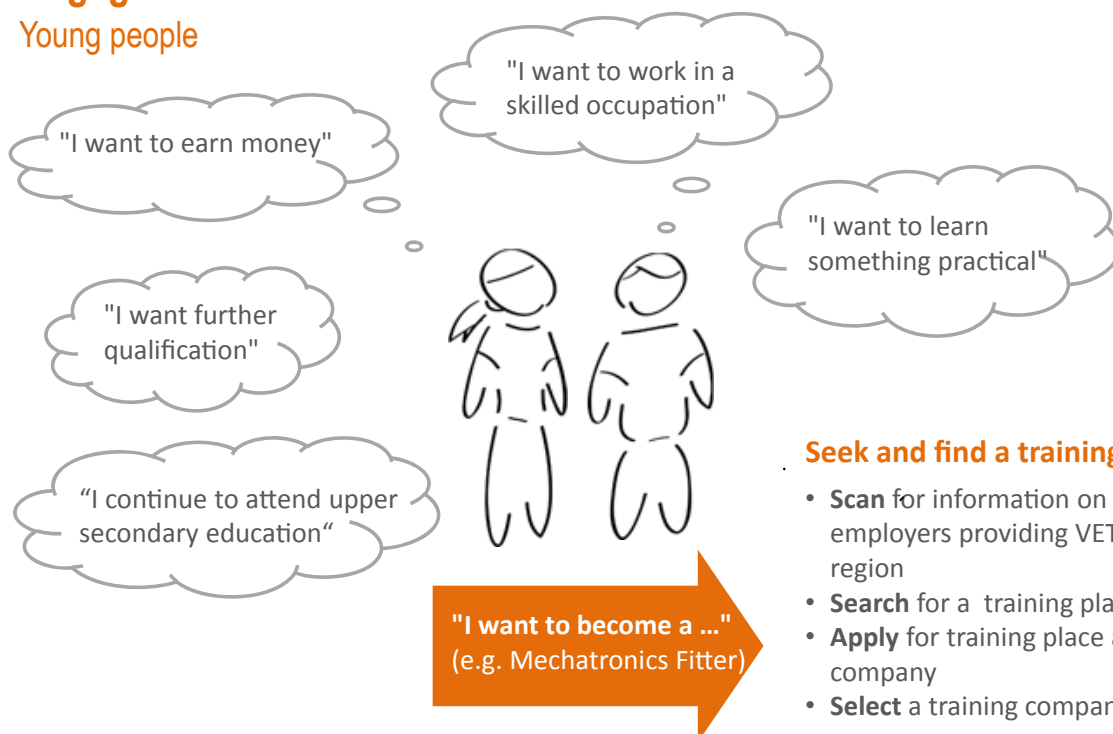
II. How *Dual VET* works

1. Engage in *Dual VET*
2. Enter into a training contract
3. Deliver work-based VET
4. Examine independently
5. Unlock a professional career
6. Stakeholders monitor, supervise and support
7. Base *Dual VET* standards on requirements of world of work
8. Set up comprehensive legal framework



1. Engagement in *Dual VET*

Young people



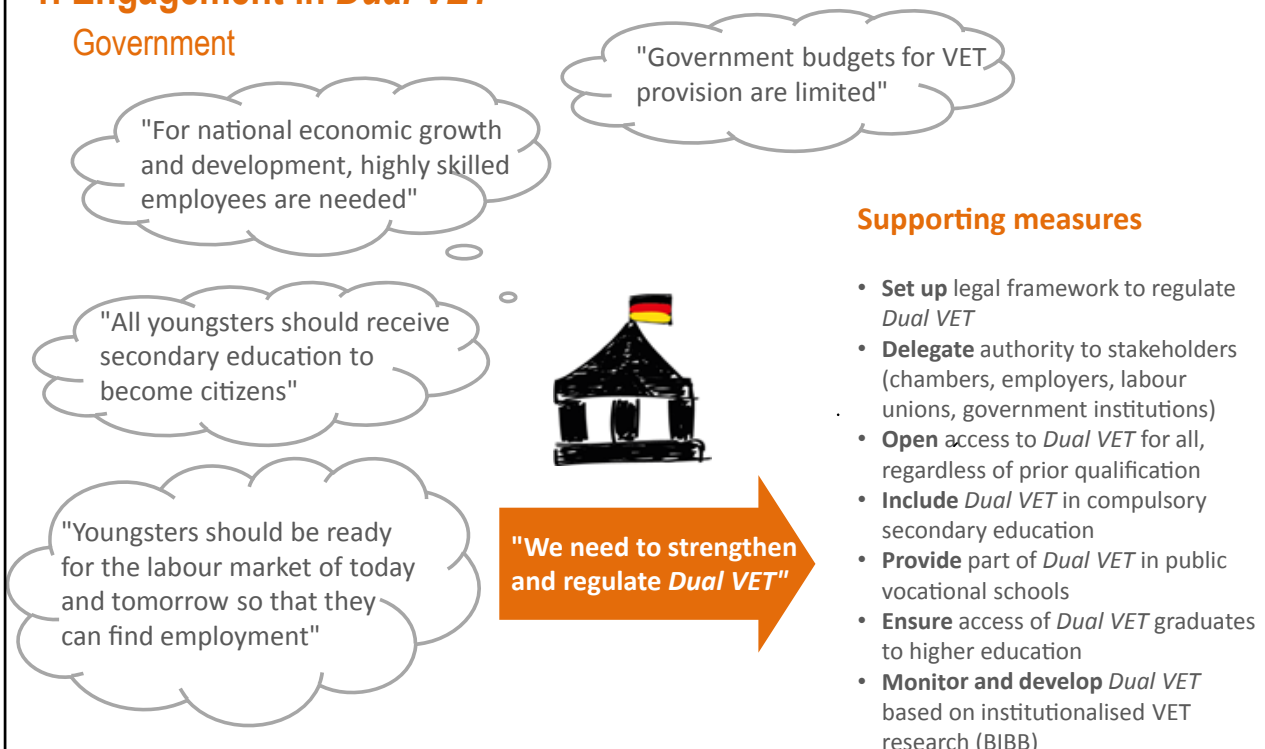
1. Engagement in *Dual VET*

Employer



1. Engagement in *Dual VET*

Government



2. Enter into a training contract

Starting point for *Dual VET*

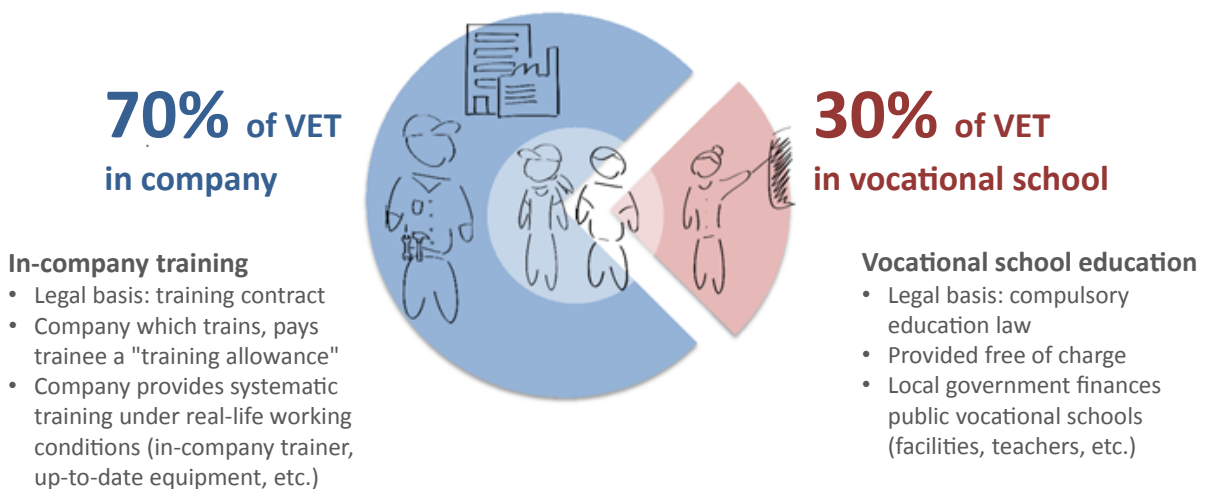


- Similar to **work contract**
- **Legal basis** for in-company training in *Dual VET*
- Provided and **registered by chambers**
- **Regulates**
 - Duration of training
 - Beginning and end of training
 - Probation time
 - Vacation
 - Content of training,
 - Training allowance
 - Termination of contract
- Signed by youngster and by training company establishing a **training relationship**

Start of work-based learning in *Dual VET*

3. Deliver work-based VET



2 coordinated learning venues ("*Dual*") for each VET programme



Approx. duration of Dual VET: 2 – 3.5 years

3. Deliver work-based VET

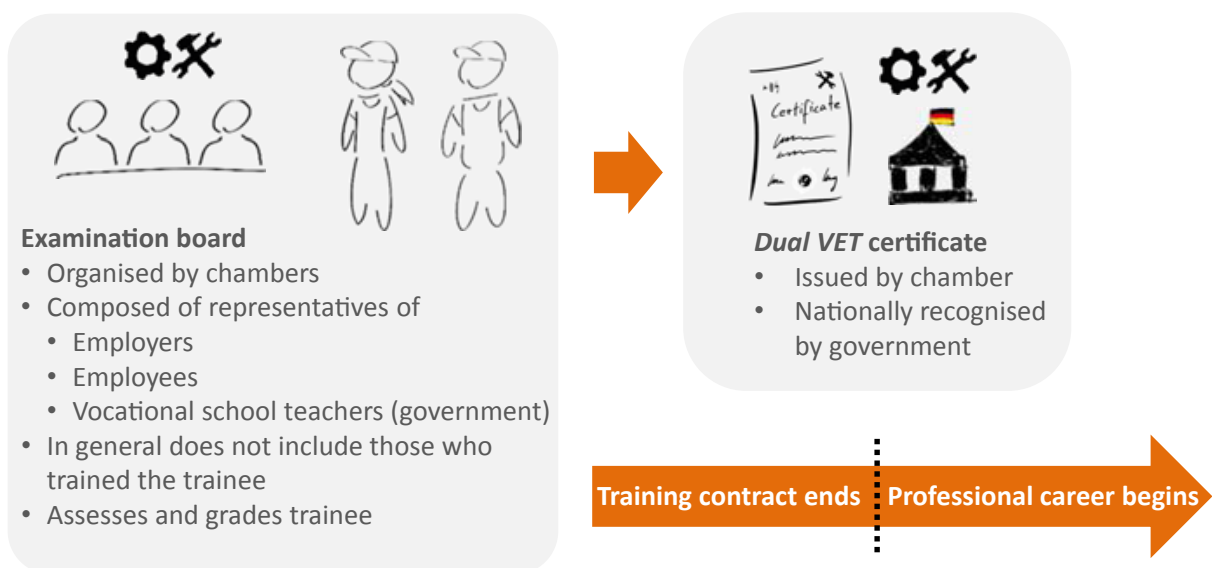
Dual VET training plan for a given occupation (example)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
In-company training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows in-company training standards (minimum standards) defined in "training regulations" Step by step, trainees take over duties and tasks in the workplace, and in the process contribute to production 			Vocational school education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows vocational education standards defined in the "framework curriculum" for vocational subjects (2/3 of schooling) Follows school curriculum for general subjects (1/3 of schooling) Classroom-based learning 	

In-company VET and vocational school education may instead also take place provided each in separate long-term blocks.

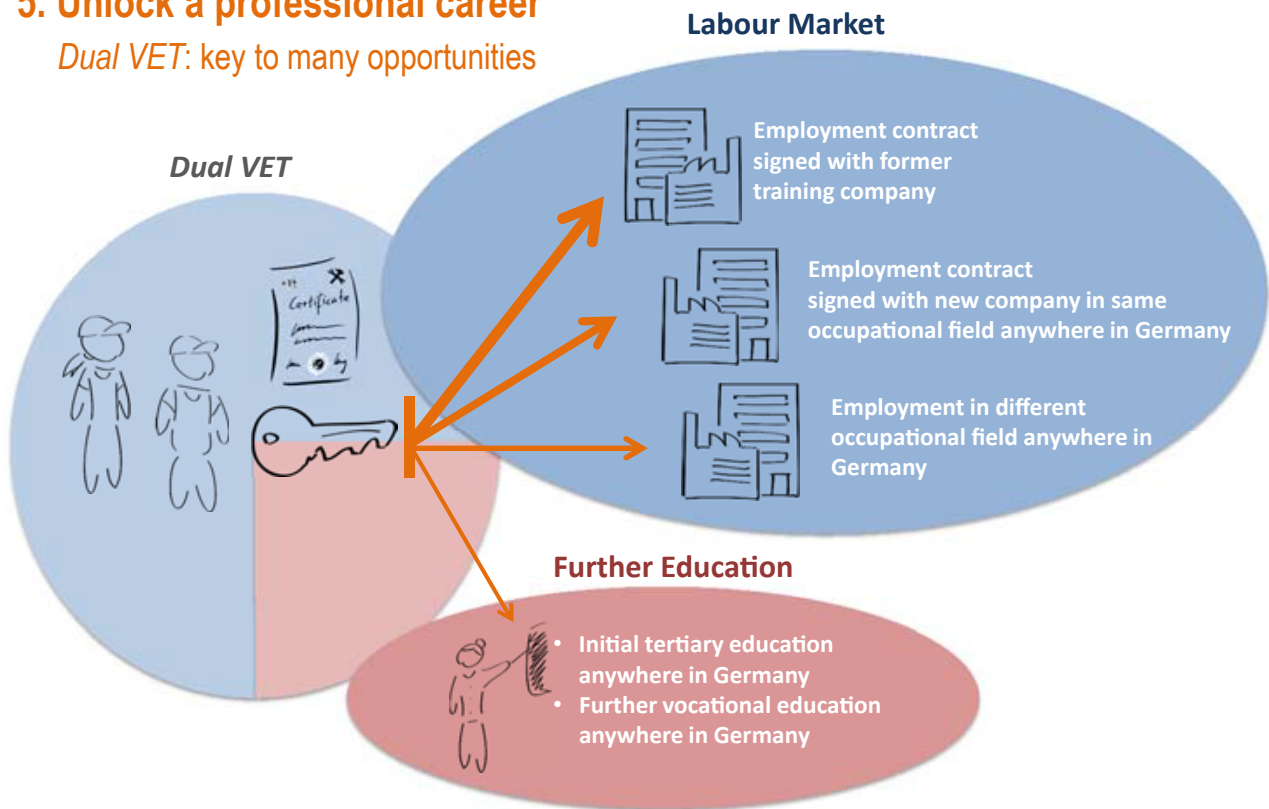
4. Examine independently

Multi-stakeholder examination board



5. Unlock a professional career

Dual VET: key to many opportunities



6. Stakeholders monitor, supervise and support

Business community, social partners and government are all involved in *Dual VET*

Chambers



- Advise companies on VET
- Train in-company trainers
- Assess and certify company and trainers for in-company training provision
- Monitor in-company training (facilities, instructors, etc.)
- Support company in finding trainees
- Register training contracts
- Organise interim and final exams
- Mediate disputes between trainee and company
- Organise events



Social Partners



- Labour unions and employer associations negotiate training allowance to be paid to trainees
- Works Councils monitor in-company training
- Are involved in the development of in-company training standards
- Are part of the examination board

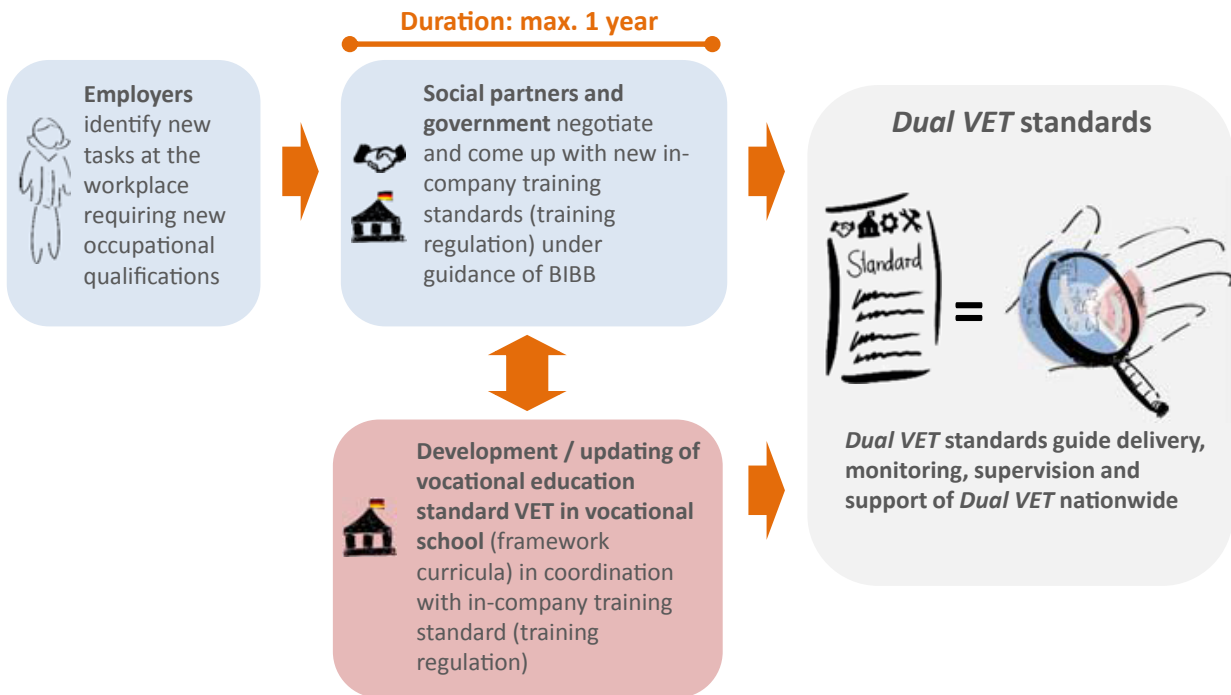
Government



- Finances, supervises and monitors public vocational school system providing part-time VET
- Federal government conducts institutionalised VET research (BIBB)
- BIBB organises *Dual VET* standard development
- Provides support to unemployed and disadvantaged to enter *Dual VET*
- Provides support for disabled people to enter *Dual VET*
- Provides vocational orientation and raises the awareness for *Dual VET*

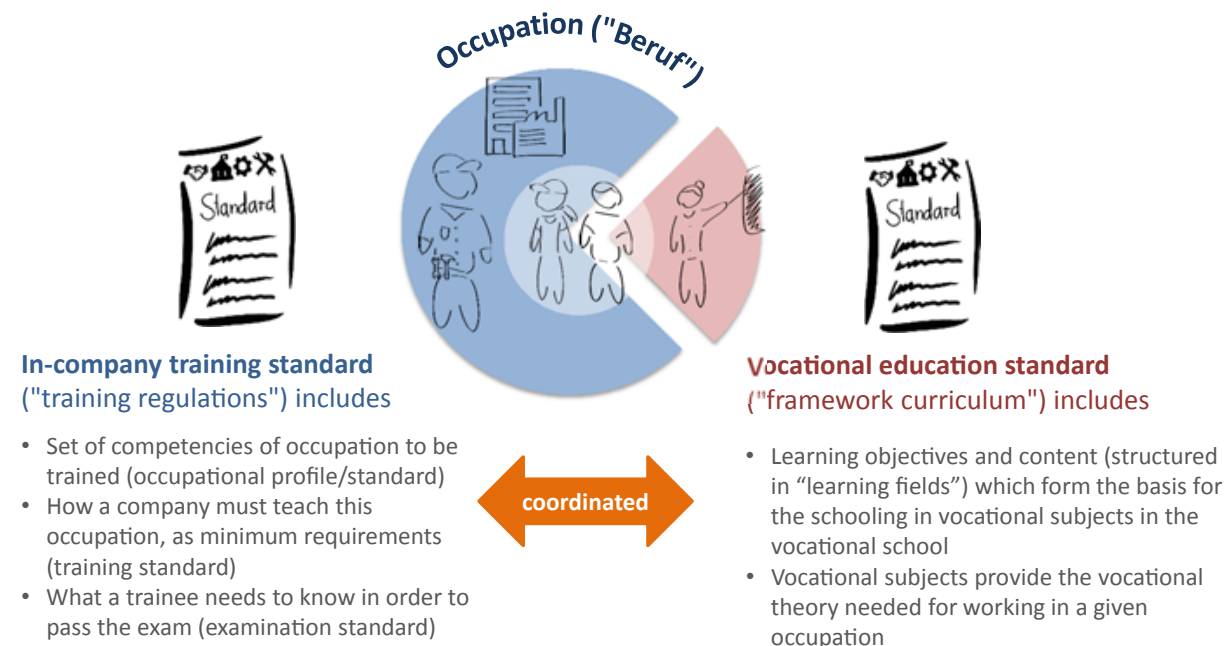
7. Dual VET standards based on requirements of world of work

Impetuses for updating/development of national *Dual VET* standards by the economy



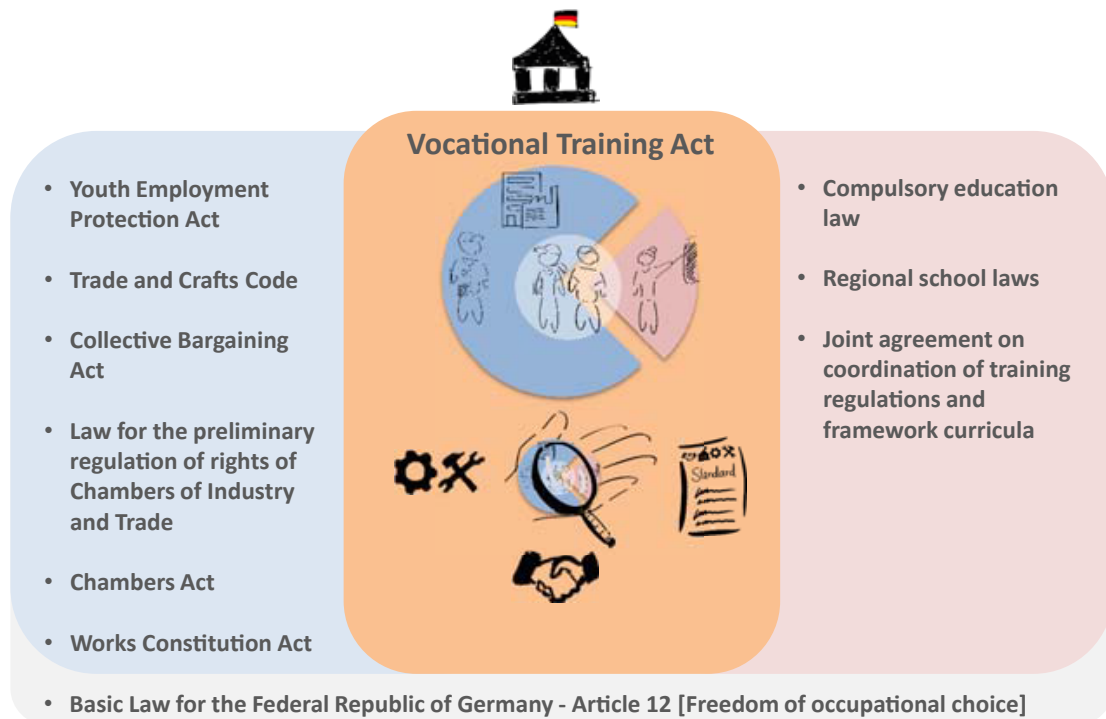
7. Dual VET standards based on requirements of world of work

Demand-driven *Dual VET* standards guiding VET delivery in both learning venues



8. Set up comprehensive legal framework

All aspects of *Dual VET* framed by system of laws



Summary – How *Dual VET* works

Enter into a training contract



Deliver work-based *Dual VET* and examine independently



Stakeholders support and assure quality of *Dual VET* based on consensus



Dual VET standards are national, up-to-date and demand-driven

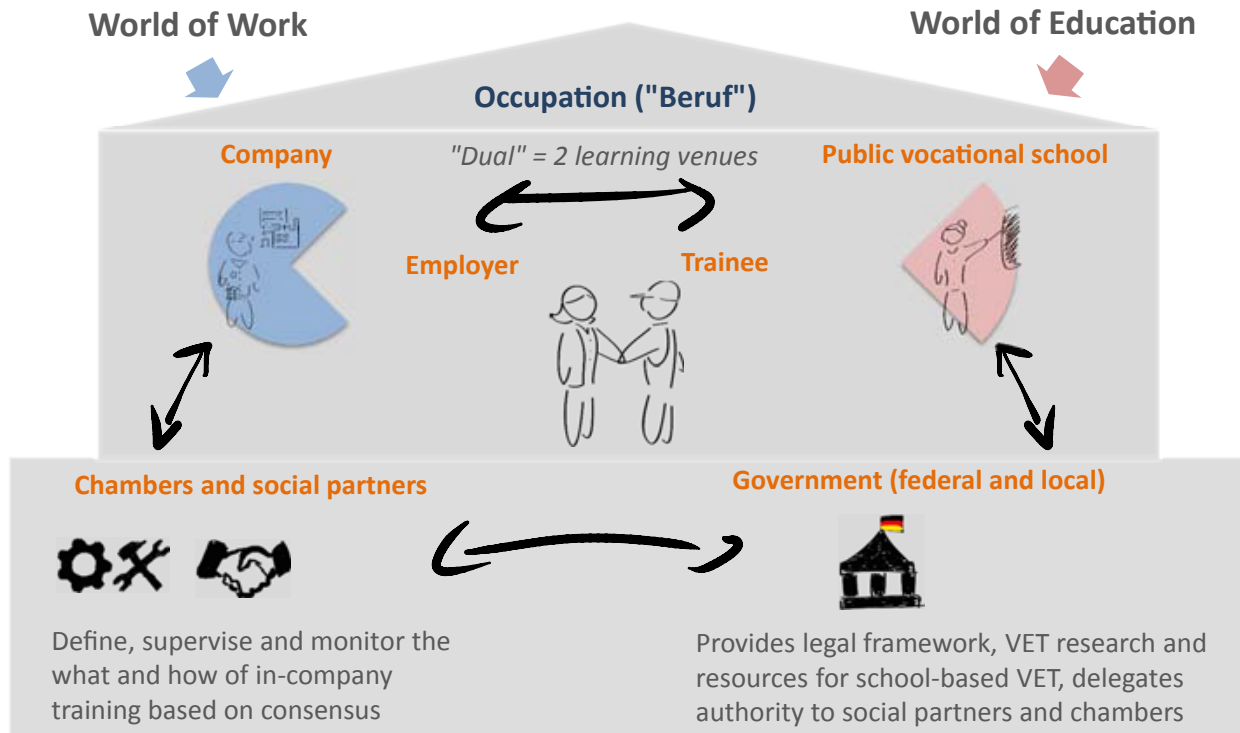


Dual VET is framed by systems of law

Vocational Training Act



Summary – Dual VET: two worlds under one roof



III. Benefits of Dual VET

Trainees



- Gain **occupational proficiency** necessary for employment opportunities and gainful income
- Earn **training allowance** during training
- Learn in **real and state-of-the-art work environment** (machinery, work processes)
- Learn how to **identify** with company and occupation
- Become capable and certified to **access different occupational and educational opportunities**

Employers



- Gain highly competent employees **meeting the needs** of the company (versus hiring externally)
- Improve **productivity** as well as **quality** of services and products
- Save recruitment and retraining costs
- Realise **high return of investment** in the long run
- Are participating in **defining company-based training content** and development of standards
- Supports **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

Government



- Reaps **political rewards** of positive economic and social impact of **Dual VET**
- **Meets national labour market demand for qualified labour** with contribution of employers (training)
- Has VET system **highly capable of modernizing itself** (technological change)
- Able to **efficiently steer VET system** and **assure its quality**
- **Strengthens formalisation of economy** by regulating in-company training
- Gains **early evidence for labour market demand/supply**

Contributes to

National Economy / Society

- **Economic performance and competitiveness**
- **Labour-market matching** (employers / employees)
- **Social and economic integration of young people** (inclusiveness)

III. Current challenges for *Dual VET*

Trainees



- **Finding *Dual VET* training place:** number of unplaced applicants for *Dual VET* (2012: 15,600, 2013: 21,000); number of companies (esp. SME) providing *Dual VET* decreasing from 24% (2009) to 21.3 % (2013)
- **Increasing demands at the workplace / learning venue** (foreign languages, etc.)
- **Improving life-long learning opportunities** in *Dual VET* (especially for older applicants)
- Gaining access to *Dual VET* and work through **informally acquired competencies**

Employers



- **Finding young people for *Dual VET*:** number of vacant training places rising from 2009: 17,300 to 2013: 33,500; number of new training contracts signed down 20,500 or -3.7 % in 2013 compared to 2012.
- **Finding competent trainees** for *Dual VET* who have the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for entering *Dual VET* ("trainability")
- **Including disabled people**

Government



- **Dealing with future nationwide lack of skilled workers** projected
- **Dealing with demographic change** leading to decrease in number of young people for labour market
- **Countering trend** of more and more young people choosing **university over *Dual VET***
- **Dealing with strong regional disparity** with regard to *Dual VET* training place demand and supply
- **Including disabled people**

Contributes to

National Economy / Society

- People have **difficulty entering *Dual VET*** and hence the labour market and gainful employment
- Difficulty **meeting demand of employers** for skilled workers



Data from
BIBB National VET Report and
Federal Statistical Office

IV. Conditions: Why does it work in Germany

- **Long-standing history** of *Dual VET*
- Highly developed **economic structure** translates into respective demand for skilled employees on labour market
- Strong **small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)**
- **Interest, commitment and capability** of companies to train
- Strong and **competent representation** of employer and employee interests (chambers / labour unions)
- Broad-based acceptance of VET standards through strong involvement of social partners in VET and **culture of cooperative engagement**
- Strong **regulatory capacity** of government
- Competent **TVET teachers and trainers**
- General education system makes **young people ready for VET**

V. The bottom line: 5 VET Quality Features

1. Cooperation of government, business community and social partners

E.g. examination board, VET standards



2. Learning within the work process

E.g. in-company training = 70%



3. Acceptance of national standards

E.g. Dual VET standards, chamber certificate



4. Qualified VET staff

E.g. competent trainers and VET teachers



5. Institutionalised research and advice

E.g. BIBB National TVET Report, VET standards



VI. Further Sources

Facts and figures

- BIBB TVET Report 2014 ([link](#))
- Federal Statistical Office ([link](#))
- BMBF Data Portal ([link](#))

Web resources

- [GOVET](#)
- [BMBF](#)
- [BIBB](#)

Dual VET standards

- BIBB Brochure: Vocational Training Regulations and the Process Behind Them ([link](#))
- Example: training regulation and framework curriculum for Mechatronics Fitter (BIBB) ([link](#))

Contact for further questions

- govet@govet.international

Legal documents

- Vocational Training Act ([link](#))
- Works Constitution Act ([link](#))

VII. Key

Blue

World of Work



Chambers

Red

World of Education



Social Partners (labor unions
and employer associations)



Youth / Trainee



Government (federal and
local)



Employer



Stakeholder support



In-company trainer



Stakeholder monitoring



VET school teacher



VET research



Dual VET examination board



Dual VET standards



Dual VET graduate certificate

GO:VET

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in Vocational Education and Training

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