

VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: EVERYONE BENEFITS

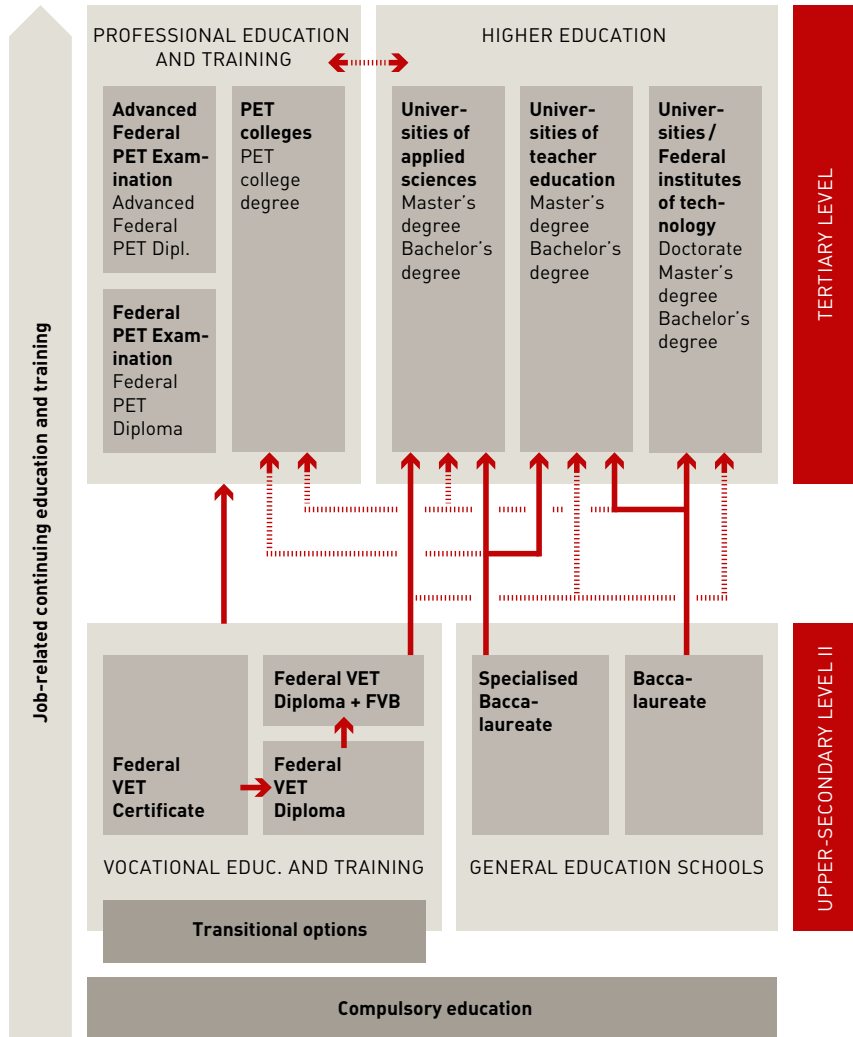


VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

EVERYONE BENEFITS

Qualified workers and managers are essential assets for Switzerland as a location for innovation and business. They are a crucial prerequisite for maintaining our country's competitiveness. To ensure the availability of qualified professionals in sufficient numbers and with the right skills, Switzerland counts on a mix of educational pathways: academic education and vocational/professional education and training cover various needs and complement each other perfectly in the Swiss system.

Dual-track vocational education and training (VET) programmes, which combine classroom instruction at a vocational school with work-based training at a host company, are particularly important. In fact, this is the option chosen by two-thirds of all young people coming out of lower-secondary education. They are making a safe bet with this choice: the Swiss education system is designed in such a way as to offer continuous education and training relays for all career paths, thereby facilitating entry into the labour market.





OUR WAY



“After obtaining my Federal PET Diploma in Food Technology, I was given greater responsibility in my job and spent several months working in the United States. As an R&D food technologist, I am now able to apply the theoretical principles that I learnt while preparing for the Federal PET Diploma Examination.”

Mikael Khayata, R&D food technologist at Nestlé, holder of the Federal PET Diploma in Food Technology

“Above all, I really like the fact that information technology is so diverse. My IT training allows me to apply many different talents. For my future career, I see a field that is rapidly growing and developing with many exciting job opportunities.”

Sandra Löw, learner in the 4th year of her apprenticeship at Swisscom, enrolled in the four-year programme for the Federal VET Diploma in Information Technology

BENEFITS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Various career opportunities

- Upper-secondary level VET opens doors: learners acquire competences that are actually required in the occupation. At the same time, the number of available apprenticeships reflects actual labour market needs.
- Tertiary-level professional education and training (PET) offers various possibilities for more advanced training, thereby paving the way for specialist/technical and managerial roles in the private sector. PET qualifications are recognised by the Swiss Confederation and offer interesting career prospects and earning potential.
- Learners who obtain both the Federal VET Diploma and the Federal Vocational Baccalaureate (FVB) may enrol directly in a relevant study programme at a Swiss university of applied sciences (UAS) without having to take an entrance examination. FVB holders may also prepare for the University Aptitude Test (UAT), which entitles them to enrol in cantonal universities and Switzerland's two federal institutes of technology (EPFL and ETHZ).
- In addition, there is also a wide range of job-related continuing education and training (CET) opportunities at all levels within the Swiss education system. CET courses are intended primarily for those who already work and who wish to upgrade their knowledge and skills.
- Modern education and training programmes prepare people for life-long learning and lay the foundations for job mobility and flexibility. Thanks to the permeability of the education system, it is possible to retrain at any time later on in one's working life.

In demand on the labour market

- By combining classroom instruction with work-based training, dual-track VET programmes provide an ideal combination of theory and practice.
- Educated and trained professionals possess the job qualifications called for in the market, are flexible and have the best prospects in the labour market.
- The PET sector allows professionals to pursue exactly the type of advanced training that they require. Holders of PET qualifications are in demand both in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and in large corporations. Moreover, Swiss companies do not draw a distinction between holders of higher education and holders of PET qualifications in their recruitment practices.
- Holders of an FVB have practical on-the-job experience. Degree programmes at Swiss universities of applied sciences are equally practical and geared to the needs of the market.



OUR STRENGTHS

“Apprenticeships and PET colleges have long ensured a fresh supply of workers and executives in our companies. Vocational education and training is a major pillar of our economy since it ensures that jobs remain in Switzerland.”

Jacques Morand, Managing Director of PolyForce, Bulle

“For us, apprenticeship training is vital to ensuring that knowledge and skills are passed down to the next generation of workers. Dual-track VET programmes and the associated education, training and career prospects are also an effective model in multinational companies. Many foreign colleagues are familiar with dual-track VET and see the merits of the system. They are amazed at just how professionally these young people interact with customers and employees within the company.”

Sabine Balmer Kunz, Head of Campus Recruiting & Young Talents, Credit Suisse

BENEFITS FOR COMPANIES

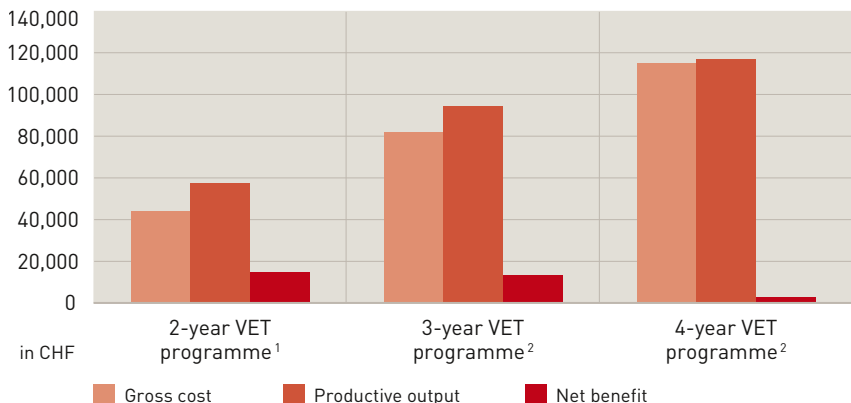
Finger on the pulse

- Qualified workers and managers with theoretical and practical training, who are able to adapt quickly to new developments, are crucial to the success of a company.
- Dual-track VET programmes are highly correlated with the needs of the labour market. This ensures a high rate of innovation and the availability of apprenticeships in occupations for which there is actual demand.
- The practical relevance of both VET and PET pays off: the newly acquired skills can immediately be applied in the company. Upon completion of initial and continuing training, employees are not only up to date but are also already familiar with the company.

Investment in the future

- Host companies allow young people to enter working life.
- Today's learners are tomorrow's professionals: companies that are committed to initial and continuing training secure their next generation of qualified workers and managers.
- Because they are assigned to productive tasks at the host company for the entire duration of their apprenticeship, learners generate an output that exceeds the costs of their work-based training: two-thirds of all host companies involved in the provision of apprenticeship training already achieve a net profit by the end of the training period.
- Host companies that decide to hire learners at the end of the apprenticeship achieve a further benefit by not having to devote costly resources to recruitment and orientation of new employees.

Cost / benefit ratio by apprenticeship duration



1 Fuhrer M. and Schweri J. (2010), Coûts et bénéfice des formations professionnelles initiales de deux ans pour les entreprises suisses, Rapport final, SFIVET, Zollikofen

2 Strupler M. and Wolter S.C. (2012), Die duale Lehre: eine Erfolgsgeschichte – auch für Betriebe. Ergebnisse der dritten Kosten-Nutzen-Erhebung der Lehrlingsausbildung aus Sicht der Betriebe, Rüegger Verlag Glarus/Chur



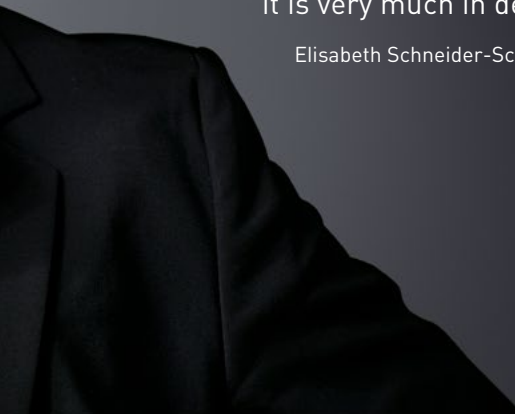
OUR FUTURE

“Cooperation between policymakers, the private sector and government agencies is important in ensuring a high level of quality in vocational and professional education and training.”

Paolo Colombo, Director of VPET Division, Canton of Ticino Department of Education, Culture and Sport

“We must remain focussed on Switzerland’s successful system of vocational and professional education and training. It has sparked interest in other countries and, as an export product, it is very much in demand.”

Elisabeth Schneider-Schneiter, Member of the National Council



VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

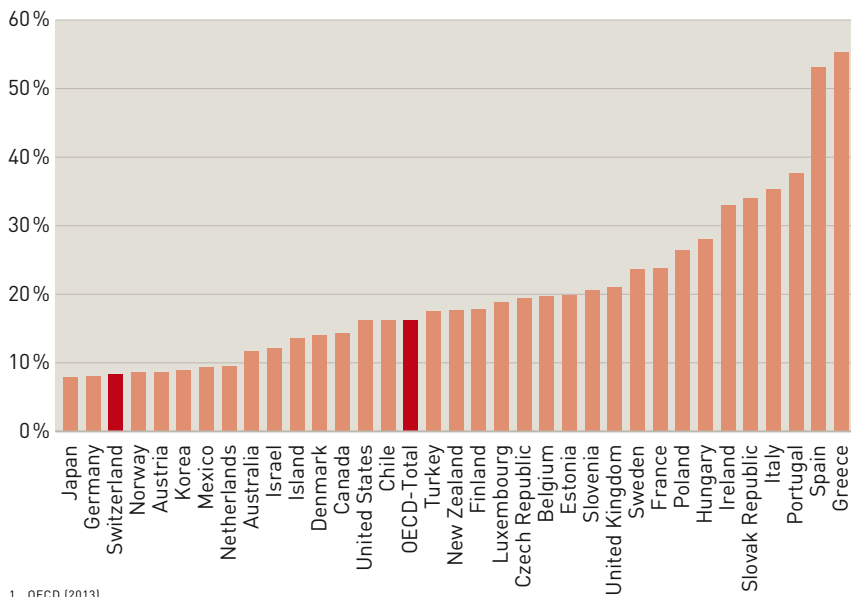
BENEFITS FOR SOCIETY

Switzerland stands out as a business location due to its high level of competitiveness, innovative strength and low unemployment. This success can be attributed, among other things, to the high-quality education system: initial and continuing training is worthwhile for all those involved.

- Companies increase their productivity and occupy leading positions among the international competition.
- Through good education/training, employees secure a successful working life for themselves, improve their career prospects and effectively protect themselves against redundancy.
- Young people receive a sound vocational basis and a direct entry into working life. Thus Switzerland also has one of the lowest youth unemployment rates in the world.
- Specialists in their field who have received on-the-job training encourage innovation, including in small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Society benefits from economic prosperity and social stability.

Today's working world is subject to rapid changes and global competition. The Swiss VPET system is dynamic and flexible. It adapts continually to new standards and demands, and meets the qualification needs of industry and society in the 21st century.

Youth unemployment rate 2012 (aged 15–24 years)¹



¹ OECD (2013).

VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: BENEFITS FOR YOU

The Swiss VPET system offers many different opportunities. You can find information by visiting the following links:

Vocational and professional education and training portal

Looking for an initial overview of the Swiss VPET system? VETPLUS.CH briefly presents the various options and shows where you can find more detailed information.

www.vetplus.ch

Portal on occupational, educational and career guidance

Want to find out more about initial and continuing training options? The orientation.ch website is the comprehensive platform for questions concerning choice of occupation, initial and continuing education and career planning. The various occupations and educational pathways are described in detail.

www.orientation.ch

Cantonal VPET agencies

Interested in training apprentices or finding out more about the Swiss VPET system? Cantonal VPET agencies offer individual support, advice and guidance.

www.csfp.ch → **Links** → **Offices de la formation professionnelle**

State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI

Interested in the development of the Swiss VPET system, or education, research and innovation policy issues? You can find answers and background information on the SERI website.

www.seri.admin.ch