



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

One-stop International Cooperation in Vocational Training





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The Federal Government is cooperating in the field of vocational education and training (VET) with many different partner countries in the European Union and with a number of other industrial, emerging and developing countries.

Many partner countries are interested in Germany's know how and experience in job-related training. This interest has increased considerably as a result of the financial and economic crisis. The German dual system of VET is seen to play a key role in meeting the demand for qualified personnel by combining learning at school with learning on the job. Training under the dual system is not only an important factor in ensuring employability, particularly for the younger generation, it also ensures that German industry is able to benefit from well-trained employees both at home and abroad. German international VET cooperation touches upon the fields of education, economic, labour, migration, foreign and development policy. It is at the interface between government departments, institutions and organizations acting on behalf of the respective ministries.

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is responsible for coordinating international VET cooperation with OECD, BRICS and emerging countries, whilst the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is responsible for VET cooperation with developing countries. Some federal ministries are also cultivating VET activities within their own remits, such as in the fields of health and labour policy.

The Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs) and the missions of the Federal Foreign Office (AA) abroad are receiving an increasing number of queries regarding vocational education and training. The GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH) and the KfW Development Bank act on behalf of the BMZ and other ministries in supervising bilateral VET cooperation projects within the framework of German development policy.

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), as the German centre of competence for initial and continuing vocational training, is facing increasing demand for systemic advice abroad. As a result, BIBB has included internationalization as one of its strategic objectives.

All these developments have prompted policy-makers to introduce a strategy to develop existing coordination between the German stakeholders involved.

Germany's international VET cooperation is based on its national VET policy and practices and the state of the art of VET research. It is also centred on national objectives in the field of development policy, on international agreements (such as the Millennium Development Goals¹) and on Germany's diverse practical experience and counselling know how.

The Federal Cabinet adopted a Strategy Paper on 3 July 2013, which forms the basis for this brochure. The following pages describe the Federal Government's aims, instruments and partners in the field of international

¹ For the Millennium Goals, see: www.un.org/millennium-goals

VET cooperation. The German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET) at BIBB – as the point of contact for all questions regarding international VET cooperation – and the „Round Table“ – as the interministerial coordinating mechanism – play a central role in this area.



Global competition is causing ever shorter innovation cycles and new types of work processes. This calls for systematic and participatory corporate organizational models and the training of corresponding skilled staff. The demand for well-trained, specialized labour is growing worldwide. Skilled staff are needed to ensure sustainable economic growth. States with vocational training systems that are based primarily on full-time schooling are under considerable pressure to introduce reforms. Employers in these countries criticize in-school training for not being sufficiently practice-related and complain about the shortage of practical qualifications. Many young people, on the other hand, have no access to the labour market and as a result have no prospects for the future. High youth unemployment in many countries is increasingly jeopardizing social peace. Youth employment and investments in young skilled staff are decisive factors for growth, prosperity and social participation. This applies to both Europe and other regions in the world. Germany's vocational training structure with the dual system at its core is encountering increasing admiration in other countries. It is providing these countries with a new model. Even the OECD, which used to focus strongly on tertiary education, has underlined the excellent performance of the dual system in an international comparative study.

I. GERMAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - IN WORLDWIDE DEMAND

The reasons for this are Germany's top position as far as youth employment is concerned, the high skills level of its trained staff and trainees and the successful transition from training to the labour market. These factors contribute equally towards the positive image of vocational training among German school-leavers. The Federal Government relies on the strengths of the German vocational training system in its cooperation with international partners. These strengths are based on five principles.

- **Cooperation between the two sides of industry, industrial organizations and the state**

Shared responsibility for a coordinated, pluralistic control of dual vocational training ensures that stakeholders are involved in the VET dialogue in accordance with their respective competences and interests at national, regional/intermediary and local level. The state, the two sides of industry and industrial organizations jointly ensure the requisite framework for vocational education and training: ranging from proportional funding and the development, constant update and implementation of curricula to testing and certifying the competences gained.

- **Learning in the work process**

Vocational training in Germany is based on developing professional skills by learning in job-related structures and in work processes. Work experience is consolidated both at school and at the workplace and forms an essential basis for professional learning and development. Extensive systematic workplace experience (training) accounts for at least 50 percent of the overall period of training. This combination of school and workplace training has proved to be the best way to develop action skills. Action skills comprise the ability and willingness to use one's know how, competences and personal, social and methodical capabilities in working and learning situations to enhance one's vocational and personal development. Training is based on a vocational training plan covering the two learning venues with coordinated workplace training regulations and school framework curricula.



Learning in the work process.

- **Acceptance of national standards**

Comprehensive vocational, training and examination standards ensure quality across individual companies. As a rule, training takes three years. Comparable training qualifications and certificates form the basis for sustainable employability, mobility and social acceptance. The Vocational Training Act, the Crafts Code and other legislation governing regulated professions cover all important issues regarding vocational education and training.

- **Qualified training staff**

A vocational training scheme that includes learning in companies needs corporate instructors as well as school teachers with specialist and educational skills. Qualified vocational training staff ensure high quality training and trigger processes of change.

- **Institutionalized vocational training research and counselling**

Labour market and VET research are an essential basis for adapting vocational training to meet technical, economic and social developments. Career information and counselling systems are a significant help in preparing decisions concerning a person's choice of career and qualifications. They encourage mobility and long-term employability.

The transferability of individual elements of the German system to other countries and regions depends on the respective local situation. The partner countries have different cultures and procedures regarding coop-

eration between employers, employees and the public sector. Elements of cooperative and practice-related vocational training must be based on the regional situation so that local partners are able to implement these elements – for example, examination boards, training standards or inter-company training centres – sustainably and on their own responsibility.

VET cooperation in Europe

The topics of „on-the-job learning“ and the „transition from school to work“ have gained considerable significance in the EU. The EU’s objectives regarding vocational education and training up to 2020 refer primarily to reforming national systems. They focus on a dual training model that involves companies, on close cooperation between the state, employee and employer associations and other industrial organizations as well as on the relevance of training for the labour market.

Several EU states have initiated reforms aimed at introducing job-related or cooperative training schemes. Germany is often asked to act as a partner in designing such schemes. For example, in December 2012, the BMBF agreed concrete measures with interested Member States (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Latvia, Slovakia) to promote youth employment and enhance vocational training systems. The BMBF is thus making an important contribution to implementing the European Alliance for Apprenticeships.

The Youth Guarantee scheme, which was adopted by the Council on 28 February 2013, is the key political strategy dealing with youth unemployment in Europe. Under this scheme, the Member States set out to ensure that all young people under 25 years of age are offered a good quality job, further training course or apprenticeship/traineeship within four months of registering as unemployed or leaving school. The European Council will provide six billion euros during the funding period from 2014 to 2020 to implement the Youth Guarantee scheme in regions with over 25 percent youth unemployment. Support from the Federal Government in this context includes creating dual traineeships.

European Alliance for Apprenticeships

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships was announced by the European Commission in its communication „Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes“. The Alliance is to be included in the general European strategy for the sustainable optimization of vocational training systems.

See:

<http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance>

Worldwide VET cooperation

The transition from mass production to an innovation-driven economy is also increasing the need for well-trained staff in emerging and developing countries. The recipe for success is to provide vocational training that involves a high degree of practical work. Some countries have been establishing practice-based, cooperative structures within the framework of their education reform programmes for some time now and have also taken an interest in the German dual system of vocational training. The Labour Ministers of the G20 states also advocated focusing on dual or job-related cooperative structures in vocational training at their Paris summit in 2011 and reiterated this conviction at their meeting in Guadalajara in 2012.



Skilled staff and vocational training are key topics for the future worldwide.

The 2012 UNESCO-UNEVOC Shanghai Consensus on vocational education and training also gives prominence to cooperative and work-based structures in technical and vocational education and training.

Demand from abroad is being matched with an increased interest in cooperation in Germany with the aim of jointly developing the national VET systems of the respective partner countries.

See the conclusions of the 2011 G20 Labour Ministers' Conference in Paris at:

www.ilo.org, see: THE ILO and the G20.

Paragraph 9 states: „We agree that training systems based on dual learning or apprenticeships, alternating in class and in enterprise, are particularly effective. We are committed to promoting apprenticeship, vocational training and work-based learning systems, and we encourage the creation of public-private partnerships for this purpose.“

See also the conclusions of the 2012 Labour Ministers' Conference at :

www.g20civil.com/documents/211/740/

The BMBF is supporting a strategy project conducted by the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) and the Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs) in the EU states of Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain as well as in Brazil, Russia, India, China and Thailand. With this project, industry is supporting the activities of the German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET) in the partner countries themselves and consolidating successful vocational training practice. The project began on 1 October 2013 and will run for two years. The aim is to support the partner countries in developing elements of a practice-based, co-operative vocational training system along the lines of Germany's dual system. Such elements include, for example, phases of workplace training, cooperative, independent examination commissions (i.e. with representatives from the government and both sides of industry), the development of standard job profiles and curricula as well as legislation governing vocational training.

A significant driving force in this context are German companies with branches, subsidiaries and joint ventures abroad, which complain about the lack of well-trained staff in these countries.

The German Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs) play an important role by providing training in accordance with German standards on behalf of companies and with the support of the chambers in Germany.

Furthermore, various German providers of training programmes are also responding to the international demand. The German authorities are helping them to access foreign markets. All ministries are noticing a high demand for German approaches to vocational education and training and are satisfying this demand according to their respective remits.

Vocational training has become an internationally recognized key factor for social participation, competitiveness, social peace, prosperity and high levels of employment. Upon request, the Federal Government supports moves to strengthen cooperative and job-related elements in the vocational training systems of its partner countries. The Federal Government is pursuing the following goals with its international VET cooperation:

- promoting the employment of young adults by strengthening company-based training elements, particularly in the European Union;
- providing counselling and transferring know how to support governments and employee and employer associations wishing to strengthen dual structures in the vocational training systems of their countries;
- meeting German industry's demand for skilled staff at home and abroad and thus strengthening the commitment of German companies abroad and the transfer of technology;
- supporting the provision of German initial and continuing vocational training services abroad;
- establishing a dialogue on VET among stakeholders as a driver for national VET policy and with a view to strengthening international VET research in Germany;
- internationalizing initial and continuing vocational training, particularly upgrading training, to meet the skills requirements of a globalized economy;
- supporting the introduction of an inclusive and holistic approach to vocational education and training in countries involved in development cooperation where vocational training can be a driver for growth and employment and thus among other things contribute towards stabilizing fragile environments;
- establishing a starting point for cooperation in further areas by initiating a trusting and purposeful dialogue involving all stakeholders.



II. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



A broad range of tried and tested instruments will help implement the objectives of international VET cooperation efficiently and appropriately. International cooperation does not mean introducing an exact copy of the German vocational training system in the partner countries. Instead, it means supporting the partner countries in adapting and introducing certain elements of dual training into their respective systems as required. Apart from introducing dual or cooperative principles, it is important to ensure their independent implementation and further development in the partner countries. The instruments and types of international VET cooperation include:

Providing systemic advice

Approaching and advising state authorities in the partner country with regard to dual or integrated forms of vocational training involving companies in order to

- persuade companies to commit themselves to vocational education and training,
- accompany processes of reform in the partner country,
- achieve the full recognition of qualifications under concrete projects – at an appropriate level in the national vocational training system.

III. INSTRUMENTS AND TOPICS

Providing systemic advice involves shaping the respective vocational training system, including, for example

- supporting work on a legal framework for vocational education and training,
- strengthening key players in vocational education and training in performing their tasks and responsibilities,
- securing sustainable, self-supporting sources of funding for the respective vocational training system,
- supporting the reform and establishment of administrative, research and advisory organizations on vocational education and training as well as corresponding educational establishments,
- encouraging local companies to engage in the practical implementation of integrated forms of vocational education and training.

Cooperative structures

Establishing structures in order to ensure the successful and sustainable introduction of practice-based, cooperative vocational education and training in the partner country. The Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs) can also assist in this context. For example, they are able to

- establish vocational training bodies, if possible involving all relevant stakeholders,
- develop transparent operational structures for vocational training measures, e.g. training/further training in individual companies;



Laying the foundations for sustainable VET-development in the partner countries.

- initiate and support training alliances between AHKs, chambers of the partner country, the two sides of industry and industrial organizations in the partner country, German companies and companies in the partner country; cooperate with vocational schools,
- establish certification and examination structures involving all relevant stakeholders.

Quality standards

Establishing and developing quality assurance instruments and vocational training standards including, for example:

- the joint development of training and examination regulations, curricula for training courses, framework curricula, teaching and learning material by stakeholders in industry and the public sector in the partner country,
- the development of training standards for companies and institutions that provide training,
- support for training teaching staff („train the trainer“).

Marketing and communication

Enhancing the attractiveness of vocational training by:

- VET campaigns in the partner countries,
- contributing to a VET campaign at European level.

Transparency and recognition

Education policy dialogue: e.g. exchanges on the National Qualifications Framework in bilateral working groups or a dialogue to promote flexibility and compatibility with academic training.

Implementation projects

Concrete projects and the creation of training networks involving companies and vocational schools as well as the two sides of industry in the partner country. Establishment of pilot projects to demonstrate good practice models.

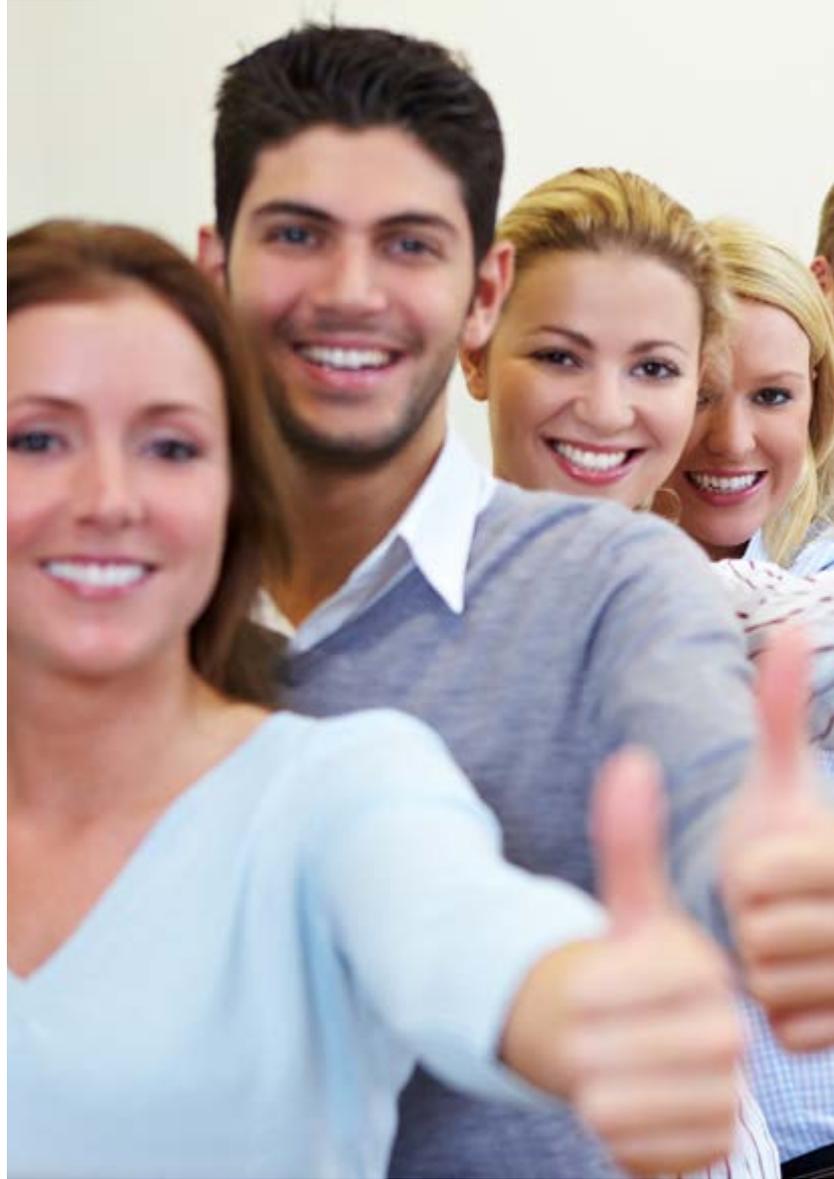
Appropriate funding

Offers of tailor-made funding within the framework of existing budgetary and financial planning for the expansion and modernization of vocational training systems.

Promoting mobility and cross-border cooperation

Increasing mobility in vocational education and training in order to create a European labour market by:

- taking greater account of intercultural competences in vocational education and training, promoting mobility in vocational training and higher education, for example through the EU education programme to promote the mobility of trainees, students and teaching staff and the funding of cross-border placements,
- establishing cross-border structures in VET mobility at bilateral and European level,
- and contributing to vocational training research at European level.



Combating youth unemployment, strengthening the development of skilled staff.



The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) is the Federal Government's competence centre for vocational training research, political counselling and practical support in initial and continuing vocational training. In accordance with its statutory remit, it has been advancing the development of the German dual vocational training system for over forty years now and is an important international reference centre. The „German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET)“ was established at BIBB on 12 September 2013. It will serve as a competent partner in VET cooperation worldwide and will develop in the longer term to become a platform for the entire Federal Government to enable the exchange of information both in Germany and abroad.

Furthermore, the BMBF's iMOVE initiative at BIBB supports German vocational training providers abroad.

The Didacta Association represents the German education industry abroad. The foreign contacts and industry-related VET competences of the Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs), Chambers of Commerce and Industry (IHKs), Chambers of Crafts (HWKs) as well as the Asso-

IV. IMPORTANT PARTNERS IN GERMANY

ciation of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) and the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH) make these organizations important strategic partners in the Federal Government's international VET cooperation.

The AHKs are funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and act as an important bridge linking German companies and companies in the partner country. They are locally embedded platforms to promote foreign trade and support relations between the German and local industry. The AHKs' close connections with the chambers of commerce in Germany, which are responsible for vocational education and training under the Vocational Training Act and Crafts Code, enable them to provide needs-oriented, high quality vocational training services based on Germany's dual system. Furthermore, AHKs are able to conduct pilot schemes to demonstrate the strengths of dual training and the significance of integration, counselling and quality assurance.

The German trade unions and employers' associations are established partners in the vocational training system in Germany and contribute to international VET cooperation – in association with their sister organizations abroad, their umbrella organization ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) and Business Europe/BE. They are important partners in the Federal Government's VET cooperation strategy.

The BMBF provides project and research funding to support German training providers involved in international activities. This is intended to put them in a better position to tap international markets. Training providers include numerous private organizations, educational



VET cooperation: Strong partners in Germany.

establishments run by industrial associations and trade unions as well as training facilities operated by German chambers (IHK and HWK). They train education personnel such as teachers at vocational schools and company training staff, introduce quality management activities in vocational training institutions, advise on the design and establishment of training centres and develop curricula and training standards in association with the foreign partners.

The GIZ is responsible for bilateral VET cooperation within the framework of technical cooperation and advises the BMZ. The GIZ is implementing more than 60 vocational training projects in developing countries on behalf of the BMZ and other ministries.

The KfW Development Bank works on behalf of the BMZ or other ministries and helps governments in the partner countries to finance key structural reforms or expand and modernize their vocational schools systems. It is the specialist agency for questions of financing vocational education and training in developing countries, including the use of innovative financial instruments.

The DEG-Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH is able to use its long-term funding programmes to co-fund private training institutions (universities, vocational schools, training centres) and support vocational training measures and pilot projects.

sequa gGmbH contributes the expertise of German industry and works on behalf of the BMZ and other ministries to conduct projects involving selected German chambers and trade associations and their foreign partner organizations in developing countries.

The BMZ's other key partners in international VET cooperation are German civil society organizations such as DVV International e.V., Don Bosco Mondo as well as other non-governmental and Church organizations.

The Federal Government also has important partners in vocational education and training in German and European companies and their subsidiaries abroad. Working in public-private partnerships, these companies train staff above and beyond their own requirements or establish inter-company training centres.

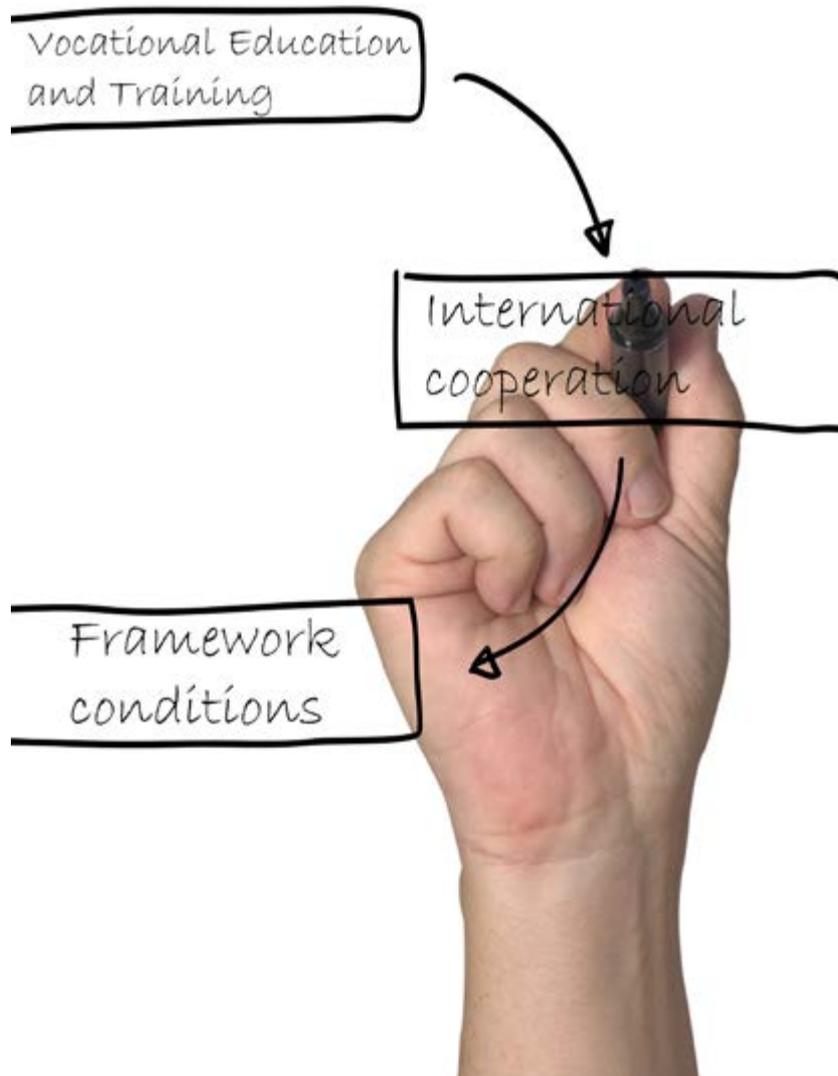


Certain framework conditions are particularly conducive to the process of transferring elements of the dual system to other countries. As a rule, the success of bilateral cooperation projects in vocational education and training is helped by:

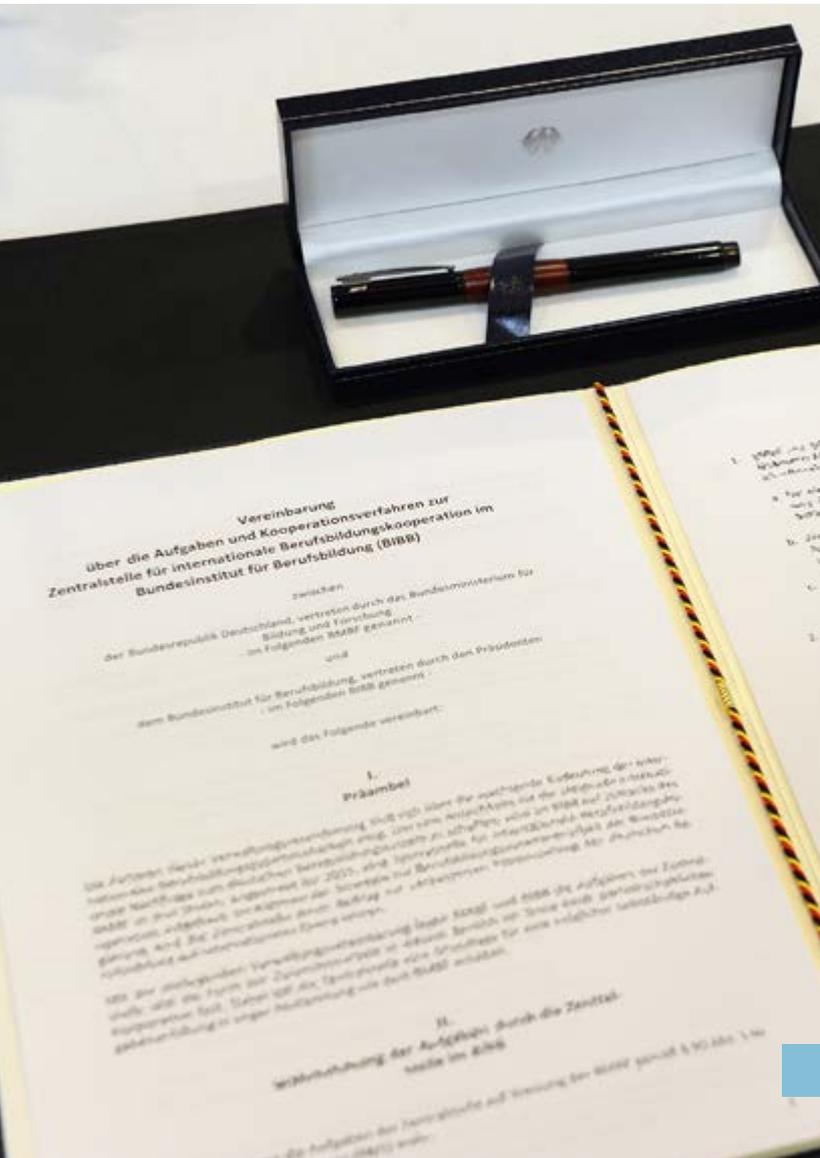
- √ active demand from the partner country for VET cooperation with German partners and a corresponding desire for change in the partner country,
- √ suitable political and legal conditions such as a national vocational training strategy and the political will to modernize and reform,
- √ the willingness of the relevant stakeholders, in particular the two sides of industry and industrial associations to take part in the reform projects responsibly and with their own initiatives,
- √ the willingness of state players to involve the two sides of industry (employer and employee organizations) and industrial organizations,
- √ the design of vocational training to meet the current and future demands of industry,
- √ the support of German providers of initial and continuing vocational training in demonstrating the strengths of a cooperative and industry-oriented vocational training system,

V. CONDUCTIVE FACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- √ the joint commitment of German companies and industrial and development policy organizations,
- √ the sound quality of the general education system and opportunities for transfer between different career paths,
- √ reliable information on the labour market from which one can deduce the needs for reform and qualifications,
- √ adequate economic potential,
- √ compatible education cultures and traditions, the appropriate status of vocational education and training (social acceptance) – also compared with academic training,
- √ efficient stakeholders who offer and finance vocational education and training as well as institutions and structures which assure vocational training standards,
- √ existing cultures of state funding for education, science and innovation.



The transferability of elements of the dual system depends on the starting position in the partner country.



International VET cooperation across ministries and organizations means that it is now possible to present German activities more professionally and coherently. The coordinated use of existing financial resources and the pooling of know how enhance efficiency and effectiveness and enable the systematic planning of activities.

A Round Table acts as coordinating body and clearing agency to harmonize bilateral VET cooperation. It brings together government departments and relevant organizations to agree on the strategic direction of the Federal Government’s international VET cooperation activities.

The members of the Round Table consist of representatives of the federal ministries concerned, the organizations working within the remit of these ministries, institutions responsible for the national vocational training system – particularly the chamber organizations (DIHK and ZDH), the two sides of industry (BDA and DGB), and BIBB and the German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET) – as well as Länder representatives. The group of participants can be extended if necessary.

VI. POOLING STRENGTHS AND MAKING USE OF COMPETENCES

ROUND TABLE AND GERMAN OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN VET AT BIBB

The German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET) was established at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in 2013. This means that BIBB can now contribute its expertise as the national competence centre for initial and continuing vocational training to international VET cooperation.

GOVET collates and processes information on the Federal Government's new and existing VET cooperation schemes and makes this data available to individual German stakeholders as required and upon request. It thus acts as a point of contact for all German institutions that are involved in VET cooperation and in future will also be available for interested foreign parties.

GOVET supports and accompanies cooperative activities on the part of the Federal Government – upon request and in complement to the various counselling activities offered by the GIZ and KfW as well as other German stakeholders in international VET cooperation.

GOVET...

- acts as the administrative arm of the Round Table for involved stakeholders,
- is the central point of contact for VET cooperation for national and international stakeholders,
- implements an internal and external knowledge management system,
- supports the establishment, coordination and technical design of the BMBF's bilateral VET cooperations,
- defines, designs and supports networking and cooperation projects.



Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB).

Further information on the German Office for International Cooperation in VET (GOVET) is available at:
www.bibb.de/zentralstelle

List of abbreviations

AHK	Chamber of Commerce Abroad
BDA	Confederation of German Employers' Associations
BIBB	Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
BMBF	Federal Ministry of Education and Research
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRICS	Association of the states: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
BUSINESSEUROPE	Business organization at EU level
DEG	Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH
DGB	Confederation of German Trade Unions
DIHK	Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry
DVV International e.V.	Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association
EUTC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
G20	Group of the 20 most important industrial and emerging countries
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GOVET	German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training
HWK	Chamber of Crafts
IHK	Chamber of Industry and Commerce
iMOVE	International Marketing of Vocational Education
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
ZDH	German Confederation of Skilled Crafts

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