

VET Trends 2016



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Dear readers,

Vocational education and training (VET) aligned to the needs of the labour market is a powerful means to empower both young people and adult learners to participate in economic and social life. Currently, the United Nations are discussing the new sustainable development goals and fortunately, a proper education aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote life-long learning opportunities will be part of this.

At the same time, the UNESCO recommendation on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is being updated. The revised version will underline the importance of work-based learning and life-long learning approaches. Regarding the governance of (T)VET, all relevant stakeholders should participate in the development of modern vocational education and training that is oriented to the needs of the labour market. In order to still attract young people in the 21st century, VET needs to keep up with the fast changes in the world of work. It needs to provide flexible entry points as well as to prepare for professional career opportunities that are attractive and upgradable.

Having these developments in mind, we are dedicating the new special edition of our journal "Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis" (Vocational Training in Research and Practice), generally referred to as BWP, to some main trends in VET. The focus is on topics that are of relevance to stakeholders shaping VET in research, policy and practice at a European and international level. In addition, the four chapter headings epitomise topics that are of strategic relevance to the BIBB in its capacity as the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Germany. The articles have been compiled thoroughly and published in English in order to give you insights into current trends within the German system of vocational education and training and to shed light on a number of developments in international VET cooperation.

In particular, the challenge of validation of non-formal and informal learning and respective learning outcomes have currently gained in importance to an extent that even exceeded our expectations when we worked on the composition of this edition. Considering the situation of huge numbers of refugees coming to the European Union and Germany in particular, it is becoming increasingly imperative to enhance the recognition of professional qualifications acquired abroad as well as means and instruments to validate knowledge, skills and competences that cannot be proved by written documents or are gained in non-formal or informal learning contexts.

Inclusion still remains both a commitment and a challenge for VET practitioners and experts. Good and promising practices need to be collated and disseminated in order to encourage others to join in. Many companies training young people with disabilities regard this experience as a positive one. This is encouraging in our efforts towards inclusion.

In all these areas, it is enriching to share points of view, learning experiences and promising practices in an international dialogue. The internationalisation of our institute will therefore continue. It is our belief that the future of vocational education and training cannot be discussed within national contexts only. More opportunities for reciprocal learning, exchange and joint projects need to be developed. For this reason, we would like to invite you establish contact with us at the BIBB in Germany.

Last but not least, enjoy your reading and take care!

B. Thomann