



University of
Zurich^{UZH}

Institute of Secondary and Vocational Education

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**The political, social and pedagogical foundations of
German-speaking VET: the case of Switzerland**

**Talk in Plenary Session 2 (Friday, 25th November, 11.30-13.00)
SALA MOSAICO**



The context of dual apprenticeships

- **Drivers**
 - Economic flourishing
 - Social policy perspective
 - Pedagogical dimension
 - Public reputation as benefit for society
- **Underestimated dimensions**
 - Dual apprenticeships are a concept in flux
 - Schools and the education system as a pillar
 - Attractive alternatives on Secondary II and Higher Education level also in dual apprenticeship countries



Tradition of dual apprenticeships and its embeddedness in economy, education and society

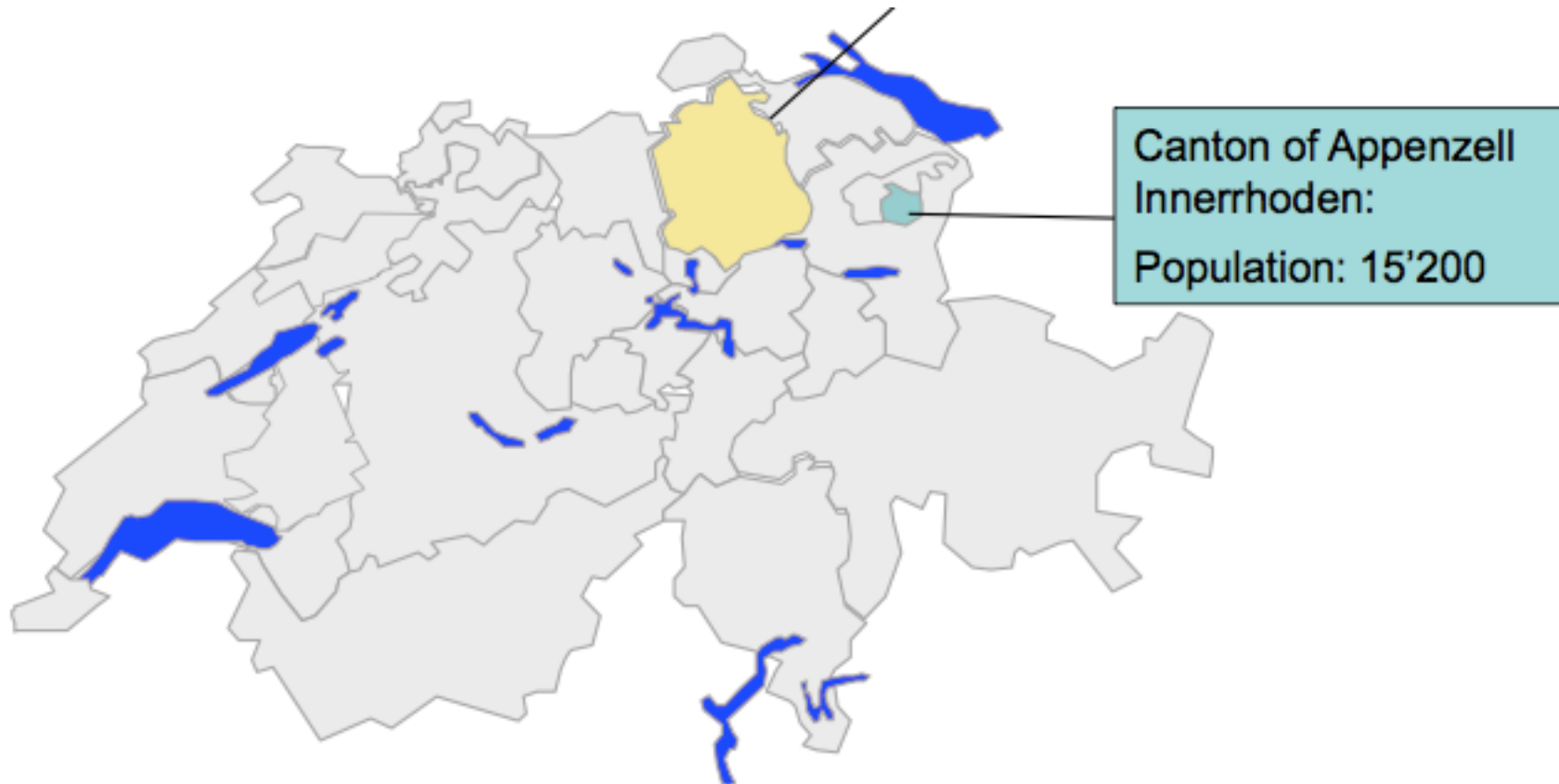
- **History**
 - Reinvention of apprenticeships: duality
 - Extension and specification of the school-system
 - Nationalization of (dual) apprenticeships
- **Legislation and legitimation**
 - Dual apprenticeships in specific contexts and long-term engagement
 - Schools and the education system as a back up
 - Craft workshops and SME as the origin and basis of duality
 - Solid legal basis of dual apprenticeships



Federalist Switzerland – 26 Cantons, 4 Languages

CH: Today: 8 Mio

Canton of Zurich 1'272'600
Population

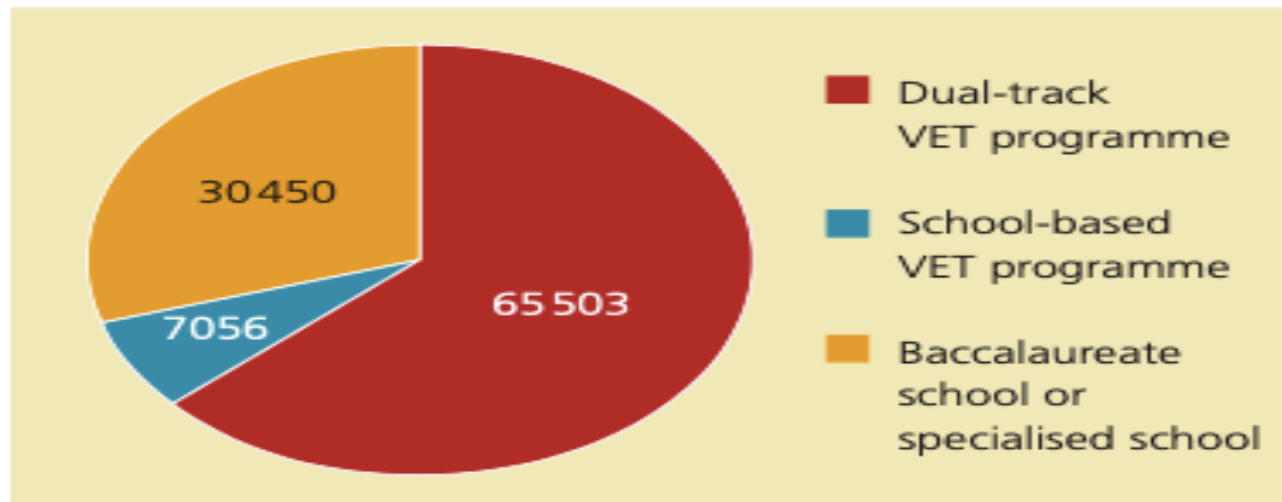




Baccalaureate Schools (High-Schools) & VET 2019 (SBFI 2022,11)

- Switzerland: High engagement in education, system is quite tracked: bacc or 3/4 years VET. Early selection, however the system is nowadays very permeable
- Dual (track)VET: more or less 3 days workplace, 1 ½- 2 days school, third site

Enrolment in upper-secondary level in 2019²





The 10 most frequently chosen apprenticeships (SBFI 2019, 12)

Occupations	Total
Commercial employee (all profiles)	13842
Health care worker	4795
Retail clerk	4708
Social care worker	3657
IT technician	2100
Electrician	1905
Logistician	1724
Cook	1594
Draughtsman	1554
Retail assistant	1450



Normally VET is for Youth, but today also Adults apply for VET

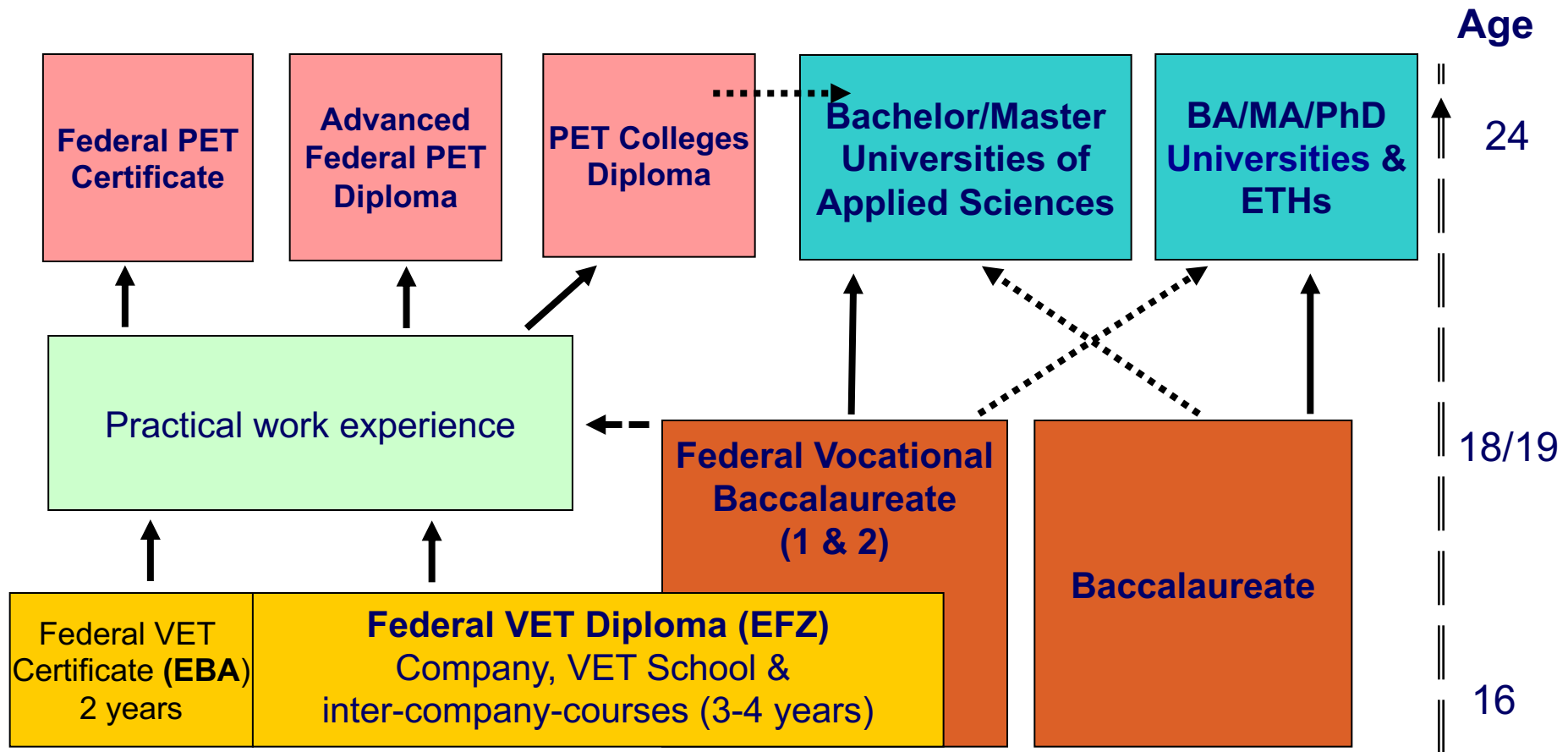
Number of vocational qualifications awarded to persons aged 24 and older in 2017⁷

Age	25–29	30–39	40+	Total
Completion of regular VET programme	2 868	995	289	4 152



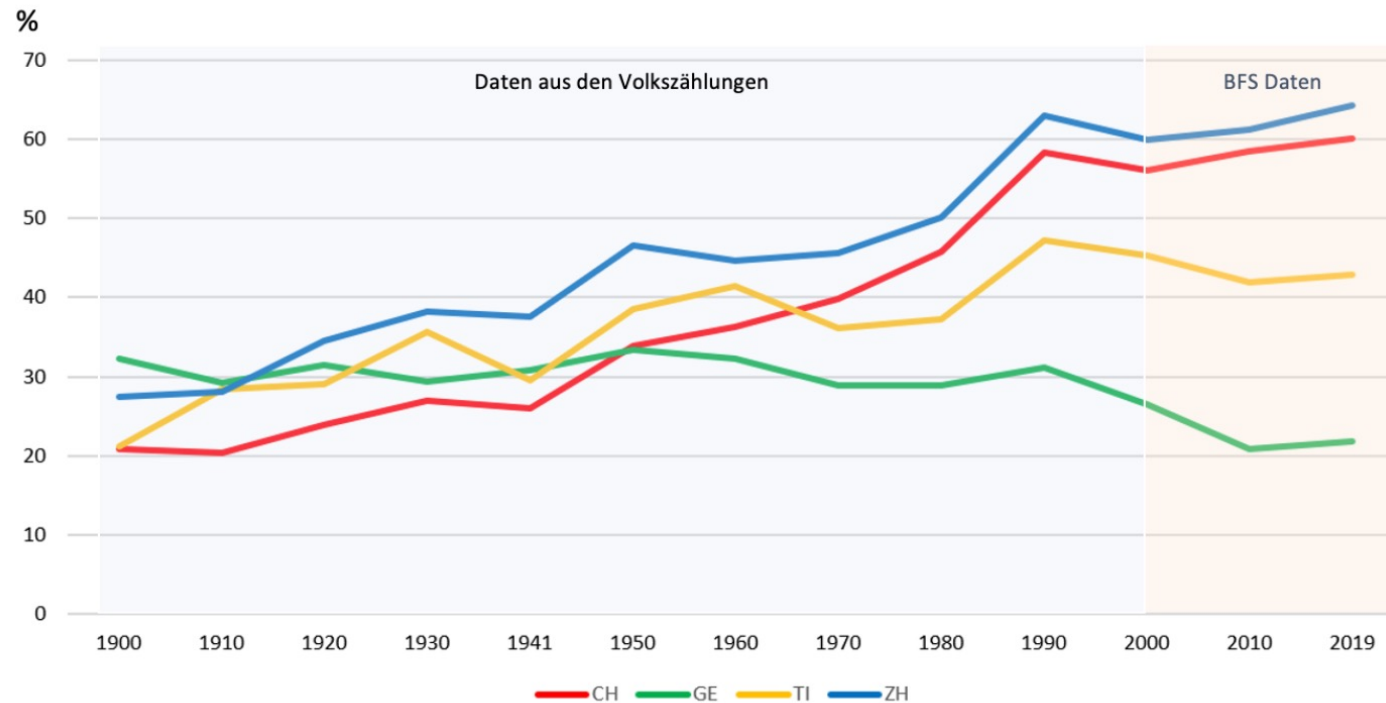


Swiss Education System (Upper Secondary & Tertiary Level)





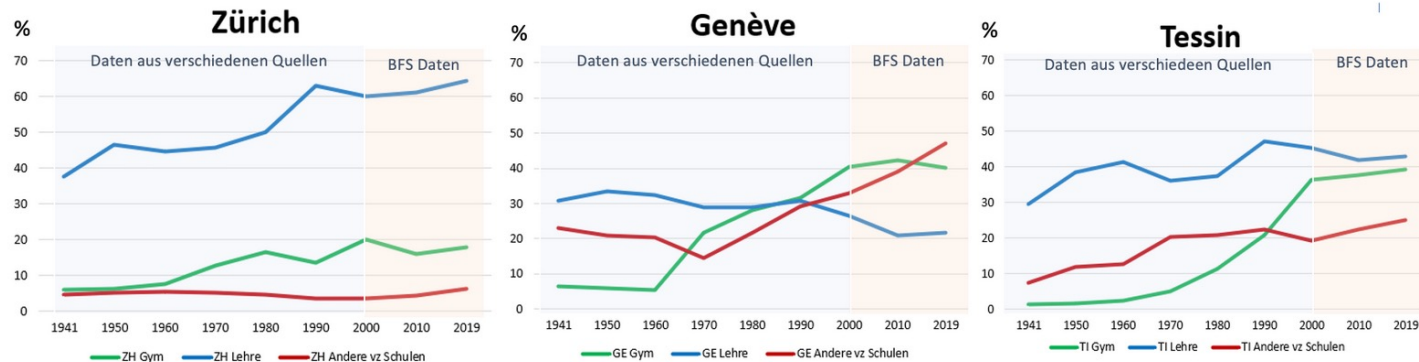
Today 63% in dual apprenticeships - Development of Enrolment Rates in VET (at age 15 to 18) (Bonoli & Gonon 2022 - Source: FOS 2021 and former statistical data)





Development of dual VET, school-based VET and Bacc Schools in Zurich, Geneva and Ticino

(Source: Gonon & Bonoli 2021 <https://sgab-srfp.ch/bildung-etwa-doch-ein-polenta-und-roestigraben/>)



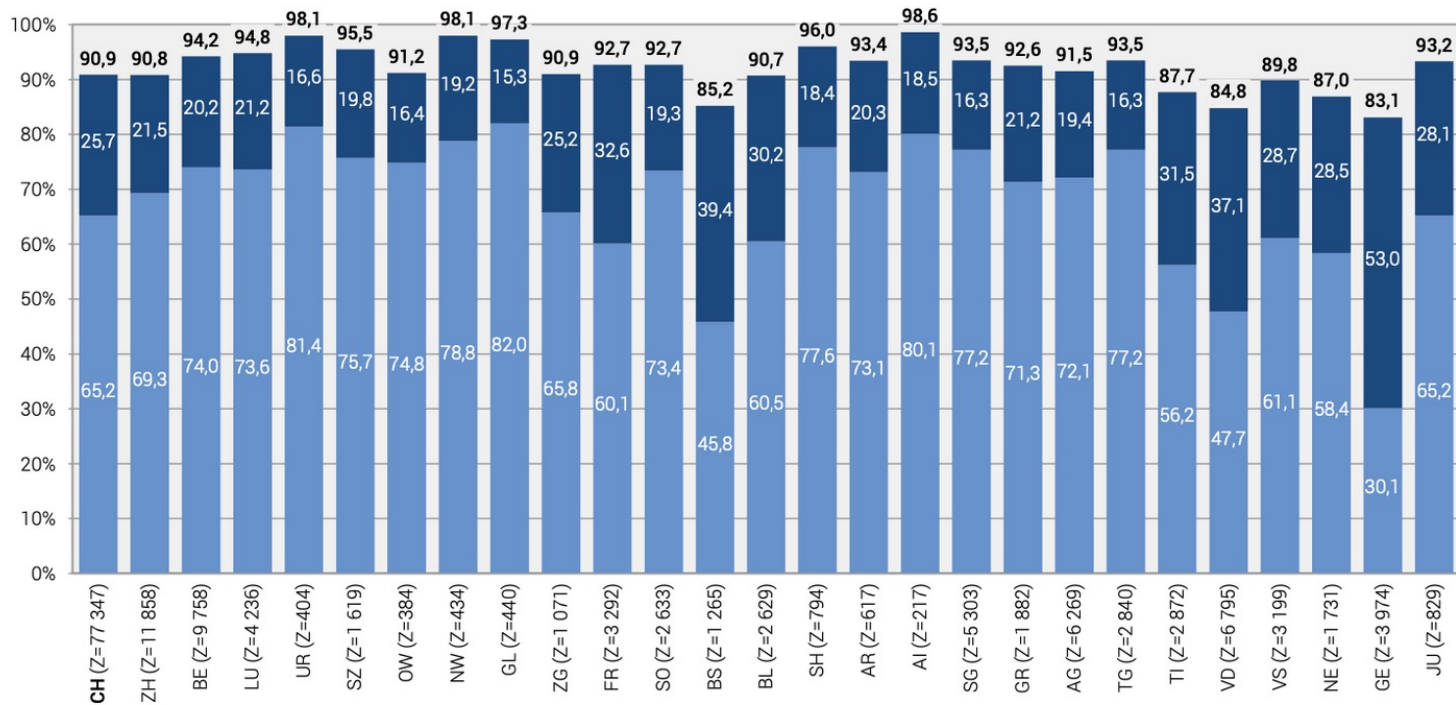
1940-2019 green: Bacc Schools, red: school-based VET
blue: dual VET



First degrees in education at age 25 in the year 2015: **Switzerland - 91% a secondary II degree**

(Source: FOS 2018)

Nach Wohnkanton





Highest Level of Education, (Percentage) 25-64 aged Population in Switzerland

	2000	2015	2020
Mandatory School	16,1	12,7	10,7
Secondary II	59,7	46,5	44,0
VET		39,3	35,5
Bacc Schools et al		8,2	8,5
Tertiary Level	24,2	39,8	45.2
Universities & AUS		25,7	30,1
Higher Professional VET		14,1	15,1
(Source: Statista 2022)			



Path-dependency: Evolution of the Swiss VET system

- The Swiss Vocational Education System (VET) developed independently from the education system. In 19th Century economic policy and social reforms led actors like the Swiss Trade Association, Entrepreneurs and Swiss Unions to build up schools, which supported the qualification and further education of workers. Upon this starting point in 1884, more state and federal regulations passed and led to a national VET system.
- The foundation of a formalized qualification model including work-based-learning and schools (dual model of apprenticeship) emerged in the 20th Century (Federal law upon VET 1930). Thus VET got the major provider for education for youth, meanwhile academic education remained a minor institution for an elite.



Federal Laws as a Basis of Expansion of VET

National legislation

1930 first federal law of VET as a compromise of different worlds

Further legislations **1963, 1978, 2004**

Foundation for Hybrid Qualifications like Federal Vocational Baccalaureat (FVB)

1993 Amendement for FVB

1995 Legislation for the Universities of Applied Sciences

2009/14 new framework for the implementation of VET



Apprenticeships: Educational space & quality standards

- **Constitutional law: Education:** Art. 61a: „Switzerland as an educational space“: Federal authorities and cantons provide a high quality and permeability
- **Constitutional law: VET:** Art. 63: Federal authorities are entitled to legislate VET and further VET through a broad and permeable program
Art. 63 a Higher Education and Art 64 Further Education (Constitution Version 2006)

Furthering the Quality of VET

- Federal Act of VET Art 8: The providers of VET guarantee a high quality; federal authorities further the Quality development and define Quality standards and control the results
- Amendments of the federal VET law and cantonal laws include other elements of Quality



Common concern of actors: Strengthening VET

- Strengthening Vocational Education and Training as a long-term project
- Swiss Trade Associations, Swiss Unions, Social Welfare Associations and Teacher Associations build a strategic alliance
- Systematisation of VET and integration in a legal framework
- Education policy is transforming the education system towards a hybrid system, which includes neo-corporatist and academic regimes
- Quality as the common aim of (vocational) education policy

Differentiation, Hybridization & Permeability

- Quality in the sense of a differentiation of offers, attractiveness with regard to a combined labor market qualification and study ability as well as mobility and career options thanks to expanded permeability in the education system have transformed vocational education and training.



Aurélie, 17
lernt Zeichnerin.

„I would like to get
an architect or a
construction
draftsman or both“

Academic Drift and VET

- In the last years a diversification of HE has taken place
- This is the result of rising demand for formally higher qualifications
- Aspirations of young people to get a high degree
- Demand of firms for higher degrees and more applied and practical knowledge
- Education Policy and VET have reacted in order to strengthen their own position
 - - keeping system alive
 - - offering new pathways into higher education
 - - inventing new forms of dual apprenticeship
 - - transferring the vocational principle to HE

25.11.2022



TRAIN AS A PRINT
TECHNOLOGIST, BECOME
AN ART THERAPIST.
PROFESSIONALS GO FAR.



What's about **Inclusion** through VET?

- First: historically VET was a way to include working class in society and qualify young people in order to find a way of living
- Secondly: Since 1970s specific programs for young people with special needs or weak performance abilities were designed. This was contested but is today of certain relevance for specific job profiles. A recently created pre-VET-program for young people and for refugees was as well established.
- But: in a liberal meritocratic capitalism, social inequality is not decreasing but increasing. And this inequality is hidden "behind a veil of achievement and merit" (Milanovic 2022, p. 21). In light of this development, access to education becomes an essential moment for all individuals to prosper socially and economically in this world. Here, lower achievers, the socially disadvantaged, people with disabilities, and individuals with other potentially exclusionary attributions such as gender stereotypes, and ethno-cultural minority are at particular risk of being denied access to education or dropping out of the education system.



Conclusion – Apprenticeships as part of the educational system

- **Differentiation and hybridization of VET, due to**
- rising demands for formally higher qualifications
- aspirations of young people to get a high degree
- demand of firms for higher degrees and more applied and practical knowledge
- offering new pathways into higher education
- inventing new forms of VET and dual apprenticeship
- new forms of Higher Professional Education and Training (PET)
- transferring the vocational principle to Higher Education
- Policy should be more active in including young people in VET with specific needs



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Thank you for your attention!

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