

Gold Standard

The Swiss Vocational Education and Training System

International Comparative Studies of Vocational Education Systems describe the Swiss VET system as highly supported by employers, who see it as their obligation to help prepare young people for productive and meaningful employment.

Apprenticeships also make economic sense for employers, providing them with an incentive to continue to participate in the system. The apprenticeships provide hands-on and applied learning opportunities, giving students real work responsibilities with plenty of coaching and adult support. This is an attractive learning option and over 70 percent of swiss students who currently opt for a vocational route.

Unlike other countries, the Swiss system intentionally provides a number of crosswalks and points of transfer to allow students to move seamlessly between academic and vocational studies, as well as seamlessly from VET on to higher education at a university of applied sciences. This feature helps motivate students to keep pursuing further education and advanced qualifications.

The Swiss system, as currently structured, represents the **gold standard** in vocational education and training. A major source of its strength derives from it being the mainstream system, the way most young people make the transition from schooling to working life. It offers proof that it is possible to design a system that can simultaneously meet the needs of a highly developed, innovative economy and the needs of the vast majority of young people.

The Center on International Education Benchmarking, a program of NCEE, conducts research on the world's most successful education systems to identify the strategies countries have used to produce their superior performance. CIEB provides up-to-date information and analysis on those countries whose students regularly top the PISA league tables and declares the Swiss Vocational Education and Training System as the best worldwide.

