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# Governance of vocational teacher education in EU countries: overview

*Report*



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**Summary:**

The document describes the governance of vocational teacher education in three European countries – Austria, Germany, and Italy (arranged alphabetically). It belongs to the first work package, which helps to understand better the needs of target groups in Ukraine and defines the best practices for learning.

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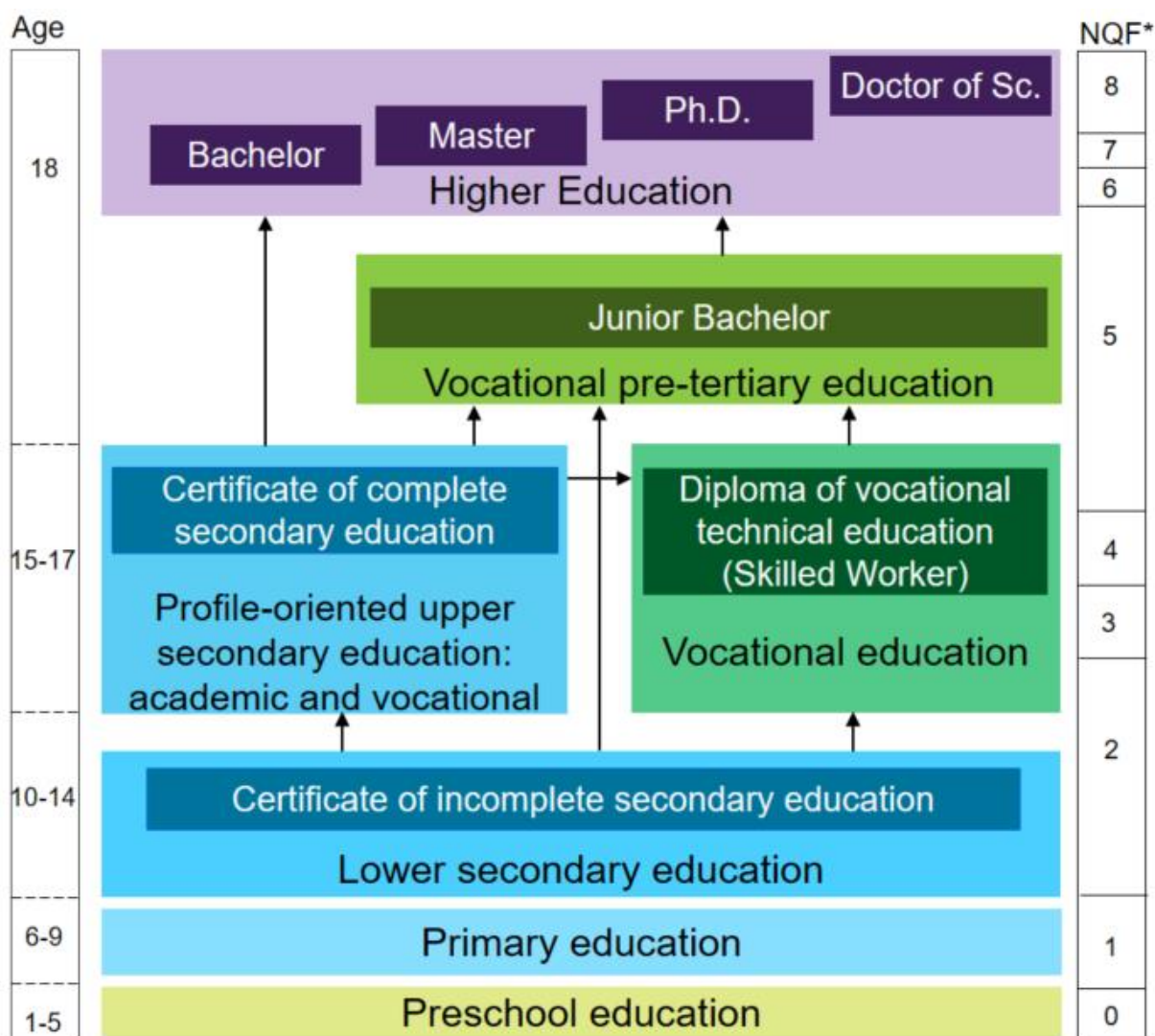
## INTRODUCTION

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Vocational teacher education (VTE) is a more complicated system than general teacher training that is conditioned by the specific place in the society – it belongs to the economic, social and cultural spheres. Successful vocational teacher education is a prerequisite for the effective functioning of vocational education in a country (Grollmann, 2008). The last one is central for the economic prosperity (Cedefop, 2011) and social well-being of youth in terms of smooth transition from school to work (Miguel, 2010). Therefore, improving vocational teacher training also means to make the skill formation system of a country work better. However, there is a paradox in so far as, sometimes, VTE and the underlying vocational education and training system (VET) have quite weak institutional links with each other, and consequently communication and cooperation rarely work well, if they take place at all, between the various actors and sub-systems. Such a situation characterises the Ukrainian VTE system in particular. The Erasmus+ project “New mechanisms of partnership-based governance and standardization of vocational teacher education in Ukraine” (PAGOSTE) deals with governance in vocational teacher education in Ukraine and attempts to build “a bridge” between two sectors and close the existing institutional gap, so that the needs and expectations of vocational schools are met and future vocational teachers are well trained and have sufficient competences to work in vocational schools.

The project goes in line with the current reforms in Ukrainian education. Since 2014 large scale and important reforms have been launched. With the Law on Education of Ukraine (2017, rev.02.04.2020), the basic structure of the educational system has been changed. Foremost, it has affected secondary education and vocational education: among numerous changes, it is worth pointing out such ones as introduction of a new level of education between vocational and higher education – pre-tertiary professional education, introduction of profilisation at upper secondary education into academic and vocational-oriented directions (see Figure 1) and implementation of the dual form of education (Art. 9, Art. 10, Art. 12, Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy [Parliament of Ukraine], Закон України "Про освіту/2017).

For the implementation of the changes in vocational education, the government developed the Concept on the implementation of state policy in the field of vocational education entitled 'Modern vocational education' for the period up to 2027. Higher pedagogical education also received particular attention from the side of the government and a strategic document was developed in 2018-2019, namely the Concept of Development of Pedagogical Education. These documents served as an impulse for this Erasmus+ project.



\*NQF – National Qualification Framework as of 02.07.2020

**Figure 1.** The system of education in Ukraine (own figure based on the Law of Ukraine on Education, 2017, rev. 02.04.2020)

One of the problems defined in the Concept for the implementation of state policy in the field of vocational education is the discrepancy between the content and methods of teaching and the real needs of the modern labour market as well as the needs of individuals, another one is the obvious devaluation of the social status of vocational teachers and trainers (Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine, Концепція реалізації державної політики у сфері професійної (професійно-технічної) освіти “Сучасна професійна (професійно-технічна) освіта” на період до 2027 року/2019). Such a situation is the result of the interplay of complex factors including the quality of training, which future vocational teachers receive at higher education institutions (HEIs). Vocational schools are the final employers of HEIs’ graduates who formally possess the qualification of a vocational teacher. However, so far there is no clear linkage

between these two institutions, which seems necessary for enhancing the relevance and quality of training provided by HEIs for the needs and reality of vocational schools.

During the reforms, learning from other VTE systems opens opportunities for adapting and applying policies, principles and concepts that proved to be successful in the respective national or regional contexts. Policy learning hereby focuses not just on “involvement but active engagement of national stakeholders in developing their own policy solutions, based on the understanding that there are no valid models but, at most, a wealth of international experience in dealing with similar policy issues in other contexts” (Grootings & Nielsen, 2009, p. 270). Therefore, for the international Erasmus+ project PAGOSTE, which aims at improving governance mechanisms in vocational teacher education in order to improve its quality and relevance, it is important to get an insight into VTE in European countries and analyse in what way their experience can be useful when implementing reforms in Ukraine. The goal of this report is to provide an overview of vocational teacher education in three European countries (Austria, Germany and Italy) with the purpose to learn from their experience in this sphere. The value of this report for the Ukrainian partners and policymakers is that it provides possibilities to analyse, compare and learn from the above-mentioned countries in terms not only of successful practices, but also learn from mistakes and failures as well. This learning is expected to help to work out the relevance for the Ukrainian context of an improvement of VTE and new strategies for their implementation.

The report has an explorative character. It has been developed by the teams of PAGOSTE from Austria, Germany and Italy. It comprises overviews of the governance mechanisms of vocational teacher education in these three countries. Each overview includes a short description of the corresponding vocational education and training (VET) system. It is particularly interesting to get an insight into the education systems of the German-speaking countries, which have a well-established dual vocational education that Ukraine has only started to pilot (Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine, Концепція підготовки фахівців за дуальною формою здобуття освіти/2018), and Italy as a Southern European country, which has a school-based VET system that Ukraine is trying to reform. Consequently, the approaches to VTE in these countries are considerably different which make such studies even more relevant and interesting. The second constitute is the analysis of teacher training provided by universities. As it was mentioned before, learning happens not only from the positive experience but from mistakes as well. As to VTE, Italy appears to have also a gap between vocational education and its teacher training system. However, this gap and with it the non-involvement of vocational schools within pre-service teacher training is compensated by the collaboration during in-service teacher training. Our overviews in the following end with the description of qualification requirements and professional profiles of different categories of vocational teachers.



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## VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

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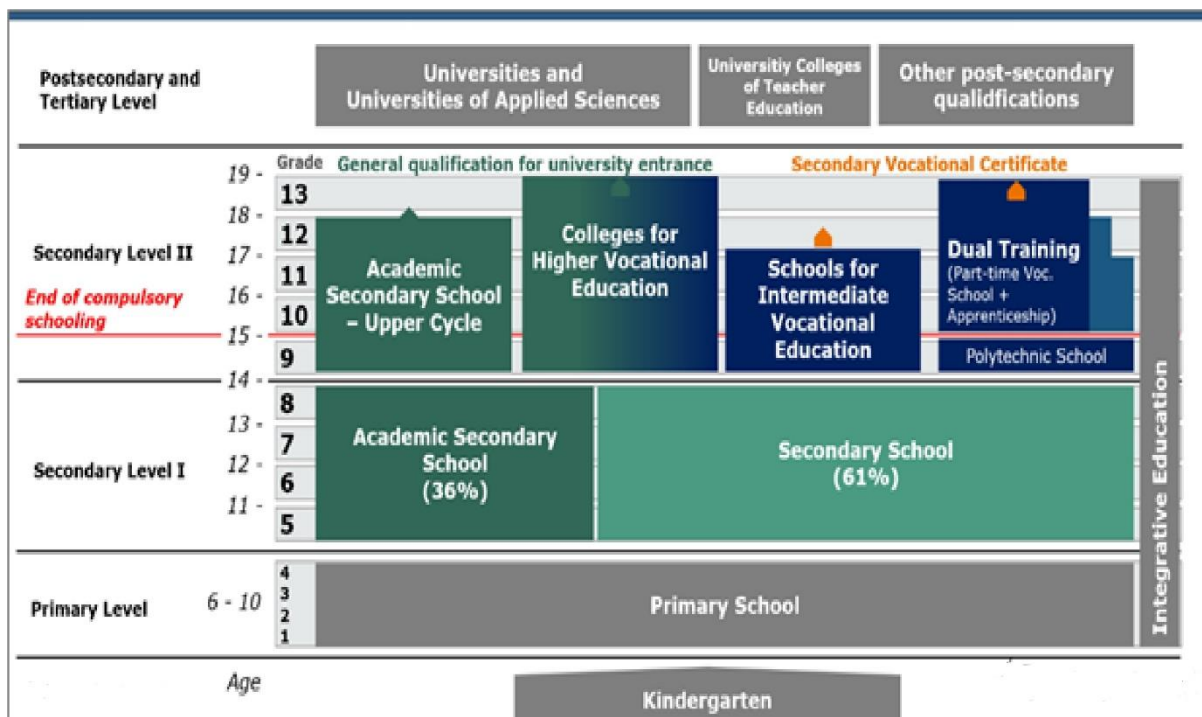
### OUTLINE

1. The Austrian education system
2. Vocational education in Austria
  - 2.1. Colleges for higher vocational education
  - 2.2. Dual training
3. Vocational teacher education
  - 3.1. Teacher education for full-time schools for higher and intermediate vocational education with focus on business education
  - 3.2. Teacher education for higher and intermediate vocational education (full-time schools) with focus on technical education
  - 3.3. Teacher education for part-time schools for vocational education (dual training)
4. Vocational teacher education – governance in Austria

### 1 THE AUSTRIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Austrian Education System is managed by the federal government and is characterised by a free and public-school system. The main goal is to meet the interests and needs of children and their parents. For children at the age of three or older it is possible to attend a nursery school voluntarily, which is called kindergarten and is not part of the school system. When children turn five years, they must attend kindergarten in a half-day form. Compulsory schooling starts at the age of six, whereas nine years of education are mandatory. For children with special learning needs various specialised schools are available, or the integrated approach may be employed.

The following Figure 1 gives an overview of the Austrian Education System. For more detailed information on the different school types, standards and classifications (e.g. ISCED levels), it is possible to visit the website of the Austrian Ministry of Education listed in the references.



**Figure 1.** An overview of the Austrian education system (own figure based on Bundesministerium Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, 2014)

After four years of primary school, children can decide between two systems: on the one hand, secondary school and, on the other hand, academic secondary school providing a general education. In contrast to secondary school, which provides basic general education, academic secondary schools pursue a broad and advanced general education.

In general, the first year at the upper secondary level (secondary level II) is the final year of compulsory schooling at the same time. After the successful completion of the 8th grade, the students and their parents have to decide between a vocational (VET) and a general education pathway. The general education pathway is the upper cycle of academic secondary school.

The Austrian vocational education offers two different options: First of all, you can attend a vocational full-time school, which are very typical for the Austrian VET policy. The Austrian VET programmes include colleges for higher vocational education and schools for intermediate vocational education. The second vocational pathway is the classical dual training, which combines a part-time vocational school and an apprenticeship. A dual training can be started after the completion of compulsory schooling. The Polytechnical School offers the possibility to finish the compulsory schooling after the completion of the secondary level I, but it is not obligatory to choose this school type before starting the dual training. Schools for intermediate vocational education and dual training conclude with a secondary vocational certificate. In contrast to that, colleges for higher vocational education and the upper cycle of academic secondary school provide students with a general qualification for university entrance.

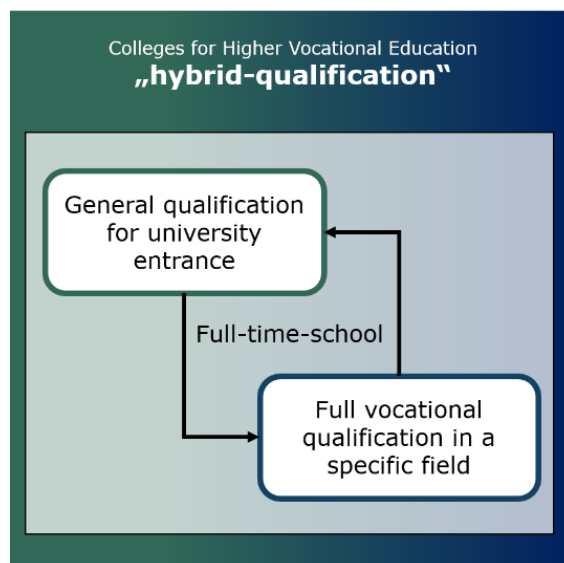
Three years after graduation, approximately 85% of graduates of academic secondary schools attend university, which is evidently more compared to colleges for higher vocational education with technical focus and business focus, where about 59% and 49% respectively study at a university three years after completion of school (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2018, p. 5).

## 2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

In Austria, vocational education consists of full-time vocational schools/colleges and a dual system. Both forms enable students to exercise their occupation immediately after graduation. The following explanations do not include the intermediate vocational school types. The reason for this limitation is the fact, that the popularity of this school-type has been constantly decreasing over the last years (especially as a consequence of the academization-trend within the secondary level II). Most of the pupils now decide between a college for higher education and a dual training.

### 2.1 COLLEGES FOR HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Colleges for higher vocational education last for five years, whereas schools for intermediate vocational education only last for three or four years. The former is focused on higher vocational qualifications in various specializations (e.g. business, tourism, electrical engineering) as well as general education, which enables students to attend university afterwards. This is also called “hybrid-qualification” (see Figure 2). In order to attend those colleges, it is necessary to complete the 8th grade of academic secondary school at the lower level or the normal secondary school.

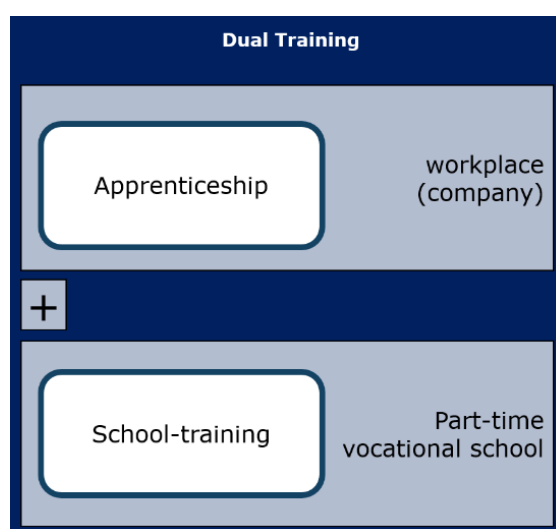


**Figure 2.** Structure of „hybrid qualification“ at colleges for Higher Vocational Education (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2018, pp. 4)

The most important types of colleges for higher vocational education (BHS) are higher federal technical colleges, secondary colleges of business administration and secondary schools for economic professions with a ratio of 44%, 26% and 18% of all BHS students respectively (Deissinger, T., Braun, V. (2018): pp. 103) In addition to those, there are many other colleges for higher vocational education with different focuses, e.g. tourism, fashion, artistic design, childhood pedagogy and social pedagogy.

## 2.2 DUAL TRAINING

The dual training comprises an apprenticeship, which is situated at the workplace, as well as school-training (see Figure 3), which is a part-time vocational school.



**Figure 3.** Structure of dual training (Bundesministerium Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, 2014)

The apprenticeship is defined as a practical education at the company, which means an “on the job training”. The apprentice receives a training-remuneration from the company and works about 30 to 32 hours a week. In addition to that, the apprentice is a part-time student at a school for vocational education, where he or she is able to attend courses, which consist of theoretical knowledge and are required in order to carry out his or her profession. This school training lasts about 8 to 10 hours a week.

In contrast to colleges for higher vocational education, it is required to complete all nine years of compulsory schooling first in order to attend a dual training. Generally, it lasts for about two to four years. In fact, there are approximately 200 different training-professions. In the end of the dual training program, it is necessary to pass an examination in front of professional experts (Bundesministerium Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, 2014).

In Austria, several different ways lead to the qualification to work as a teacher. Currently, three different types of teachers exist in Austria, which depend on the different subjects they teach: teachers for general education, teachers for business education and practice teachers.

Teachers for primary schools have to attend teacher education programs at special teacher training colleges (focus on pedagogical and didactical skills). Teachers for general subjects in upper secondary schools have to attend teacher education programs for their chosen subjects (usually two) at a university (focus primarily on specialist knowledge). Teachers for secondary schools (secondary level I) have the option to choose between studying at special teacher training colleges and universities. After teachers have finished the different teacher education programs, they receive the title of Bachelor of Education, which is necessary to start teaching their subjects at school. In order to qualify for a long-term contract of employment as a teacher, the bachelor graduate has to finish a master's programme within five years (Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, n.d.).

However, this summary concentrates in particular on teacher education for vocational subjects, especially with a focus on business and technical subjects. Of course, there exist many other schools for higher and intermediate vocational education with different focuses like for example tourism, fashion, artistic design, agriculture and forestry, childhood pedagogy, social pedagogy and many others.

The following figure gives an overview of the different types of teacher education in Austria. The most important difference is between the VTE for vocational subjects at full-time schools and the VTE for part-time schools.

	<b>(full-time) Schools for higher and intermediate Vocational Education</b>		<b>(part-time) Schools for Vocational Education (Dual Training)</b>
	Schools with focus on <b>business education</b>	Schools with focus on <b>technical education</b>	
<b>Vocational Subjects</b>	1) Master's degree in „business education“ ( <b>MSc</b> ) + 2) Working experience (2 years) <hr style="border: 1px solid green;"/>	1) Master's degree in a technical domain ( <b>MSc</b> ) + 2) Working experience (3 years) <hr style="border: 1px solid green;"/> + 3) Bachelor of Education ( <b>Bed</b> ) – parallel to the job	1) Certificated Vocational Qualification (e.g. Meisterprüfung) +/or 2) Working experience (3 years) <hr style="border: 1px solid green;"/> + 3) Bachelor of Education ( <b>Bed</b> ) – parallel to the job
<b>Academic subjects</b>	Teacher education programs at universities (MEd with 2 subjects)		/

**Figure 4.** Educational requirements to different categories of VET teacher (Pädagogische Hochschule Wien (n.d.))

Since the centre of interest of the following part lies, as already mentioned before, on teacher education for schools with the focus on business and technical subjects (based on the biggest

proportion of the number of students), this part is divided in three sub-topics, to allow a better explanation of teacher education of full-time schools for higher and intermediate vocational education, with focus on business education or rather technical education, and part-time schools for vocational education (dual training).

### 3.1 TEACHER EDUCATION FOR FULL-TIME SCHOOLS FOR HIGHER AND INTERMEDIATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WITH FOCUS ON BUSINESS EDUCATION

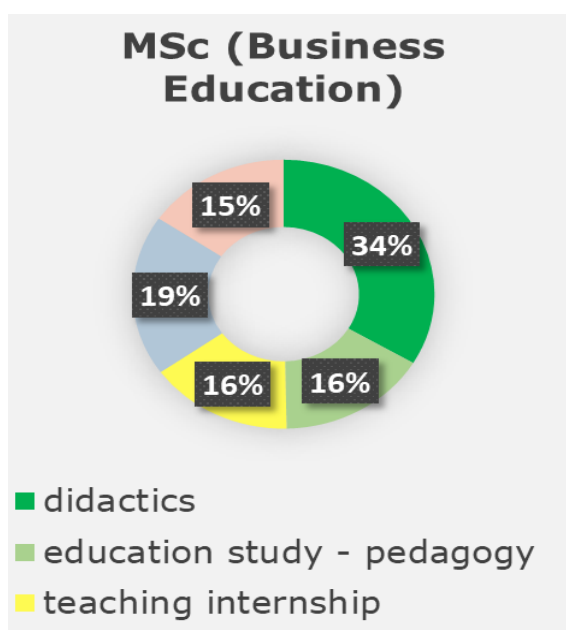
Before it is allowed to start with teacher education for full-time schools for higher and intermediate vocational education with focus on business education, a bachelor's degree in an economic study program is obligated.

After that, it is possible to start with the master's degree „Business education“ (MSc) at a university, for example at the Vienna University for Business and Economics.

The study contents of the Master of Science (Business Education) at the Vienna University for Business and Economics are worth 150 ECTS, which consist out of

- 5 ECTS research methods;
- 20 ECTS theses;
- 24 ECTS teaching internship;
- 52 ECTS economic and didactic courses (didactics);
- 25 ECTS business education and educations studies (pedagogy);
- 24 ECTS electives.

Figure 5 demonstrates the distribution of the ECTS in percent.



**Figure 5.** Percentage division of ECTS at Ms of Business Education Program (Own figure based on Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, n.d.)

The teaching internship has to be done during the master's study at a full-time school for higher or intermediate vocational education with focus on business education. It tries to link the learned theoretical knowledge of the students with the practical work of a teacher during the daily tasks at school. The students have to accompany one or several teachers during a semester at school and also hold several lessons in front of VET learners. The outcome will be reflected by the teacher/s and the professors from university. The internship shall help the becoming teachers to get to know the daily work of a teacher in the practice and gives them the opportunity to get professional advice from different teachers for their future teaching career.

Together with the bachelor's and master's degree the last requirement for teaching at a school for vocational education is two years of working experience in a relevant business field. However, the master's program "Business education" qualifies not only for school teaching, but also for many other professional fields like for example economics and administration, advisory professions, HR, adult education, etc. (Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, n.d.).

For the reason of the specific master's program, the education for business and economics teachers is very special and the only one in the field of the vocational education in Austria, which trains the becoming teachers in that kind of, clearly defined way on the topic.

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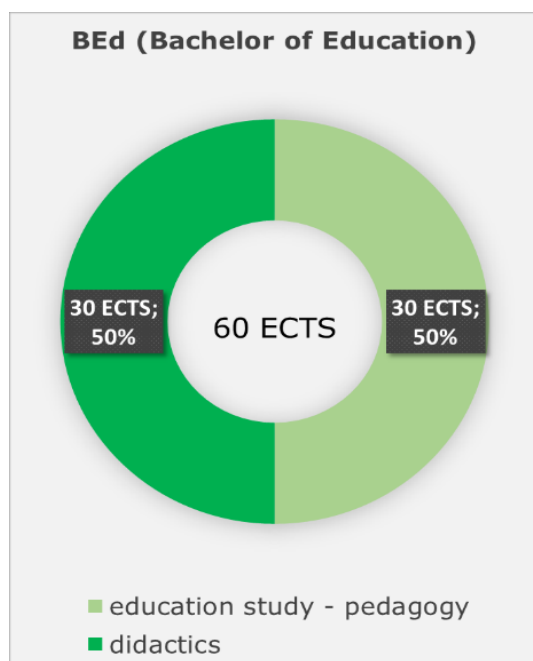
### 3.2 TEACHER EDUCATION FOR HIGHER AND INTERMEDIATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (FULL-TIME SCHOOLS) WITH FOCUS ON TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Before the start of the teacher education with the focus on technical education for higher and intermediate vocational education, a master's degree in a technical domain occurs as a first obligation. Together with that, another requirement for teaching is three years of working experience in a relevant business field. These two points are, next to other key capabilities, very important for a becoming teacher because the theoretical knowledge would be not enough without the practical experience and the same counts for the other way around.

After these obligations are fulfilled, it is allowed to start teaching at the above specified schools, but under the restriction, that parallel to the teaching job, the Bachelor of Education (BEd) at a university college of teacher education will be started and completed.

The workload is 60 ECTS, which consist out of 30 ECTS education studies and pedagogy plus 30 ECTS didactic courses (see Figure 6).





**Figure 6.** Percentage division of ECTS at Bachelor of Education Program (Own figure based on Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, n.d)

It also includes a bachelor's thesis and a practical phase. The practical phase occurs during the whole duration of the studies and tries to link theoretical, teaching-relevant contents and educational-practical elements. The internships at different schools shall serve as an orientation in the professional field, as for example the implementation of methodical-didactic considerations and the testing of various areas of responsibility of teachers. The outcome will be reflected by a cooperation between the teachers of the university and the school. The practical phase is not just about professional, but also about strong psychosocial support in the beginning of the teacher profession.

The possibility to already start teaching after the master's degree and three years of working experience has been opened in order to help those future teachers, who first did their technical studies, started working and got the idea of becoming a teacher only some years after the end of their studies. They are able to do their bachelor's studies, which is necessary to become a teacher, while they have already started with teaching, which they decided to do from now on. Another reason for this way of education is that the people, who knew from the beginning of their studies that they want to become a teacher, have the chance to start as fast as possible with their dream job.

### 3.3 TEACHER EDUCATION FOR PART-TIME SCHOOLS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (DUAL TRAINING)

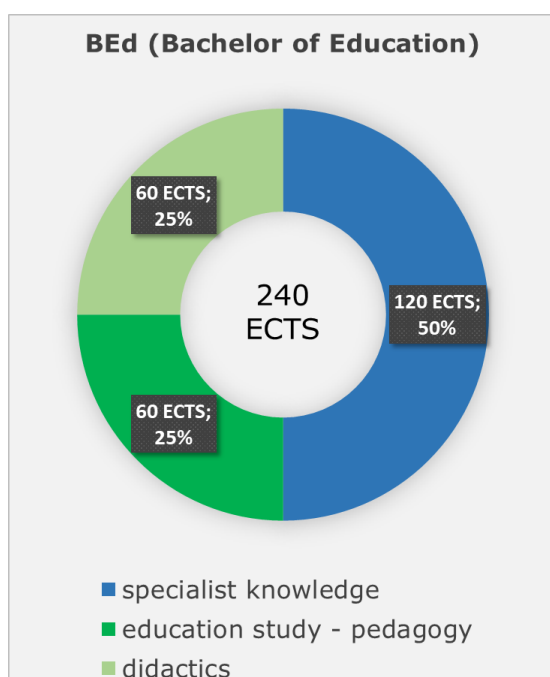
Before it is allowed to start with the teacher education for part-time schools for vocational education, also better known as dual training, a certificated vocational qualification, for example the "Meisterprüfung" (next step after the examination in front of professional

experts in the end of the dual training program) is obligated. Together with that, the necessary condition of three years working experience in a relevant business field represents another requirement for teaching.

After these obligations are fulfilled it is again allowed to start teaching at the above specified schools, but under the restriction that parallel to the teaching job the Bachelor of Education (BEd) at a university college of teacher education will be started and completed.

The workload is 240 ECTS, which consist out of

- 120 ECTS specialist knowledge;
- 60 ECTS education studies and pedagogy;
- 60 ECTS didactic courses (see Figure 7.



**Figure 7.** Percentage division of ECTS at Bachelor of Education Program (Own figure based on Pädagogische Hochschule Wien, n.d.)

It also includes a bachelor's thesis and a practical phase (find further information about the practical phase above in the end of section 3.2). It can be seen that the bachelor's programme for the teacher education for the dual training consists of more ECTS as the teacher education for full-time schools with the focus on technical education. This is because the becoming teachers for full-time schools with the focus on technical education have already a master's degree in a technical domain and, therefore, more detailed theoretical knowledge than the former, which they need to teach their students at school. The becoming teachers for the dual training system need to catch up with this theoretical knowledge and therefore they have to do 120 ECTS in the sector specialist knowledge. Additionally, the becoming teachers for full-time schools with the focus on technical education also gain a special didactic and educational

knowledge during the many group projects that they have to do during their studies. This is the reason why the parts of education studies and pedagogy and didactic courses contain also more ECTS during the teacher education for the dual system. This way of education shall help people, who want to become teachers and do not already have a degree from university, to become teachers faster and not only after some years of studying at a university.

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#### 4 VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION – GOVERNANCE IN AUSTRIA

In Austria three main Institutions participate in the vocational education governance.

- First of all, the **universities and university colleges** are responsible for the study contents and the conduction of the vocational teacher education.
- The **Ministry of Education** represents the government's perspective and is responsible for the school-type-specific curricula-development and for the general administration and conception of the school system (strategic planning) in accordance with the government-cabinet and the relevant stakeholders (industry, commercial-chambers, etc.). The Ministry of Education is therefore responsible for all matters regarding the public education in Austria (e. g. general and vocational education, post-secondary education and the administration of the pedagogical universities).
- The **directorate of education** is responsible for the operative conduction of the school law. This includes the implementation of quality assurance, school supervision and educational controlling, as well as the implementation of the employment law and the right to represent staff from public schools and other federal employees in public schools (Bundesministerium Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, online).

##### **Universities and University colleges:**

In each federal state at least one institution is located, where it is possible to attend a teacher education program for the different school types and subjects. As already mentioned earlier in this paper, there is a difference between the teacher training for vocational full-times schools (without company-based training) and vocational part-time schools (in combination with dual training). Therefore, two different institutions are responsible for teacher education: universities and special teacher training colleges (also called 'University Colleges of Teacher Education' or in German: Pädagogische Hochschulen).

The following table shows the responsible Institutions depending on the required academic title and the according school type/subject:

**Table 1.** Educational requirements to different categories of VET teacher (overview display based on own research)

School Type/Subject		Required Academic Title	Responsible Institution
<b>(full-time) Schools for higher and intermediate Vocational Education</b>	Schools with focus on <b>business education</b>	Master's degree in „business education“ ( <b>MSc</b> )	Departments/Institutes for Business Education at four universities across Austria (specialist + pedagogical and didactical study content) (WU in Vienna, Linz in Upper Austria, Graz in Styria, Innsbruck in Tyrol)
	Schools with focus on <b>technical education</b>	Master's degree in a technical domain ( <b>MSc</b> )	Different universities across Austria (only focus on technical specialist knowledge, no pedagogical study content)
		+ Bachelor of Education ( <b>Bed</b> ) – <i>parallel to the job</i>	University Colleges of Teacher Education
<b>(part-time) Schools for Vocational Education (Dual Training)</b>		Bachelor of Education ( <b>Bed</b> ) – <i>parallel to the job</i>	(only pedagogical and didactical study content)

In order to become a teacher for business-subjects at a full-time school for higher and intermediate vocational education, a Master's degree from one of the four study-programs at Austrian universities is required. (Universities that offer a Master's Degree in Business Education are summarized in the table below:

**Table 2.** Austrian universities, which provide a Master's Degree in Business Education (overview display based on own research)

University	Responsible Department/Institute
<b>Vienna:</b> Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Wien)	Institute for Business Education <a href="https://www.wu.ac.at/wipaed">https://www.wu.ac.at/wipaed</a>
<b>Linz:</b> Johannes Kepler Universität Linz	Abteilung für Wirtschafts- und Berufspädagogik <a href="http://wipaed.jku.at/studium/">http://wipaed.jku.at/studium/</a>

<b>Graz:</b> University of Graz	Institute for Business Education <a href="https://wirtschaftspaedagogik.uni-graz.at/de/">https://wirtschaftspaedagogik.uni-graz.at/de/</a>
<b>Innsbruck:</b> University of Innsbruck	Institute for Business Education <a href="https://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/wipaed/">https://www.uibk.ac.at/iol/wipaed/</a>

The **universities and the University Colleges of Teacher Education** are independent and free in their decision-making process when it comes to the content of the different courses and teacher education programs. The state respectively the government (Ministry of Education) has no direct authority to issue directives. Still, it is of course common practice, that the ministry for education and the universities consult each other on a regular basis, in order to achieve study-programs that are accepted at the market and work in correspondence with the current changes of the school-curricula. A close cooperation between the stakeholders is very common in Austria. However, the ministry has no official authority when it comes to the vocational teacher education programs at universities.

#### **Ministry of Education and Directorate of Education:**

The **government respectively the Ministry of Education** is responsible for the various curricula of the different school types. Of course, the universities and special teacher training colleges build their study contents upon these curricula, since the becoming teachers have to teach these contents in the future. Therefore, it can be seen, that the government shows a direction and gives advises how the teacher education institutions could manage the courses and study contents. The teacher education institutions are free to take the advises. In the different school types the government respectively the ministry of education is on the other hand entitled to make changes or make important decisions which affect the teachers, principals, students and the study content of the schools.

The **directorate of education**, an administrative authority from the government, helps the ministry of education to do the operative work in the different schools in the different states of Austria. Therefore, nine different directorate exists (one for each federal state).

In summary it can be seen, that the universities and University Collages of Teacher Education are independent from the ministry of education regarding the development of the teacher-education curricula and free in decision making regarding the study content in their different teacher education programs although there usually is a close coordination between the stakeholders.

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## OVERVIEW OF GOVERNANCE IN VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN GERMANY

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### OUTLINE

1. Vocational education in Germany
  - 1.1. Dual system
  - 1.2. School-based system
2. Vocational teacher education
  - 2.1. Framework
  - 2.2. Structure
3. Role of different actors in governance of vocational teacher education
  - 3.1. State and federal states (*Länder*)
  - 3.2. Universities and HEIs
  - 3.3. Vocational schools
  - 3.4. State colleges for Training and Further Education of Teachers (*Seminars*)

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### ACRONYMS

HE – higher education

HEI – higher education institutions

KMK – Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs

VET – Vocational education and training

VTE – vocational teacher education

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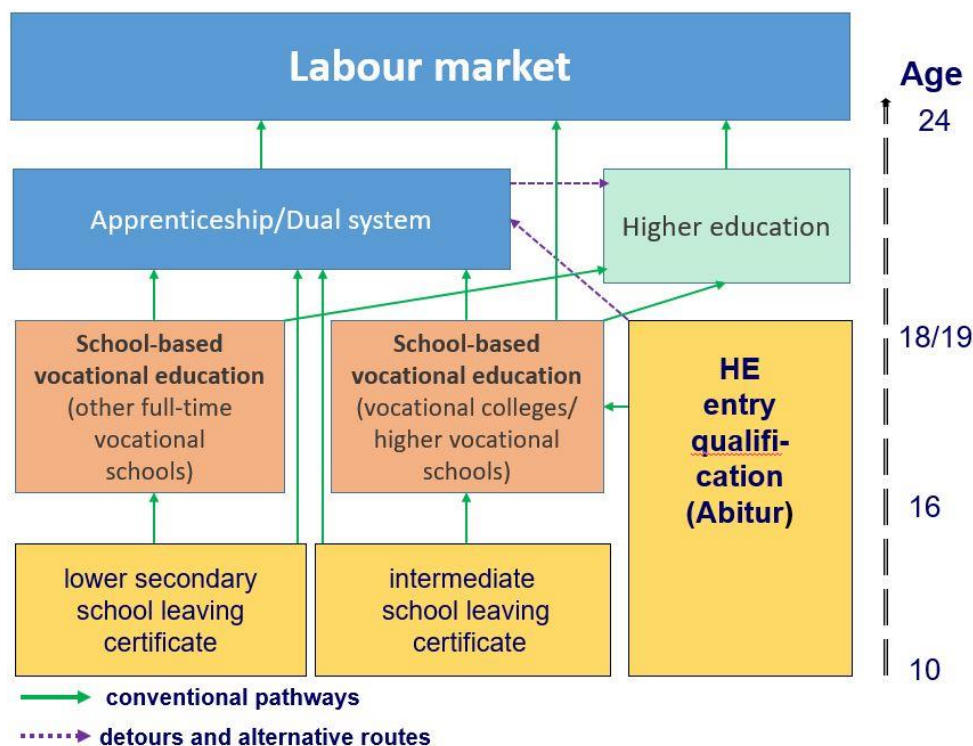
## 1 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN GERMANY

In contrast with other countries, vocational teacher education (VTE) and professional requirements for prospective teachers in Germany are more institutionalised and also more complex than in many other systems: a relevant master's degree, at least one year of relevant practical experience in the subject specialisation, at least 18 months of practical training - all in all, this leads to a minimum of 7,5 years to become a licensed teacher at a vocational school. In order to provide such training, the coordination and clear function division between different actors takes place. All this is partly due to the complexity of the German vocational education and training system (VET), both part-time and full-time, which is the work destination of future VET teachers.

The vocational education system in Germany is foremost famous for its dual system. However, the architecture of German VET is more complex and is realised in different subsystems (see



Figure 1), which effectively supply the employment sector with qualified workers. Besides the dual system, there is a second sub-system, a network of full-time vocational schools with various functions, which deliver school-based vocational education.



**Figure 1.** The German education system (own figure based on Deissinger, 2019, p. 150)

The next subsections introduce the different forms of vocational education in Germany and outline their key features.

### 1.1 DUAL SYSTEM

The dual system in Germany preserved its roots from the classical apprenticeship model, which was practised in most European countries until the Industrial Revolution. Unlike in other European countries, the specific learning culture of the apprenticeship system in Germany was not lost during industrialisation and laid the foundation for a modern dual system (Deißinger, 2008; Greinert, 2002). It now serves as an institutional solution to the problem of skill formation and socialisation of young people in the country that do not want or are not able to proceed to higher education.

The main function of the dual system is to impart initial training to school leavers in a given range of declared trades or recognized training occupations (*Ausbildungsberufe*) by using two sites of learning: the training company (*Ausbildungsbetrieb*) and the part-time vocational school (*Berufsschule*), with compulsory school attendance for all young people under the age

of 18 not attending a higher or a full-time vocational school, hence covering virtually all who have entered an apprenticeship. Instruction can be part time during the week or on a block-release basis. Compulsory instruction in the part-time vocational school is both laid down in the various federal state school acts and indirectly regulated in the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsbildungsgesetz*), which defines the duties of both parties out of the training contract. When it comes to working time and working conditions, the Youth Employment Protection Act (*Jugendarbeitsschutzgesetz*) obliges employers to release young people to attend the vocational school during normal working hours. The two learning sites correspond with two legal responsibilities due to the German federal political system (Deissinger, 2010, p. 449).

Within the dual system, the state's role is clearly defined but extends to both 'learning venues'. The 16 State Education Acts (*Schulgesetze*) set up the frame, among other things, for curricula and compulsion. The federal states work out syllabuses for vocational and general subjects for each occupation. The so-called 'training ordinances' (*Ausbildungsordnungen*) which underlie these curricula outline the didactical programme for in-company training to which companies have to adhere, although flexibility ensures that different technologies and organisational factors are considered (Deissinger, 2015, p. 562).

Although the dual institutional principle certainly is the striking feature, the working principles of Germany's dual system also comprise at least three more dimensions, which render it the character of a special kind of dual system (Deissinger, 2010, p. 450; Deissinger & Gonon, 2016):

- The dual system is a well understood and socially accepted pathway into employment as it follows a traditional pattern of skill formation recurring to the medieval mode of apprenticeship training. This means that training is workplace-led and predominantly practical and that work experience during the training period is seen as an essential asset of this kind of VET. It also implies the notion that the system works in accordance with skill requirements defined around the workplace since it is not task-based but occupation-based.
- Although traditional at its core, the modern German dual system is also subject to the involvement of the state with regard to the nature and quality of occupational standards as well as to legal conditions underlying apprenticeship training. The German training culture is based on the notion that an apprenticeship should be based on an underpinning pedagogical understanding, which sets it apart from normal work.
- As the government sets quality standards with respect to in-company training only in a formal manner, other social groups have a major influence on the dual system. This means that public, private, and semi-private institutions use long-established modes of cooperation within the system and that employers and unions normally take the initiative with respect to training regulations and their revision or modernization.

## 1.2 SCHOOL-BASED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The dual system remains the major pathway for obtaining occupational qualifications and the number of its participants outweighs the number in full-time vocational schools (see Table 1). Yet recently, academization imparted a new meaning of school-based vocational education, increasing its student's body. In some federal states (e.g. Baden Wurttemberg), the number of students at full-time vocational schools has taken over the number of apprentices in the dual system.

**Table 1.** *Some comparative figures in German VET in 2017/18 (Destatis. Statistisches Bundesamt, 2019)*

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Baden-Württemberg</b>
<b>Apprentices in the dual system</b>	1.411.218	191.266
<b>Students in secondary full-time vocational schools (w/o part-time vocational schools)</b>	1.079.244	220.114

Full-time vocational schools perform different functions. They are open to school-leavers who have not managed to find an apprenticeship place in the dual system due to various reasons. Firstly, they perform the function of social preparation (mostly one to two years), which means enabling young people to go for an apprenticeship by improving their stakes in the training market. Secondly, they provide further education (mostly two to three years), which means leading young people to achieve a higher school qualification level (including, e.g., the Abitur). The number of students with aspirations for higher education is growing and some types of full-time vocational schools (e.g. vocational college) also offer, apart from the occupational qualification, a higher school certificate (hybrid qualifications). Thirdly, full-time vocational schools offer as well vocational training (mostly two to three years), which means that young people achieve a portable occupational qualification outside the dual system. In terms of vocational training, school-based VET is considered complex since vocational full-time schools may offer courses leading to qualifications either within or outside the scope of the Vocational Training Act. In addition, some schools deliver entry-level training based on specialised federal regulations, such as in the area of health occupations, whilst most full-time vocational schools (*Berufsfachschulen*) attract a wide range of students and aspirations (Deissinger, 2004, p.82).

The various institutional sub-types of school-based VET in Germany are numerous and differ from federal state to federal state. This is explained by the fact that most of school-based occupations are defined by the federal states due to their autonomy in matters of education and culture. Some among these institutions, however, are subject to federal legislation, such as most of the so-called "health occupations".

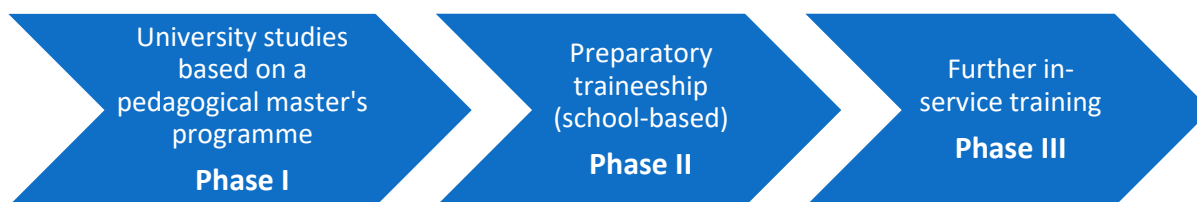
Against this background we can point out what may be called the *functional diversity of school-based VET* (Deißinger, 2019; Seeber & Michaelis, 2015). In a more in-depth perspective, it is possible to distinguish *six subtypes of vocational schools/courses* in Germany (with only the first constituting the dual apprenticeship system):

- I. Part-time vocational schools (see chapter 1.1) which provide underpinning theoretical knowledge and general education for apprentices in the dual system (*Berufsschulen*)
- II. Full-time schools that qualify young people in so-called „school occupations“, mainly "assistant occupations", based on federal state law (*Berufsfachschulen, Berufskollegs*) - These types of schools account for 6.7% of beginners of school-based VET in Germany or 16.9% respectively including those with hybrid qualifications (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, 2017, p. 197)
- III. Full-time schools that provide skill formation for young people via so-called „school occupations“ based on the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsfachschulen*) - These types of schools account for just 2.1% of beginners of school-based VET in Germany (ibid.)
- IV. School-based formalised training leading to a nationally recognized qualification in the health and human services sector (hospital nurses, nurses for the elderly, physiotherapists) (*Schulen des Gesundheitswesens*) - This is the largest category of school-based training and accounts for 81% of VET beginners in the school-based system (ibid.)
- V. Full-time courses within the "transition system" (mostly aiming at vocational preparation and/or bridging general education and apprenticeships) (*Berufsvorbereitungsjahr* and similar courses)

In 2016, nearly 300,000 young people had to enter a “measure” in the transition system. Some of these measures traditionally are offered by vocational schools, including the first year of courses in *Berufsfachschulen* (not fully qualifying) or the Vocational Preparation Year (BMBF 2017, p. 45). On the other hand of the spectrum, we have those institutions that lead to educational qualifications (lower secondary school standard, intermediate secondary school standard, university of applied sciences entry qualification, general university entry qualification, e.g. in *Wirtschaftsgymnasien*). It is obvious that teachers in VET are challenged with a heterogeneity of both students and courses which is far more demanding than in general education. With the perspective of upgrading school qualifications, vocational schools in Germany also provide a specific kind of "second pathway" which softens the typical effects of a highly selective secondary school system (Pietsch & Stubbe, 2007). With this function, schools/courses also comply with academic aspirations of young people though they also may lead into an apprenticeship.

## 2 VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

In Germany, VET teachers are expected to be *experts* in their field of study and *educational specialists/pedagogues*. Also, they are expected to have practical experience and be able to treat realistic problems which their students may face in their working life (Deissinger, Braun, & Melnyk, 2018). Therefore, their professional competences are manifold and are acquired in the course of a three-phase training (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Three phases of teacher training in Germany (Frommberger & Lange, 2018, p. 11)

The other key word of vocational teacher education in Germany is polyvalence, which means that the graduates of university-based VTE programmes must have enough subject-specific knowledge and skills, in order to be competitive on the labour market (Tramm, 2001). The following subsections describe the regulations, which generally frame VTE in Germany and look at the structural issues of vocational teacher education.

### 2.1. FRAMEWORK

The legal norms, which frame the vocational teacher education in Germany are the Framework Agreement for VET Teachers (*Rahmenvereinbarung über die Ausbildung und Prüfung für ein Lehramt der Sekundarstufe II (berufliche Fächer) oder für die beruflichen Schulen (Lehramtstyp 5)*), where educational and qualification requirements for VET teachers are described, and the Standards for teacher education in educational sciences (*Standards für die Lehrerbildung: Bildungswissenschaften*) which outline necessary pedagogical competences of teachers (Frommberger & Lange, 2018).

According to the Framework Agreement, vocational teacher training may be carried out at higher education institutions (normally universities), which provide scientific knowledge as well as professional practice that are meant to lead to the acquisition of professional and pedagogical competences. The period of study is at least six semesters in the bachelor's programme and at least two semesters in the master's programme. Including practical school studies, this amounts to 10 semesters in total, which equal a study effort of 300 ECTS credits. It is obligatory to have at least 12 months of the relevant subject specific experience of work (*Rahmenvereinbarung über die Ausbildung und Prüfung für ein Lehramt der Sekundarstufe II (berufliche Fächer) oder für die beruflichen Schulen (Lehramtstyp 5)*, 1995).

The study programme at higher education institutions comprises:

- Educational sciences with a focus on vocational or business education and training as well as specialised didactics for the vocational subject and the second subject of teaching and school practical studies amounting to 90 ECTS;
- Courses of the professional specialisation (first subject) as well as courses for teaching the second subject, totalling 180 ECTS credits;
- BA and MA theses, covering 30 ECTS. The federal states may deviate from this norm by 10 credits less or more, but a total number of 300 ECTS must be achieved.

The study ends with a Master of Education degree or the First State Examination, or, in the case of the universities in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, a Master of Science in Business or Technical Education.

The duration of the preparatory service is at least 12 and at most 24 months, notwithstanding any professional specialisation. Practical school experience and comparable subjects can be credited towards the preparatory service, which is completed with the [Second] State Examination for those who want to enter the school system. By passing the [Second] State Examination, the teacher's qualification is formally completed. The task of the preparatory service is to provide practical school training based on scientific education acquired at higher education institutions (universities).

The third phase has a particular place in the German school system. In-service training is intended to ensure that the professional skills of teachers are continuously developed and that personnel development in the professional and pedagogical fields is in line with the state of the art in science and practical skills and knowledge and also up-to-date to the practice in companies (Rahmenvereinbarung über die Ausbildung und Prüfung für ein Lehramt der Sekundarstufe II (berufliche Fächer) oder für die beruflichen Schulen (Lehramtstyp 5), 1995).

With the purpose of ensuring high quality teaching in the VET system and avoiding extreme heterogeneity preconditioned by the autonomy of federal states, in 2004 the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) issued the Standards for teachers in the sphere of educational sciences (revision as of 16.05.2019) where main competences are defined and described. They identify focal criteria for studies and training and assign in detail, which competences have to be achieved during the first two phases of VTE. Together with the requirements for the subject sciences and subject didactics, the standards for the educational sciences are crucial for the accreditation and evaluation of teacher training programmes.

The competences are grouped into four categories:

- teaching places emphasis on the correct and relevant subject knowledge;
- bringing up implies abilities to foster the personal development of students;



- assessment means abilities to evaluate students' knowledge fairly;
- innovating focuses on the constant further competence development with regard to social, cultural and technological developments (Standards für die Lehrerbildung: Bildungswissenschaften, 2004).

The standards in detail describe the pedagogical competences (*pedagogue*) although the competences of the *expert* have equal importance. Subject specific knowledge about the subject matters being taught (*expert*) is explicitly mentioned in the first competence category and refer to the university curricula of related disciplines such as Business Administration which also form the basis for teacher training programmes. In addition to formal knowledge, however, VET teachers are also required to possess expertise of the professional practice their students will be facing in the future. Skills in the professional fields of the corresponding occupations and a deep understanding of vocational learning processes are essential features of VET teachers' professional knowledge as experts, especially of those working at full-time school-based vocational schools, where students do not have as much company-based practice as apprentices in the dual system (Deissinger et al., 2018, p. 41). The acquisition of professional knowledge and skills is, firstly, ensured by the specialisation courses (subject specific courses comprise up to 180 ECTS), secondly, by the practice prescribed by the university curricula, and thirdly by the obligatory work experience (internships) comprising at least 12 months as prescribed by the Framework Agreement. The majority of student teachers in Germany hold an occupational qualification in their field (Grollmann, 2008), so they begin their first phase of teacher training with already having gained the relevant professional experience, e.g. through an apprenticeship programme in the dual system or a Dual University study programme (Deissinger, 2005).

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## 2.2 STRUCTURE

Against the background of the implementation of the Bologna declaration, three models of vocational teacher education may now be distinguished in the German VTE system:

- the consecutive model, which integrates the courses for the major subject of teaching, courses for the second (minor) subject of teaching and vocational education/didactics at both cycles of study (bachelor's and master's levels);
- the top-up-model, in which vocational education/didactics courses and the course for the second subject are introduced only at master's level;
- the blended model, which offers courses in both teaching subjects at bachelor's level and a module of vocational education and didactics, available also to students of other departments. At master's level students deepen knowledge in all three blocks (in the major subject, the second subject and vocational education)

The dominant model is the "consecutive model", which preserved some features of the former university Diploma programme for vocational teachers before the Bologna process



(Barabasch & Watt-Malcolm, 2013; Bünning & Shilela, 2006, p. 15). The advantage of two cycle teacher education programmes is that students can change their decision to pursue the teaching career and check other available options for the Master’s degree in their specialisation (Barabasch & Watt-Malcolm, 2013, p. 161).

The University degree programmes in VTE usually combine scientific and applied courses that are intertwined thematically and chronologically, leading to a profound education of the graduates as *experts* in their fields and to the theoretical and basic practical competences of a *pedagogue*. The courses that aim at expertise in the teaching subject(s) comprise scientific elements and cover the bigger part of ECTS credits (180). Scientific courses focusing on pedagogy include theoretical contents of pedagogy and didactics in general, but also didactics of the specific subject(s). In order to create learning settings that foster the combination of theory and practice for the expert as well as the pedagogue, practice-oriented theoretical courses and internships at vocational schools and companies are mandatory components in the study programme (Deissinger, Braun & Melnyk, 2018, p. 43). The content of the study may vary not only between different federal states but also between different universities. This can lead to problems with the recognition of the teaching qualification in other federal states. The distribution of courses within a typical VTE programme is presented in Table 2.

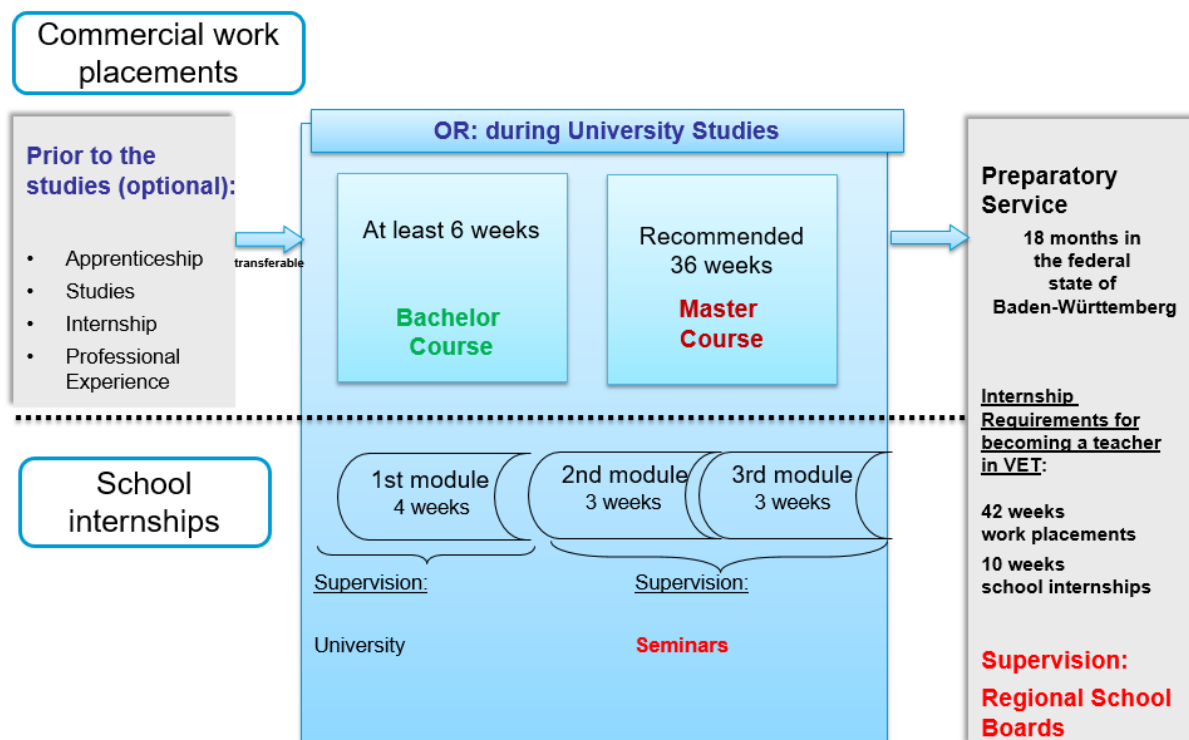
**Table 2.** *Distribution of fields of study in VTE (own figure based on (Fasshauer, 2010, pp. 240–241)*

Block of courses	Share in %
Professional specialisation (major and minor subjects of teaching)	54-66
Didactics	6-13
Pedagogy/educational sciences	13-18
School-based practice-oriented studies	5-7
Final theses	8-13
<i>Total (300 ECTS)</i>	<i>100</i>

One of the core changes of the Bologna process was the introduction of the modular approach to the study organisation, which allows flexibility and permeability of programmes. Though most universities adopted the consecutive model that structures the sequence of blocks of courses according to the logic of the university Diploma programme for vocational teachers, the variations in terms of study organisation, its chronological order and contents at bachelor’s and master’s levels may account for up to twelve percentage points of the total ECTS range between different universities (see Table 2).

Both the bachelor’s and the master’s programmes include several internships. Commercial work placements of at least 6 weeks (8 credits) can already be part of the bachelor’s course (e.g. in the case of the University of Konstanz in Business Education). They are meant to offer settings for applying knowledge learnt at university, for obtaining new practical knowledge in

relevant subjects, for gaining professional experience, and for deepening and broadening competences (Deissinger et al., 2018, p. 47). Thus, they primarily serve to link theory and practice but also include aspects of expert knowledge. The school internship may take different forms. Some federal states have introduced a practical semester when students already learn to teach at vocational schools. Other federal states or even universities have decided to split it up into several modules. The structure here is more complicated since it requires a lot of coordination efforts between the institutions involved (see Figure 3).



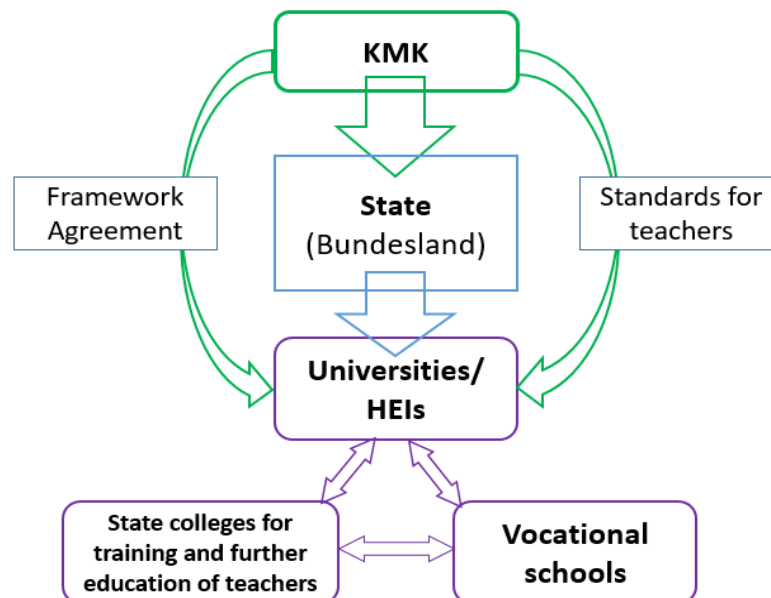
**Figure 3.** Internship requirements for entrance to Preparatory Service (own figure)

The chart shows the overall structure in the case of the Business Education Master and the underlying Bachelor at the University of Konstanz. Here students enrolled in the bachelor's programme have to complete an internship of 4 weeks duration at a vocational school. With respect to the phases of teaching practice at vocational schools integrated into the degree it is aimed at linking teacher education at the university with the subsequent teaching preparatory service under the responsibility of the state colleges of training and further education (*Seminare für Ausbildung und Fortbildung der Lehrkräfte in Baden-Württemberg*) (Verordnung des Kultusministeriums über den Vorbereitungsdienst und die Zweite Staatsprüfung für die Laufbahn des höheren Schuldienstes an beruflichen Schulen, 2004). The master's programme, therefore, includes two more modules of practical teaching at vocational schools with 3 weeks duration each. The form of the practice is job shadowing in the beginning to active teaching during the second module. Thus, students gradually develop their competences as pedagogues. During the active teaching, approaches change as the

pedagogical skills of students grow. In the beginning, students practice the teacher-centred approach, which is less demanding for beginners. However, during the last module they are expected to be able to apply student-centred teaching and instructional design of lessons. The trainees also gain experience outside the regular lessons by taking part in events like school conferences, parents' evenings, school celebrations, etc. In contrast to the first school-based internship (bachelor's programme), the second and third internships are organized by the state colleges for training and further education of teachers. The teaching is supervised by a mentor from the regional state college. Students receive feedbacks on their conducted lessons as impulses for further reflections and improvements (Deissinger et al., 2018, p. 47). Thus, three modules constitute the practical semester, which should help learning teachers to understand their professional inclinations with respect to teaching (Deißinger & Seifried, 2010).

### 3 ROLE OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN GOVERNANCE OF VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

The complexity of the structure of vocational teacher education in Germany and the need and accountability for high-quality teaching in vocational education requires the involvement of different actors into this process who share responsibilities for meeting the social and economic demand for well-trained and competent vocational teachers. Some of the actors directly participate in the training of teachers, others set the framework for conducting such training or the working environment for teachers. Generally, however, it is important that their interests become part of a complex system of coordination between different institutions (see Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Actors in the governance of vocational teacher education (own figure based on Michalk, 2017)

The main actors in the governance of VTE comprise the Ministry of Education (federal state), the national KMK as a roof organisation of education ministries, state colleges for the training and further education of teachers, higher education institutions/universities offering courses in VTE, vocational schools (cities/districts), and, in the case of Baden-Württemberg, the federal state centre for school quality and teacher education.

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### 3.1 STATE AND FEDERAL STATES (*LÄNDER*)

The interests of the federal state (*Bundesland*) are represented by the KMK, which consists of the Ministers of Education from all 16 federal states. The state hereby exercises its role by setting educational cross-cutting and subject-specific standards for school education (including full-time and part-time VET). Therefore, it also indirectly influences general occupational standards (e.g. two-phase training, further professional development etc.) although company-based training is subject to federal legislation (Deissinger, 1996). International educational policy also plays an important role when it comes to vocational education (e.g. the Bologna process, Erasmus+ programmes etc.). The Federal Government in consultation with the federal states can initiate general reforms. For example, in 2013 the Federal Government and the federal states unanimously adopted the joint the program "Quality offensive teacher training" to initiate reforms and promote new developments in teacher education (Bund-Länder-Vereinbarung über ein gemeinsames Programm "Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung" gemäß Artikel 91 b des Grundgesetzes, 2013).

However, education lies within the responsibilities of the federal states, thus, the federal states issue the specific laws on teacher training (*Lehrerausbildungsgesetze*) and on school matters (*Schulgesetze*). The legal status of teachers, whether they are employees or state officials, and their salaries are also defined on the level of federal states (Michalk, 2017).

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### 3.2 UNIVERSITIES AND HEIS

Universities and HEIs offering courses in Vocational Pedagogy (e.g. Business Education in Konstanz) develop, in line with the teacher training standards described above, the scientific/subject curricula. They realise the first phase of VTE. In order to provide high-quality training of teachers, course curricula have to be based on the newest scientific findings. Universities and HEIs have academic freedom in teaching and methods, that is why different parallel study structures can exist not only within the different federal states but also even within one state. Universities are free to define the content of the study in such a way that students manage to acquire the necessary competences for future work as a vocational teacher.

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### 3.3 VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Vocational schools (cities/districts) are responsible for taking teacher training students and mentoring their internships as well as training those entering the Preparatory Service.

Vocational schools provide also empirical material for conducting research and updating the content of university programmes.

### 3.4 STATE COLLEGES FOR TRAINING AND FURTHER EDUCATION OF TEACHERS (SEMINARS)

State colleges for the training and further education of teachers offer courses, which frame the school practice/internships in the bachelor's and master's programmes. They interact with vocational schools and university and serve as a communication bridge between these institutions. They are solely responsible for the second phase of vocational teacher education - i.e. the Preparatory Service. Within the modular structure described above, however, they are also involved (in the case of the University of Konstanz) to offer theoretical seminars for the second and third module of school practice. This happens in the classrooms of the university, but lecturers from the university are not involved. This structural feature once again underlines the complexity of the VTE system where decentralized responsibilities merge successfully though not without tensions.

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## VET IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW ON THE GOVERNANCE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND TEACHER EDUCATION FOR THE UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION

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### ACRONYMS

CPIA - Provincial Center for Adult Education (*Centro Provinciale di Istruzione degli Adulti*)

CVT - Continuing Vocational Training

leFP - Vocational Education and Training (*Istruzione e Formazione Professionale*)

IFTS - Higher Technical Education and Training (*Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore*)

ITS - Higher Technical Institute(s) (*Istituto Tecnico Superiore*)

ISCED - International Standard Classification of Education (standard UNESCO)

EQF - European Qualification Framework

VET - Vocational Education and Training

MIUR - Ministry of Education, University and Research (*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca*)

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## 1 THE ITALIAN VET SYSTEM

The role of the system of education and training is pivotal in granting the maximization of opportunities within the process of change investing the maintaining and growth of occupational levels, the improvement of the matching between competences offer and demand, as well as the growth of the quality of occupation. In parallel, a well-gearred system of education helps minimising social risks, such as inoccupation, as well as facilitating transactions in the job market (Guarascio e Sacchi, 2017). Moreover, granting a high-quality education and training offer is fundamental in creating, disseminating and using knowledge (World Bank, 2017), so that the capacity of innovation of companies and the chance of granting persistent levels of economic growth relevantly depends on the capacity of the education and training system of providing the basic knowledge for the development of innovation processes (Alessandrini, 2017).

While primary education (in Italy Primary school and lower Secondary school) represents the basis for the development of reading, writing, and cognitive skills, secondary education (including lyceums, vocational, and technical schools) is fundamental in the development of specific competences (such as technologic skills), as well as of the attitude to learn and solve problems, the capacity of working in team, and cooperation. Tertiary education and high-specialization paths, then, endow the population with both innovation capacities, and the ability of disseminating and enriching one's own competences, so to support the general development and bring benefit to the process of change.

In recent years, the education system has changed towards more flexibility, trying to develop in line with the concept of lifelong learning, identifying learning as a continuous process that interests the individual since the first educational experiences to the age of retirement and beyond. As contents and modalities of learning keep changing along with production technologies and organization modalities in fields as production, consumes, and communication, the bonds and capacities of feedback between the job market and the education system should favour the dynamic change of the latter, in order to provide the population with competences useful to maximise opportunities in the job market. Technology transformations, moreover, especially in ICT, have highlighted the importance of high

education paths such as PhD and High Specialization Schools to strengthen the bonds between companies and educational institutions.

The recent Industria 4.0 Italian government plan explicitly foresees dedicated incentives to favour the investment in educational paths designed to endow workers (and all subjects entering the job market) with the necessary competences to exploit the productive potential of new technologies, imagining training within the companies or coordinating activities between institutions and companies. A flexible education offer, then, is structured around business formation, organizational flexibility, competences updating, recognition of informal learning and the diffusion of technological education within companies in a lifelong learning perspective (Di Rienzo, 2012). Professional education aims at the development of key-competences to influence the growth processes of both companies and the economic system; measures intend to focus the attention on the education and training demand rather than on the offer, to face both the contraction of the request of intellectual/technical profession, and the widening of the occupation rates on low-skilled professions through dedicated paths of professional education and training (Istruzione e Formazione Professionale - leFP).

In Italy, all young people have the right/duty (diritto/dovere) (Law 53/2003, p.7) to education and training for at least 12 years before reaching the age of 18, aiming to obtain a qualification. Compulsory education lasts 10 years, up to 16, and includes the first two years of upper secondary general education or VET.

From a European perspective, the term “education and training” refers to all types and levels of general education and vocational education and training (VET). VET can take place at secondary, post-secondary or tertiary level in formal education and training, or non-formal settings including active labour market measures, irrespective of the provider or governance scheme. VET addresses young people and adults and can be school-based, company-based or combine school- and company-based learning (apprenticeships). The term VET, therefore, also covers the technical and vocational schools.

In Italy, the term “vocational education and training” defines specific programmes primarily under the authority area of the regions and autonomous provinces (such as leFP - Istruzione e Formazione Professionale).

At the completion of lower secondary education (age 14), learners sit a state exam to acquire a certificate (EQF level 1) granting them admission to the upper secondary level, having then the opportunity to choose between general education and VET.

At upper secondary level, young people may opt for:

- five-year programmes, including the two last years of compulsory education and three years (under the right/duty of education and training) in:
- high schools (licei), which provide general education programmes (artistic, classical, linguistic, scientific, human sciences, music and dance strands, including figurative arts,

architecture and environment, design, audio visual and multimedia, graphics or stage design in the second period) at upper secondary level;

- technical schools, in which learners can acquire knowledge, skills and competences to carry out technical and administrative tasks;
- vocational schools, which provide specific theoretical and practical preparation enabling learners to carry out qualified tasks in production fields of national interests (Cedefop, 2016).

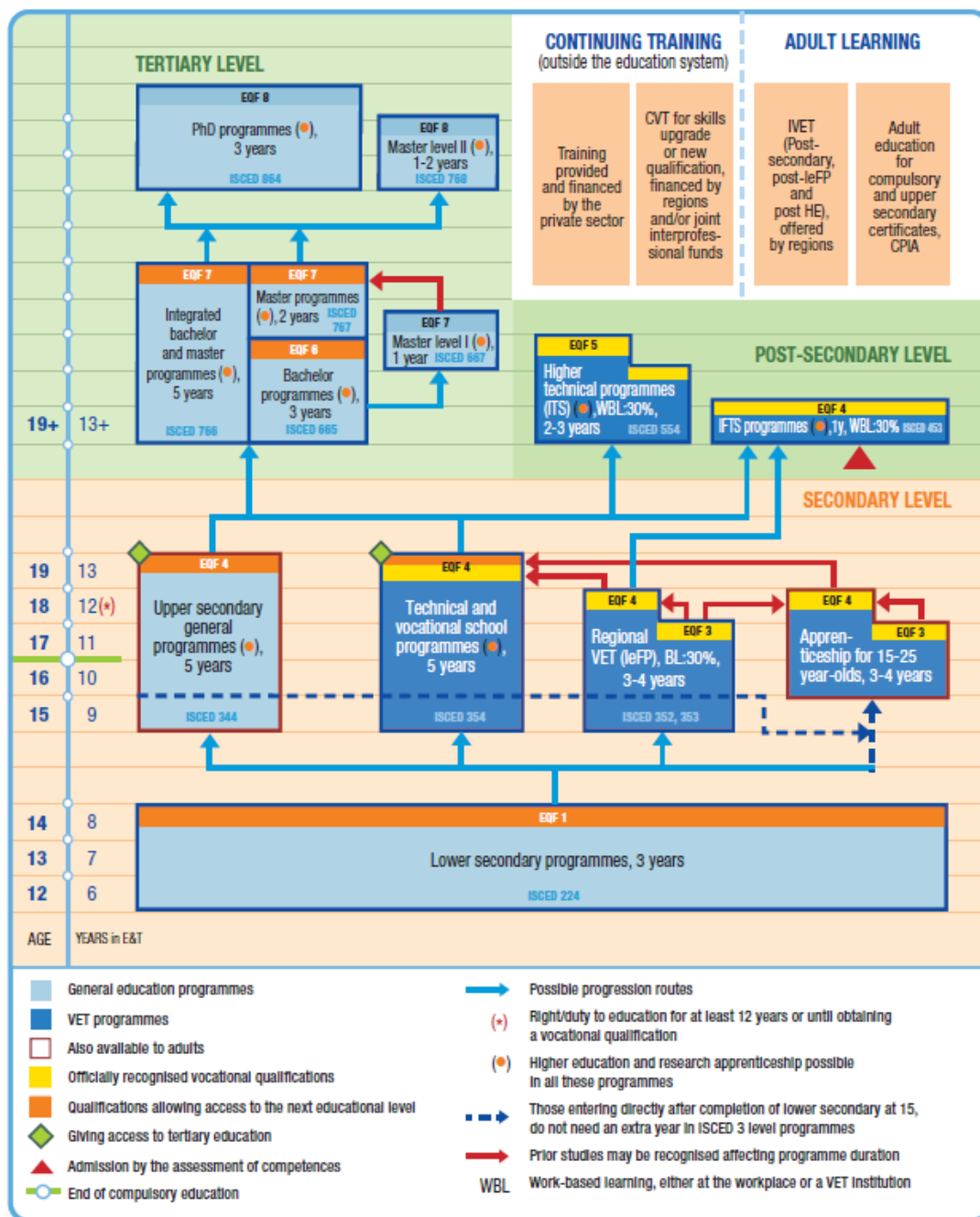
The successful completion of high school, technical and vocational school awards qualifications at EQF level 4; a state leaving-exam opens access to higher education;

- Regional Education and Vocational training courses (IeFP - Istruzione e Formazione Professionale) (3 or 4 years - EQF 3 or 4 respectively);
- an apprenticeship-type scheme (EQF 3 or 4).

At post-secondary level, the Italian system features higher technical training (IFTS - Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore, ITS - Istituto Tecnico Superiore) and short programmes or courses (post-IeFP and others).

VET courses also exist at higher education level.

Tertiary education (ISCED levels 665, 667, 766, 767, 768, 864) is divided into higher education programmes at the university and higher education programmes at non-university institutions. Universities can be public or private, and follow the three cycles of the Bologna structure: Bachelor's Degree (EQF 6); Master's Degree (EQF 7) and Postgraduate specialization courses (EQF 7) or PhD programmes (EQF 8). Higher artistic and musical programmes (in Italian *Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale*) are non-university programmes based on the three-cycle structure (EQF 6, 7, 8).



**Figure 1.** Vocational education and training in Europe – Italy. Cedefop. ReferNet VET in Europe reports. (INAPP et al., 2016).

Figure 1 (INAPP et al. (2016) shows how VET programmes in Italy [blue squares] involve secondary and post-secondary education levels. At a Secondary level, VET paths include:

- Technical and vocational schools (5 years);
- Regional VET (leFP) (3-4 years);
- Apprenticeship to professional qualification and diploma (3-4 years).

At a Post-secondary level, learners can choose between:

- Higher technical education and training (IFTTS) (1 year) and short programmes or courses (post-leFP and other);
- Higher Technical Institutes (ITS) (2-3 years).

The educational supply chains of post-qualification and post-diploma courses provide professional-oriented education and training interventions aimed at subjects of a professional qualification or a 5-years diploma. Differently from leFp, ITS and IFTTS, those courses are not codified by the National Repertoire, as they express the professional needs expressed by the job market on the territory. They are, therefore, heterogeneous in length, financing, type of intervention, and audience.

The post-secondary educational and training offer, which encompasses into two different education branches (IFTTS,ITS), is destined for young people and adults who have a diploma. It aims at promoting professional competences for the job market, while fostering new forms of territorial aggregation, experimenting new didactic methodologies, favouring the learners' active participation and integration among education, enterprise, training and local institutions.

The technologic areas comprised in the educational offer for ITS, leFP and IFTTS are correlated, in function of the so-called “long supply chain of professional education and training”: an integrated system designed to provide young people coming from leFP the chance of following their specialization path. The areas of specialization are:

- Energetic efficiency;
- Sustainable mobility;
- New technologies of life;
- New technologies for Made in Italy (mechanics, fashion, food, home, services to enterprises);
- Innovation technology for cultural heritage and activities;
- Information and Communication Technology.

Italian VET also offers adult education (lifelong learning programmes outside the education system, as well as adult education programmes) and Continuing Vocational Training (CVT).

Adult education includes post-secondary and post-higher education VET courses, organised by the Regions, as well as Education and Training courses for adults, promoted by CPIA (Provincial Centre for Adult Education - Centro provinciale di istruzione degli adulti) in cooperation with educational institutions.

Lifelong learning (CVT - Continuing Vocational Training) is generally promoted and financed by private entities, while updating and requalification are financed by the Regions and/or inter-professional funds. It responds to the Council of Europe recommendation to increase investments in education and training systems, intensifying the efforts to provide wide access

to a quality lifelong learning, and to realize strategies of active ageing allowing the extension of the working life. To this end, it is necessary to ameliorate the formal levels of education, and in parallel to promote the work-based learning systems, potentiating professional training and widening the opportunities for the acknowledgement and validation of qualification and competences acquired out of the formal education circuit (Council of Europe, 2015).

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## 2 VET GOVERNANCE IN ITALY

The development and enhancement of leFP systems through a high participation on the side of Companies, as well as the promotion of work-based learning (WBL) are at the basis of the “Italian way” to the Dual System. The reforms introduced with Law n.107/2015 (la Buona Scuola) and the Decree n. 81/2015 (issued to actuate the enabling act of Law n.183/2014 - Jobs Act, see anted) aim at both the job market and the school, introducing and revising the three main instruments of the dual system in Italy: Alternanza Scuola-Lavoro (Work-related activities, now named “Percorsi per le competenze trasversali e per l'orientamento” – Paths to Soft Skills and vocational education/training), simulated training company, and apprenticeship.

Education and training paths within the experimentation of the Dual System aim at obtaining the 3-year qualification of professional worker, of the 4-year professional diploma, or of the higher technical specialization certificate (IFTS). To be considered dual, these paths must include a total amount of hours devoted to working practice higher than ordinary leFP and IFTS, also through work-related activities, simulated training company, and apprenticeship, though with different application modalities.

The Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) frames the IFP within the National school paths (Technical and Vocational Institutes) for ITS and IFTS.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLPS - Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza Sociale) frames the leFP, while the Regions / autonomous Provinces are responsible for its planning, organisation and provision.

Regions and Autonomous Provinces are also in charge of planning, organising and supplying ITS, IFTS, post-leFP, post-university education, and the majority of apprenticeship training courses.








The goals of the public-system-provided Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) are set by the Ministry of labour, while CVT activities are managed by Regions and Autonomous Provinces, or by the Social Partners. Social Partners play a pivotal role in the promotion of business-training plans (within single companies or groups), financed by the Regions or carried out thanks to the 'Inter-professional [Joint] Funds for Continuous Training'. They also generally play an advisory role in designing the IFP policies, contributing to their implementation in the



educational offer; they also contribute to the elaboration and organization of the policies enacted in the job market.

The development of the leFP system has proven a very successful instrument to contrast the phenomenon of educational dispersion, as it is able to intercept the potential abandoning catchment area, re-motivating students and stably enrolling them into educational paths finalised to job placement.

**Table 1.** Secondary level classroom education (own table)

Type of institution	 Technical and vocational Schools	 Regional VET centres	 Private VET centres	 Private VET centres
Property of	State	Regions or autonomous Regions	Private entities	Private entities
Funded by 	State	State + Regions	State + Regions	Market
Autorized by 	Established by the MIUR	Established by the Region	Region Accreditation	Region Authorization
Title issued 	Professional qualification / Diploma	Professional qualification	Professional qualification	Professional qualification

The table summarizes the different types of VET institutes and their corresponding funding/responsible institutions according to the Italian legislation. Technical and vocational school, as well as Regional VET centres, are public, and funded/co-funded by the State; though being authorized by different Institutions (the MIUR for the Technical and vocational schools, the Regions for Regional VET centres), they both issue a Professional qualification. Only Technical and vocational schools can issue a Diploma. Private VET centres, on the other hand, are property of private entities, which usually also fund them. They must be Accredited or authorized by the Region and offer a professional qualification.

### 3 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS: RECRUITING AND TRAINING

#### Focus on classroom education at a secondary level

Different types of VET schools employ different categories of professionals for teaching:

**Table 2.** Teachers and Trainers in VET schools (own table)

 <p>Technical and Vocational Schools</p>	  <p>Regional VET centres      Private VET centres</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Training-teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainers</li> </ul>

### 3.1 TEACHERS AND TRAINING-TEACHERS IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

#### 3.1.1 The Teacher's profile

The teacher's professional profile comprises disciplinary, psycho-pedagogical, didactic-methodological, organizational-relational, and research/documentation/evaluation competences. These competences are inter-related and meant to interact, so to develop along with the teacher's didactic experience, the study and research activity, and the systematization of the didactic practice. The content of the professional service of the teaching personnel is defined within the frame of the general goals of the National Education System, respecting the education policy plan provided by the school.

#### 3.1.2 The Training-teacher profile

The Training-teacher is a teacher with theoretical-practical competences; (s)he eminently deals with laboratory didactic activities, and functions as a connection between the exquisitely theoretical teaching of a discipline and the practical application and acquisition of the concepts exposed, sometimes working in co-teaching with the «theoretical» teacher, sometimes teaching in complete autonomy.

#### 3.1.3 Teachers' recruiting

The requisites to teach as teachers are the possession of an MA (Master's Degree), along with the acquisition of 24 European Credit Transfer System Credits (ECTS) in the fields of anthropology-psychology-pedagogy and didactic methodology (pedagogy, special pedagogy; didactics of inclusion; psychology; anthropology; general didactics methodologies and technologies). The ECTS must be acquired at least in 3 of the 4 fields; at least 6 ECTS must be certified to each field.

The requisite to teach as training-teachers consists in a technical/vocational high school Diploma.

For teachers, the recruiting procedure starts with a National competitive exam, followed by 1 year of probationary period, with some initial training. To enter the National competitive exam for teachers, one must already have acquired at least the 24 ECTS mentioned above.

### 3.1.4 Pre-service: Probationary training

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Newly recruited teachers must undergo a probationary training period.

The school principal assigns a tutor teacher, who has the task of orientating the new hires, facilitating the process of building of their professional identity, accompanying them in the acquisition of the necessary know-how/competences to teach, and monitoring the training process.

The newly recruited teacher traces a first skills assessment (a structured self-evaluation) with the help of the tutor teacher.

On the basis of the school needs, of the skills assessment, and once the tutor teacher has been appointed, the school principal and the newly recruited teacher sign a professional development agreement, which establishes the goals for the development of cultural, disciplinary, didactic-methodological and relational competences to be reached through specific training activities.

The Training activities to be carried on amount to 50 hours per newly recruited teacher. The path is structured into 4 different phases:

- preparatory meetings (6 hours)
- training labs– at least 4 (12 hours)
- “peer-to-peer” observation in the classroom (12 hours)
- on-line training (20 hours).

### 3.1.5 In-service training

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All newly recruited teachers must undergo an in-service training period. The in-service training is «mandatory, permanent and structural» («obbligatoria, permanente e strutturale») for all teachers, in a lifelong learning perspective. The single school institutions define the training activities, considering the National three-year education policy plan (which the MIUR, once heard the competent trade unions, adopts every three years), the outcomes of the school improvement plans, and the priorities identified by the National education plan.

To enhance in-service training, every year each teacher, at any school level, receives the possibility to adhere to an educational offer defined by the single schools coherently with the needs detected; the possibility to participate to congresses and similar initiatives (max. 5 days per year); and an electronic card, worth 500€ per school-year. The card can be used to buy books, texts, journals – any publication useful for professional refresher activities, hardware and software, tickets for theatre/cinema shows, museums, exhibitions, cultural events, live-show; it also can be used to enrol to refresher/ professional qualification courses, carried out by institutions/organizations accredited by the Ministry, as well as to BA/MA courses, postgraduate courses, University Master’s consistent with the professional profile.

The main concept sustaining this practice is that the enhancement of a professional profile needs to be adequately supported by the cultural and personal development of the resources involved.

### 3.1.6 University offer for lifelong training for teachers (post-graduate)

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Universities play an important role in the lifelong learning for teachers. The options offered by universities are the following:

- Further training and specialization courses;
- Tutor-teachers training;
- Master's courses.

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## 3.2 THE TRAINER IN REGIONAL VET COURSES

The trainer acts within the professional training organised and carried out under the responsibility of the Regions and autonomous Provinces. The trainer slightly differs from the teacher, as while the teacher is essentially a «content expert», the trainer is a «process expert», playing different roles according to the situation: Tutor, Trainer, Group leader, Coach, etc.

The main goal of the trainer is to support the learning process, orientating and motivating students, reinforcing the link between education/training and job market, updating the students' professional competences.

### 3.2.1 The Trainer's professional profile

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The trainer is an intermediate-level professional; (s)he performs intellectual activities (didactics, research, and experimentation) with scientific autonomy and deontological responsibility, through specific cognitive theoretical and methodological instruments. His/her interventions can be addressed to both singles and groups, in different lifelong (formal and non-formal) educational and training contexts.

The trainer can work within corporate settings, within education/training contexts, placement, consulting, orientation, skills balance and assessment of competences acquired in formal/informal/non-formal contexts, within the updating and training services for teachers and trainers, as training designer, junior expert in the Human Resources promotion/management, junior expert in the evaluation/assessment of learning processes and products.

### 3.2.2 Trainers' recruiting and Pre-service training

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The training of VET trainers is not regulated at a national level; there is neither an officially acknowledged register, nor are there any formal recruitment procedures. The minimum requisites, established by the National Collective Labour Agreement, impose a (university)

degree or a high-school diploma, along with some professional experience in the specific field. The trainer is also required to regularly participate in refresher programmes, both within and without the company/organization where (s)he works.

Each Region or autonomous Province sets its own standards for the pre-service training of trainers, so as to ensure the quality of the education and training services offered thanks to public funds. To access these funds, the private VET centres must be accredited/authorized by the competent authority, on the basis of quality standards involving also the pre-service training for trainers. Private VET centres not using public funds are not committed to any specific rules on the pre-service training for trainers.

### 3.2.3 University offer for lifelong training for trainers

Though there are no formal obligations, an increasing number of trainers possesses a university degree.

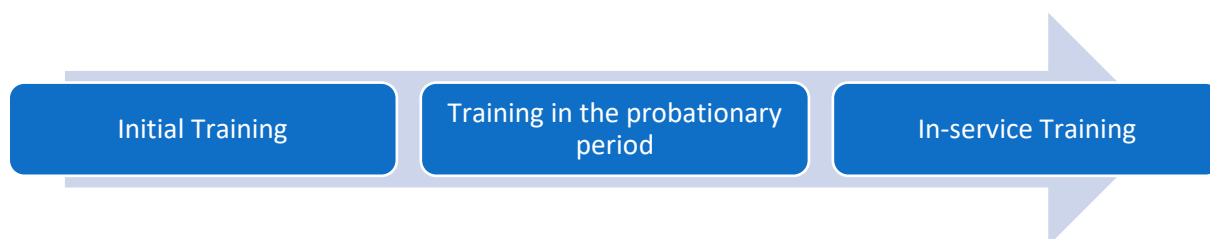
In recent years, many Departments of Education have implemented education and training programmes for trainers, at different levels:

- BA (Bachelor's Degree)
- MA (Master's Degree)
- Postgraduate specialization courses

## 4. THE GOVERNANCE IN THE TRAINING OF VET TEACHERS AND THE ROLE OF THE DIFFERENT ACTORS

### 4.1 TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND TRAINING-TEACHERS

The educational path of teachers and training-teachers is articulated into three phases (see Figure 5):



**Figure 5.** Educational path of teachers and training teachers (own figure)

The teachers' training system design does not stem from a single regulation, being rather the result of a set of different measures woven into a very complex frame, where different stakeholders play different roles with different responsibilities in the aforementioned three phases.

#### 4.1.1. Ministry of Education (MIUR - Ministero dell'Istruzione)

On the basis of the Italian Constitution, the State has the power to define the general regulation on education, while school institutions keep a wide range of autonomy. The State works through the legislative power of the Parliament and, above all, the activity of the Ministry of Education (MIUR – Ministero dell’Istruzione), which is also responsible of both the juridical state and the training of teachers.

#### Initial training

- Defines the classes of competition granting access to teaching, determining the study subjects, thus influencing the technical-scientific education/training that teachers must possess.
- Regulates the modalities to acquire the 24 European Credit Transfer System Credits (ECTS) in the fields of anthropology-psychology-pedagogy and didactic methodology issued by universities and other Higher Education institutions, influencing the compulsory training in education/didactics.

#### Training in the probationary period

- Regulates and provides operational indications for the creation as well as the assessment of the compulsory training activities for teachers during their probationary period.

#### In-service training

- Elaborates on a three-year basis the National education policy plan for teachers, which sets the national priorities of in-service training.
- Finances the access of teachers to free training activities, through the electronic card (Carta del docente).

#### 4.1.2. High Council of Public Education

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The High Council of Public Education is a national corporate body of democratic participation, where different professionals of the school are represented (School Directors, Teachers, technical and administrative staff) as well as representatives of arts, culture, labour and industry. The Council holds an advisory role in the exercise of the government functions (MIUR) within education.

#### Initial training

- Expresses its opinion on the definition of the classes of competition for the recruitment of teachers.

#### 4.1.3. School Labour Unions

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They have a lobbying function on the MIUR, to safeguard the rights of both school workers and students.

#### Initial training

- The MIUR must inform them before defining the classes of competition for the recruitment of teachers, on which they can formulate their proposals.

#### In-service training

- Through supplementary agreements to the National Collective Employment Contracts (CCNL), they influence the definition of the National education policy plan for teachers and can formulate their proposals.

#### 4.1.4. Schools

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##### Training in the probationary period

- Nominate a tutor teacher, who has the task of orientating the newly recruited teachers, accompanying them in their self-assessment and professional growth.
- Elaborate with the new hire a Pact for the professional development.
- Organise a 50-hours educational offer, largely dedicated to experiencing the classroom.

##### In-service training

- Elaborate a training plan for teachers, taking into account the National Plan, as well as the educational needs analysis of the teachers in the specific school.

#### 4.1.5. Universities

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##### Initial training

- Promote MA courses granting the degree necessary to the recruitment of teachers.
- Promote the courses granting the acquisition of the 24 ECTS in the fields of anthropology-psychology-pedagogy and didactic methodology mandatory to participate to teaching competitions.

##### In-service training

- Promote training courses for tutor teachers.
- Promote specialization courses and further courses contributing to the educational offer available to teachers for their professional refresher activities.

#### 4.1.6. Enterprises, professional/vocational training centres, associations and cultural agencies

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##### In-service training



- Promote training courses and cultural events contributing to the educational offer available to teachers for their professional refresher activities.

#### 4.2 TRAINING OF TRAINERS

The situation of trainers operating within the vocational training organised and financed by Regions is quite different. In their case, within a general frame established at a national level, the training depends on regional regulation on the enlistment of training institutions. In many cases, Regions and autonomous Provinces organise independent courses for the training of trainers.

Through the National Collective Employment Contracts, Labour Unions mean to foster the progressive qualification of trainers' competences, imposing to professional education institutions the promotion of the training of trainers.

In 2018, SWG carried out a survey (Grassi, 2018) meant to detect the impact of the recently approved European Recommendation EQAVET (European Parliament and Council of Europe, 2019) on the Italian professional training system. Results show that:

- 79% of trainers possesses a University degree;
- 60% are not full-time trainers, but are engaged in other professional activities;
- 57% of professional training institutions have structured a training plan for their employees;
- 33% of institutions encourages the training of their trainers, and a third of them offer economic incentives to the purpose;
- 37% of institutions set a minimum of training hours trainers must attend every year;
- 30% of institutions establish mandatory training for their trainers, but do not set the number of hours;
- 73% of trainers declare they are engaged in refresher activities concerning both technical and didactic competences;
- the fields where trainers declare they have developed their skills the most are: Knowledge of the mechanisms of professional training (+2,4%); Competence based education (+1,8%); Technical knowledge related to their task (+1,6%); General didactic skills and evaluation/assessment skills (+1,5%);
- 10 Regions out of 20 promoted training projects for the trainers belonging to territorial institution in the three years previous to the survey.

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