International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training

Many countries, including our partners in Europe, are interested in German experience and know-how in vocational education and training. This interest has increased considerably as a result of the financial and economic crisis. The German dual system of VET is seen to play a key role in fostering needs-based training by combining school instruction with learning on the job. It is an important factor in ensuring employability, particularly for the younger generation. German industry also needs increasing numbers of well-trained workers at home and abroad.

The Federal Government has established two important new institutions in 2013 as part of its Strategy for Integrated International VET Cooperation in order to meet this increasing demand and at the same time ensure quality and consistent conduct by German stakeholders:
• the BIBB’s **German Office for International Vocational Education and Training Cooperation (GOVET)** as the central contact point for people in Germany and abroad enquiring about Germany's international VET cooperation,

• the **Round Table for International Vocational Education and Training Cooperation**, which acts as a clearing agency and coordinating body and brings together senior and working-level representatives of all the organizations and federal government departments involved in VET at regular meetings.

For many years, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has maintained close cooperative relations in the field of VET with government departments in such countries as China, India, Israel, Russia, South Africa and Turkey.

High-level representatives of government departments, chambers, social partners and companies meet regularly in **bilateral working groups** to discuss the progress made with cooperative activities and coordinate joint projects on a partnership basis. The exchange of
experience usually focuses on fields of innovation such as VET standards and curricula, train-the-trainer programmes, the establishment and development of inter-company training centres and finance.

**Regular bilateral cooperation activities** are carried out with a number of European countries under the Memorandum which was signed with six EU partner countries at the VET summit in December 2012.

In addition, the BMBF is funding a strategy project involving the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) and eleven **Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHK)**. The aim of this project is to encourage local industry to support the development of elements of practice-based cooperative training.

The **BMBF funding initiative to export vocational training** enables German VET providers to develop and test innovative and sustainable business models for exporting VET services. This also helps exporting German companies to remedy their skills shortage in the target regions. The fourth call for proposals under this initiative was announced in 2013.
The statutory mission of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) includes providing services related to international VET cooperation. BIBB’s services range from advising political stakeholders to cooperating with partner institutes and include involvement in European and international networks and academic exchanges, presentations at international conferences and support for international delegations. The newly established German Office for International Vocational Education and Training Cooperation (GOVET) mobilizes additional capacities at BIBB to support the Federal Government’s VET cooperation. The Central Office is the interdepartmental contact point for enquiries from German and foreign stakeholders and people interested in international VET cooperation.

The International Marketing of Vocational Education initiative iMOVE provides extensive services to assist mainly small and medium-sized educational companies with the strategic planning and implementation of their activities abroad. These services include publications and a web portal in seven languages as well as seminars, conferences and delegation visits. iMOVE advertises German initial and continuing VET expertise abroad with its „Training – Made in Germany“ label.

Applicants should contact the BMBF’s project management agency at the DLR. By funding VET exports, the BMBF is helping German providers of initial and continuing vocational education and training to exploit the potential of this dynamic international market in numerous regions of the world.