

Short Summary on Studies analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on the apprenticeship markets in DC dVET countries

A [study conducted by the BIBB](#) (Federal Institute for VET) forecasts a decline in the number of apprenticeship positions available in **Germany**. However, it also predicts that youths with university entrance qualification will switch to tertiary education instead of seeking an apprenticeship position. This can lead to filling problems for companies because suitable candidates are no longer available. It is also expected that particularly academically weak graduates from lower secondary education will face problems in securing apprenticeship positions. The study calls for special measures for the worst-affected sectors (hospitality, sports & tourism) to prevent a sharp decline in the number of training contracts. For information on the measures already taken by the federal government, see [DC dVET COVID-19 News #2](#). [Another study conducted by BIBB and LMU Munich](#) uses data from the past 12 years to examine the connection between companies' expectations on economic development and their willingness to provide apprenticeship positions. According to the study, the current negative expectations of the economy are likely to lead to a lower demand for apprentices. The estimates of the number of apprenticeship positions that are likely to be lost in 2020 are in a similar range for both studies (between 25,000 and nearly 44,000 positions in the worst case). [Another study by FiBS](#) provides an overview of past developments and current figures on the apprenticeship market, makes forecasts based on past crises and outlines various scenarios. In addition to dual VET, the study also looks at developments in the transition system (interim solutions that prepare for vocational training) and full-time school-based VET. The study comes to similar results as the other two studies mentioned above regarding declining numbers of apprenticeship positions and additionally ascribes a growing role to the transition system as a compensatory instrument.

In **Liechtenstein**, with around 150 apprentices per year, the corona crisis is not expected to have a major impact on the apprenticeship market. The advantage of the size of the country is that almost every individual case can be observed. So far, in 2020 there were no(t yet) effects from Corona: all young people who completed compulsory education found a follow-up solution in the form of dual VET or an interim solution. Further information on the current situation in Liechtenstein can be found [here](#).

As in Germany, a decline in the number of apprenticeship positions is also expected in **Austria**. [A study commissioned by the initiative z.l.ö. - zukunft.lehre.österreich](#) on the short and medium-term effects predicts that up to 10,000 apprenticeships could be lost. The study is based on a survey of 400 training companies and shows that retail, commerce and handicraft, tourism and leisure sectors as well as the industry will probably be particularly hard hit. [Another study from Austria conducted by the ibw](#) offers, among other things, a brief outlook on the effects of the current crisis. Among other things, these analyses show that young people aged up to 25 with higher or academic education are much more affected by the generally rising unemployment than young people with an apprenticeship degree. The ibw also expects a decline in the number of apprenticeships offered but notes that forecasts are difficult to make at this point in time.

In **Switzerland**, too, the training market has been monitored even more closely since the outbreak of the crisis. In addition to the [Monitoring of the Task Force Perspective on VET 2020](#), which is based on surveys of the cantonal vocational training offices and professional organizations, the ["Apprenticeship Pulse"](#) project provides relevant information each month based on surveys of almost 3,000 training companies. Previous surveys have shown that since the beginning of the crisis, the majority of trainees received in-company training despite the pandemic, and this figure even rose to almost 100% in August. This was achieved either with appropriate

protective measures or home office regulations. In addition, 84% of the companies providing apprenticeship positions stated that they would like to continue providing the same or even more positions. Since it is expected that the negative effects of the corona crisis will only become fully apparent with a delay, the close monitoring will continue until at least 2021. The latest results of the September survey can be found [here](#). The extensive monitoring is completed by a [study with projections for Switzerland](#) based on economic forecasts from the end of April. These forecasts predict that the crisis will continue to be felt for a long time to come. It is expected that until 2025, 20% less apprenticeship contracts (cumulative) will be concluded. The forecast is based on the assumption that companies will behave in a similar way as in past crises. As in Germany and Austria, the experts also assume that young people who are weak at school or those who have not yet found an apprenticeship position will be particularly affected by the crisis. The hospitality industry and other tourism-related businesses are likely to be particularly hard hit by the crisis. The study also points out that it will be particularly difficult for young people who have completed their apprenticeship this summer to integrate into the labor market.

Despite the partly gloomy outlook, all DC dVET member countries seem to have been relatively successful in completing or continuing the current apprenticeship programs and in taking appropriate measures to temporarily support training companies. Furthermore, it appears that the vast majority of the companies providing training remain committed. The central role of the business sector in dual VET has relevant advantages regarding the quality and closeness to the labor market of the training. Linked to this is the disadvantage of a certain cyclical sensitivity of the supply of training positions, which is particularly evident in times of crisis. Nevertheless, there is a consensus in the DC dVET countries that it is important to provide training even in economically difficult times in order to have the required skilled workers available once the economy recovers, to counteract disintegration of young people and to offer them the best possible conditions for starting their professional life despite all challenges.