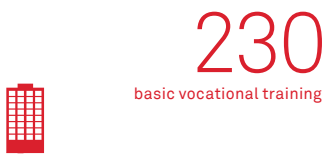




**KEY FIGURES**



Sources: BFS; SECO; SBFI, 2018

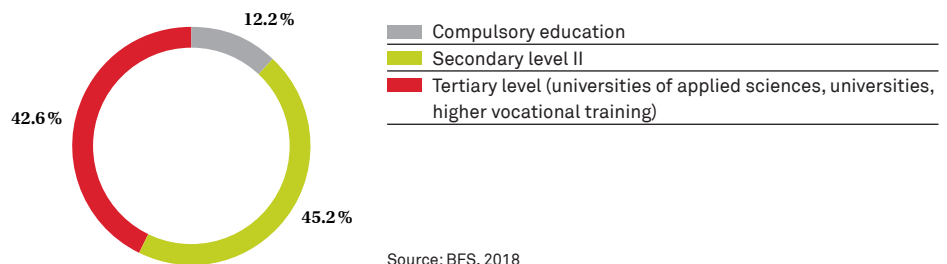
# VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND

**AT A GLANCE**

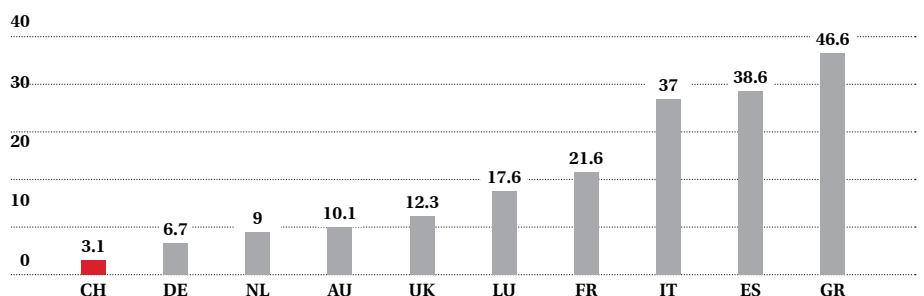
The high quality of vocational training is a central pillar of the innovative strength and efficiency of the Swiss economy. A total of 230 different vocations can be learned through direct channels in Switzerland. The vocational training courses, each lasting two to four years, focus on professional qualifications that are actually in demand and on jobs that are currently available. The resulting highly educated professionals form the basis for an excellent talent pool for companies based in Switzerland. The economy thus has an ideal selection of specialist professionals at its disposal, thanks to this combination of academic education and vocational training.

**Educational Status of the Swiss Population**

% of permanent residents aged 25-64 according to highest educational qualification, 2017



**Youth unemployment rate 2017**



OFFICIAL PROGRAM



## SECONDARY STAGE II: BASIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- Upon completing obligatory schooling, around two thirds of young people in Switzerland opt to undertake foundational vocational training. This proportion has remained steady for many years.
- In 2016, slightly more than a third (38%) of young adults had a high-school diploma. Approximately 20% achieved a diploma qualifying them for university studies, with 15% receiving a vocational diploma. This percentage is somewhat lower than in other countries, since school leavers with vocational training also receive a competitive and very prestigious education and have access to training programs at the tertiary level.
- The graduation rate at the upper secondary level is 94.7% in Switzerland.
- Apprentices increase their productivity during their training and are therefore more valuable to businesses.

### Switzerland's positions at the last professional championships

EuroSkills	
Gothenburg 2016	1
Lille 2014	4
Spa 2012	2
Lisbon 2010	2
WorldSkills	
Abu Dhabi 2017	2
São Paulo 2015	4
Leipzig 2013	2
London 2011	3

Source: www.swiss-skills.ch, 2018

- The **cost-benefit ratio** is an important factor for a business when deciding whether to become involved in vocational training. Employers offering training programs in Switzerland can generally achieve a **positive net gain**. This varies among the trades and professions that can only be practiced by workers with formal qualifications. On the one hand this is because apprentices can be employed at low wages, and on the other hand, because their having been trained according to the company's requirements leads to lower recruitment costs. Apprentices also have a tendency to be loyal to the company where they trained, often returning at a later stage in their career.

- Throughout Switzerland as a whole, the apprenticeship situation is stable. In 2017, the number of apprenticeship positions offered by companies exceeded the demand among young people. Industrial professions are also proving extremely popular.

### Top 10 Most Frequently Chosen Initial Professional Training Programs

Number of learners, 2017











Profession	Total
Business administration	14,280
Retail specialist	4,983
Health specialist	4,563
Care specialist	3,493
IT technician	2,087
Electrician	1,996
Logistician	1,732
Chef	1,626
Illustrator	1,536
Retail Assistant	1,524

Source: BFS, 2017

- Investigations conducted on the basis of the PISA study substantiate the academic ability of apprentices. Swiss students come out on top in performance rankings for mathematics and are in the top 25% for science.
- Switzerland has a training system that optimally meets the requirements of the economy. According to the WEF's Global Competitiveness Report (Switzerland's overall position: 1st place, 2017), the Swiss training system performs best in an international comparison.

### Quality of the Education System

International rankings for training and skills, 2017

Country	Rank
 Switzerland	1
 Singapore	2
 Finland	3
 USA	4
 Qatar	5
 The Netherlands	6
 Ireland	7
 Canada	8
 Germany	9
 New Zealand	10

Source: WEF Global Competitiveness Index, 2017 – 2018

- Most apprenticeships take place in small businesses. In addition, there are different forms of organization of vocational training through training associations and training centers.
- Training service providers such as libs (Industrielle Berufslehren Schweiz) guarantee professional and practical training (see case study). libs works with over 100 companies and is the largest provider of basic vocational training to Swiss industry.

### VOCATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND FURTHER VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- According to the Global Competitiveness Report, Switzerland is the world's number one in the categories of **labor market efficiency, business sophistication and innovation**. This underlines the high status of training and further education in Switzerland.
- The vocational baccalaureate (BM) makes it possible for students to transfer to a university of applied sciences (FH) without having to take any further examinations. It can be completed during the apprenticeship or afterwards. By taking an additional examination, the "Vocational Baccalaureate - Universities"; it is also possible to transfer to a university or a Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH).
- The universities of applied science are divided into seven regions. They have two stages – Bachelor and Master degrees – and are active in 14 different subjects, which are in turn separated into the three major fields of study: Technology, Business, and Design; Health, Social Work, and Art; and Sports and Other. The number of bachelor's degrees increased by 59% between 2010 and 2017. The selection of master's courses on offer has also been expanded over the years.

### Graduates from Swiss Universities

Bachelor's and Master's degrees by subject, 2016

Field of study	Students
Pedagogy	5,198
Humanities and arts	2,380
Social sciences, journalism, and information technology	311
Economics, management, and law	3,640
Science, mathematics, and statistics	573
Information and communication technologies (ICT)	528
Engineering, manufacturing, and construction	3,211
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and animal medicine	114
Health and social services	3,617
Services	640
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,212</b>

Source: BFS, 2017

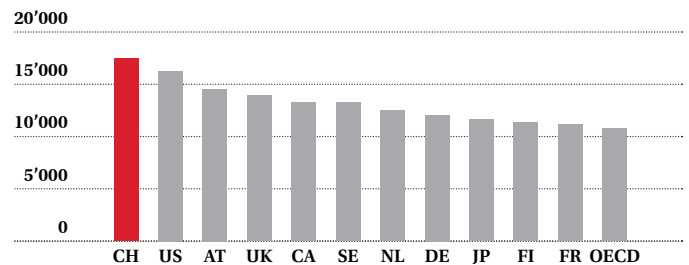
- The advanced vocational training system forms the tertiary level of the education system, with the FHs and the universities/ETHs. Advanced vocational training enables professionals with a Swiss Federal Certificate of Competence or a similar degree to specialize in a particular subject and to enhance their specialist knowledge. It is also possible to obtain qualifications in Corporate Management. The number of qualifications earned in higher vocational training has risen by one-fifth in the past 15 years. The proportion of women at the higher-level universities of applied science doubled between 2000 and 2017.

### RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN DIPLOMAS AND FUNDING

- Switzerland is part of the European system for the recognition of professional qualifications, which regulates the recognition procedure for EU and EFTA citizens, as well as for immigrants from non-member countries (see "Current Developments").
- **Public investment** in vocational training amounted to around **CHF 3.5 billion** annually in recent years. The cantons, which are responsible for implementing vocational training, take on three quarters of the costs. The federal government's share is one quarter of the costs of the public sector. Up to ten percent of the federal funding is slated for supporting development projects and special services within the public sector.

### Bildungsausgaben pro Schüler / Studierenden

im internationalen Vergleich in US-Dollars, 2014



Quelle: BFS, 2017

## TESTIMONIAL



“The Swiss education system produces top-class educated practitioners and highly qualified university graduates. The apprenticeship scheme is especially important for Siemens Schweiz. We employ more than 280 apprentices and train them in our own training centers in Zug and Zurich and on the job in our departments. By doing this, we are actively promoting our young employees and combating the shortage of labor. After all, the employees in this country are certainly not lacking in motivation - the Swiss are unbelievably motivated and loyal. I have never experienced such commitment elsewhere.”

SIEGFRIED GERLACH  
CEO of Siemens Schweiz  
[www.siemens.ch](http://www.siemens.ch)

## CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

- The national government is committed to ensuring that the benefits of the dual vocational training system are better appreciated at an international level. The aims are to achieve improved recognition for vocational training qualifications and greater (international) mobility for the professionals involved. Switzerland therefore supports the EU's Copenhagen Process, the aim of which is to enhance the efficiency, quality and appeal of vocational training.

## CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### Authorities and regulators

State Secretariat for Education,  
Research and Innovation (SBFI)  
[www.sbf.admin.ch/  
vocationaltraining](http://www.sbf.admin.ch/vocationaltraining)

Swiss Federal Institute for  
Vocational Training (EHB)  
[www.ehb-schweiz.ch](http://www.ehb-schweiz.ch)

Swiss Office of Vocational Training  
Conference (SBBK)  
[www.sbbk.ch](http://www.sbbk.ch)

Swiss Conference of Cantonal  
Ministers of Education  
[www.edk.ch](http://www.edk.ch)

[swissuniversities](http://swissuniversities.ch)  
[www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch)

### Further information

SBFI Documentation  
Collection of SBFI publications on  
vocational training  
[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)

Overview of Universities in  
Switzerland  
[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)

Overview of all courses and studies  
[www.studyprogrammes.ch](http://www.studyprogrammes.ch)

Recognition of foreign university  
and higher education diplomas  
[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)

Specialist information on vocational  
training, vocational guidance and  
the labor market, with an overview  
of current developments in the  
domain of vocational training  
[www.panorama.ch](http://www.panorama.ch)

Swiss University Rankings  
[www.universityrankings.ch](http://www.universityrankings.ch)

Professional register of all  
federally-accredited professions:  
Statutory foundations and  
addresses  
[www.bvz.admin.ch/bvz](http://www.bvz.admin.ch/bvz)

Apprenticeship barometer:  
survey among young people and  
enterprises on the apprenticeship  
situation  
[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)

Leading Houses have been  
commissioned by the SBFI to  
encourage the sustainable  
development of vocational training  
research in Switzerland  
[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)

Cost and benefits of basic  
vocational training from the point of  
view of Swiss businesses  
[www.ffb.unibe.ch](http://www.ffb.unibe.ch)

Vocational Training Plus: National  
campaign focusing on supporting  
talent  
[www.berufsbildungplus.ch](http://www.berufsbildungplus.ch)

### S-GE resources

Handbook for Investors  
[www.s-ge.com/  
handbookforinvestors](http://www.s-ge.com/handbookforinvestors)

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09/2018