



# 3.5.319 - Structural Approaches to Democracy Education in Vocational Education and Training Systems in International Comparison (PartVET)

Research Project: Project

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This project focuses on vocational learners/apprentices. It examines the opportunities they have to participate in shaping vocational education and training by contributing their experiences and interests – both at the political level as well as in very tangible terms in the learning environments of VET schools and work places.

There are many reasons for asking this question. On the one hand, the necessary adjustments and innovations in vocational education and training could potentially be enriched and thus made more effective through the systematic participation of apprentices. Furthermore, participation is a central element of democracy education. Practical learning about how democracy works reflects on, supplements, and deepens theoretical knowledge about it. Experiencing formalized voting processes, negotiated compromises, the necessary mutual respect, the acceptance of decisions made, and the assumption of responsibility offers the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of democracy. This form of learning fundamentally corresponds to the philosophy of the dual training system, in which theoretical and practical learning are combined. Theoretical knowledge is applied and implemented under guidance, but also independently, in the professional reality: “learning by doing.” The resulting experience of self-efficacy among vocational learners/apprentices and the experience of being able to have a concrete influence on their apprenticeship can improve motivation, promote stronger identification with the occupational field and training, and thus reduce dropouts.

The theoretical background of the project is educational governance research.

Methodologically, the project is designed to be qualitative and exploratory. Extensive literature research and analysis will be followed by interviews with experts from the key stakeholder groups who shape vocational training policy, as well as with vocational learners/trainees.

The objectives of the project are to contribute to a deeper understanding of democracy education in vocational education and training, specifically in terms of opportunities for active participation, and to broaden the view of the governance structures of vocational education and training systems to include the group of VET learners. This will enable a new perspective on the relevance of VET learners for the competitiveness and quality of vocational education and training.

The project is designed to compare different countries and includes the vocational training systems of Switzerland and Denmark in addition to Germany. By selecting vocational training systems that are very similar in structure and organization, it is possible to identify differences in the participation of vocational learners/apprentices and develop options for action.