

## **The "Zug International Vocational Education" project in brief**

The dual-track system of vocational education and training (VET) enables young people to enter the world of work on the basis of simultaneous in-company training and education at a vocational college, thereby ensuring the supply of up-and-coming qualified specialists and managers. The system is oriented towards the needs of the labour market and towards professional qualifications for which there is proven demand as well as towards available employment vacancies.

The dual-track vocational education system provides young people with a certified professional qualification within two to four years, thus providing them with the ability to prove themselves on the labour market. Thanks to the progression routes built in to the education and training system, further levels of education and training are available (see also Figure 3).

### **Lack of specialist staff and internationality**

The appointment of specialist staff at various different levels increasingly represents a considerable challenge for many companies. Many companies, especially those operating in an international environment, recruit their specialist staff from abroad. The Canton of Zug features a high density of international companies. The fact that they are often not familiar with the Swiss vocational education system has a direct impact on both the recruitment of specialist staff and on willingness to train staff as future professionals.

No English language apprenticeships are currently available in Switzerland. As a result, foreign-language speaking young people living in Switzerland because of their parents' international activities have no opportunity, other than a private international school, to complete an apprenticeship as a suitable course of education and training. Because an above-average number of international companies are located in the Canton of Zug, and the population is very international as a result, the Canton of Zug has taken the initiative.

### **Target groups**

The "Zug International Vocational Education" project is designed to enable internationally oriented and multinational companies which use English as their corporate language to participate in the Swiss vocational education system. The intention is to make the dual-track system accessible to both young people who have German as their native tongue but enjoy the English language, and to foreign-language speaking youths with a sound knowledge of German. New education and training possibilities for young people with foreign parents and families and for internationally oriented Swiss nationals are being opened up (see also details on Pillar 3, on page 3).

### **The "Zug Vocational Education" project ...**

- clarifies the situation regarding vocational education in the Canton of Zug from the "international perspective" (training offers, challenges, solutions for young people, employers and educational training institutions);
- draws attention to the requirements and potential emanating from business and society (of companies, families and young people) in this context and

- outlines and initiates solutions for new products, services and activities in the field of vocational education with regard to the international alignment, demand, progression routes, acceptance of the courses offered and their qualifications – together with providers, employers, authorities and specialist centres (see Figure 1: The three pillars).

The following illustration outlines the project's solution approach, in particular the three pillars (1, 2 and 3) which support the project.

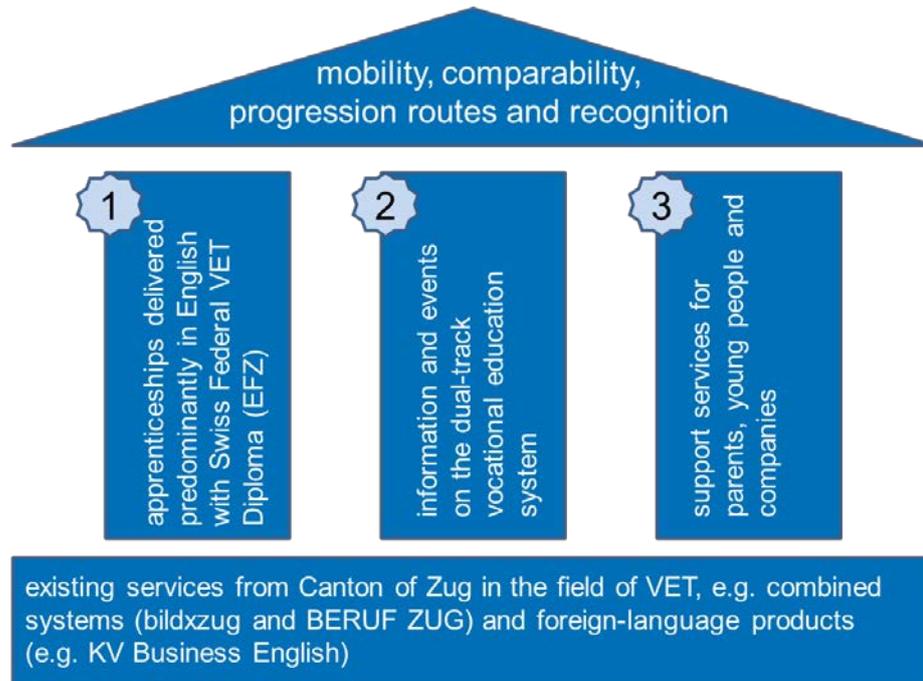


Fig. 1: The three pillars approach as a possible solution

**First pillar (1): International apprenticeships predominantly in English (Pilot career as a commercial employee / IT specialist)**

- In the Canton of Zug, appropriate education and training facilities for the English-speaking world are being developed and offered.
- Federal VET Diploma in Commerce, Profile E, Sector: service and administration; duration 3 years
- Federal VET Diploma in Information Technology, Direction: application developer or system technician; duration 4 years
- The range of offers is delivered predominantly in the English language in all three learning venues (apprenticeship company, vocational college, external course centres). This is supplemented by professional and sectoral education, such as for example international contexts and relations, macro-economics, history, goods flow (supply chain and logistics), or international trade (crops, gold, oil, rare earths, energy, etc.).
- These vocational apprenticeships and their qualifications should meet the requirements needed to succeed in an international context in terms of mobility, comparability and progression routes.

- The main focal points of these apprenticeships consist of vocational education at the three learning venues delivered predominantly in the English language:
  - Practical vocational training (apprenticeship company)
  - College-based education (vocational college)
  - External sector and professional knowledge (external course centres)
- Learners are also assigned language instruction in their own weaker language so that as a result, the main focus is on the English language, but skills (oral and written) in the German language reach a satisfactory level. (Completion of the Business apprenticeship requires that a "native speaker" level is achieved in the German subject area.)

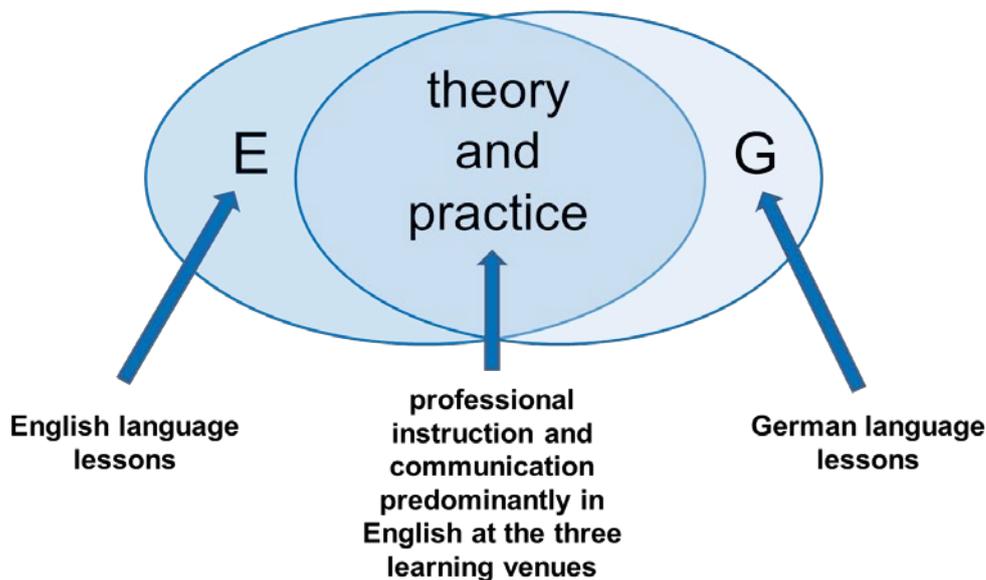


Fig. 2: Model for linguistic and professional access

### **Second pillar (2): Information and events on the dual-track vocational education system**

- International companies and companies with international managers in the Canton of Zug know and understand the Swiss dual-track vocational education system with its peculiarities, e.g. apprenticeships, higher specialist vocational colleges (HF), Universities of Applied Sciences (FH), and the opportunities and strengths associated with the system.
- On the basis of targeted information, internationally oriented companies in the Canton of Zug are motivated to participate in the training and education of young people, i.e. they create new apprenticeships and placement positions while predominantly using the English language, thus promoting Switzerland's dual-track vocational education system).
- Foreign-language speaking parents and young people are informed about the Swiss dual-track vocational education system and its special features, e.g. vocational apprenticeship, higher specialist vocational colleges (HF), Universities of Applied Sciences (FH) and the associated opportunities and strengths.

- Vocational education and its great potential is discussed at international schools, by parents associations and other interest groups, and the range of offers in the Canton of Zug is publicised.

### Third pillar (3): Supporting young people, parents and companies

- Internationally oriented companies offering this type of new apprenticeship are to receive a competent and available point of contact in the local area for the duration of the training period for questions, problems, consultation and support. Such a point of contact serves as the backbone and an additional service for these specific foreign-language products. Points of contact are intended to supplement existing products and services.
- All young people and their parents, whether foreigners, Swiss nationals or foreign-born Swiss nationals with a lengthy stay will find sufficient points of contact in Zug (within the scope of the current offer) available to them for personal support during and after the apprenticeship.

Figure 3 illustrates the possible integration of the apprenticeships delivered predominantly in the English language and supplementary services into Switzerland's dual-track vocational education system:

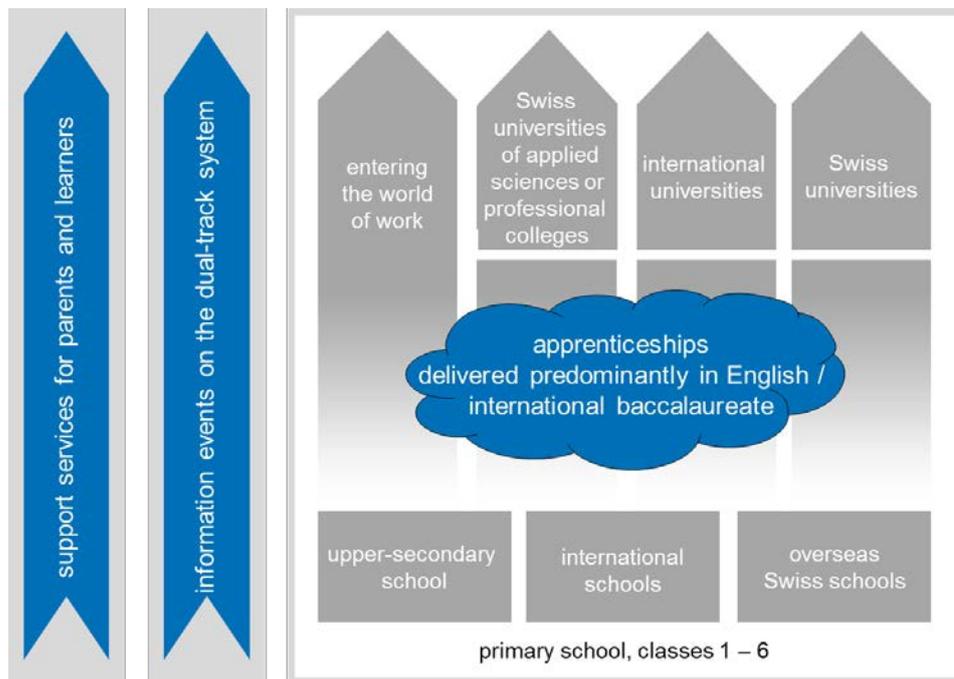


Fig. 3: Possible scenarios and integration

Figure 4 shows the composition of project organisation, networking of the project and integration of the various stakeholders:

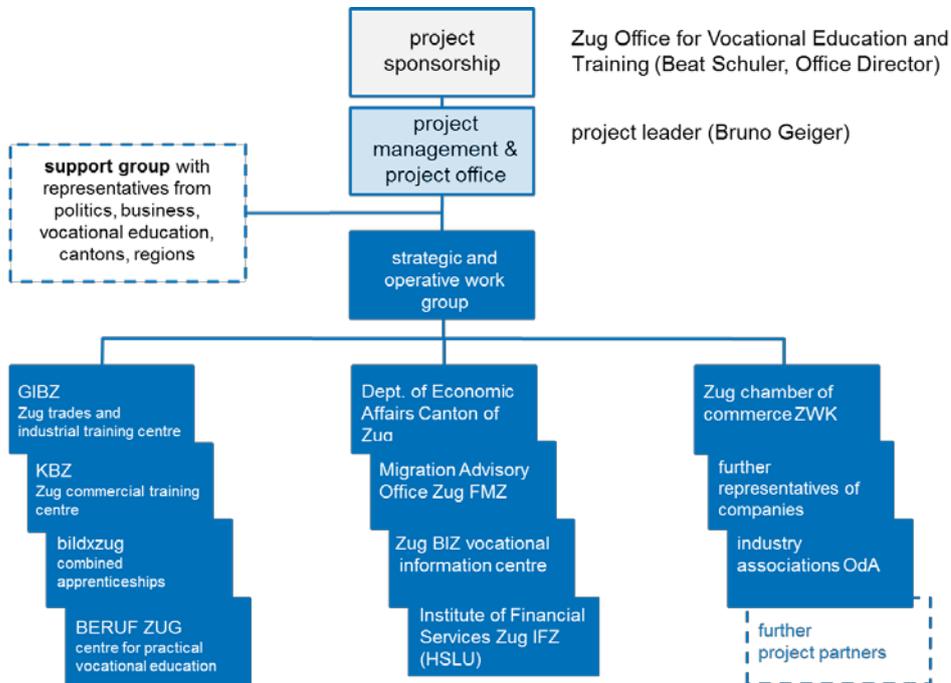
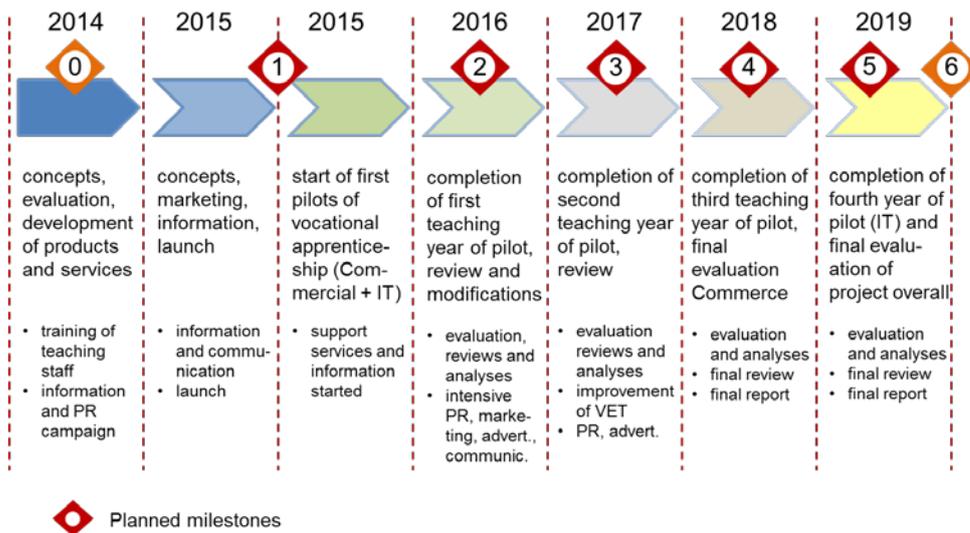


Fig. 4: Project organisation

The current timetable shows the anticipated phases and steps with the appropriate milestones over the entire course of the project from 2014 to 2018:



### **Outlook and vision**

This project is intended to generate greater understanding of Switzerland's dual-track education system while establishing the already widespread use of English as a foreign language for the purpose of vocational education and removing a barrier for young people who speak a foreign language.

Setting up these apprenticeships taught predominantly in English in the Canton of Zug will also enable the product of "Vocational Education and Training with Federal VET Diploma (EFZ)" (with the three learning venues of apprenticeship company, vocational college and external course centres) to be established in other cantons as well as, if need be, in another country.

### **Contacts**

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