

SCELTO: Go for the apprenticeships

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Within the broad field of research on the transition from education to the labour market, the SCELTO project focuses specifically on the transition from lower secondary (which marks the end of compulsory education) to upper secondary level when students make their educational and/or occupational choices. The SCELTO project examines the situation in the Canton of Ticino, which differs from the rest of Switzerland. As it happens, the Canton of Ticino has the lowest rate of direct transitions from lower secondary to vocational school. This is due to a strong preference for selective schools, where the solid curriculum of general education courses is intended to prepare students for university. The SCELTO project pursues two main objectives: i) conduct a research survey; and ii) use these survey findings to highlight possible operational strategies that will encourage more students to enrol in vocational schools not because poor academic achievement in lower and/or upper secondary education leaves them with no other alternative but rather because they fully understand the benefits of Swiss vocational education and training programmes (VET programmes). Using qualitative and quantitative analysis, the research survey seeks to determine the factors that influence a student's decision to enrol in either a selective or vocational school at the end of compulsory education. The research survey also takes a look at the impact that their decision has had in the first year of upper secondary. The survey sample is comprised of around 200 students, together with their parents, and individuals responsible for providing educational and occupational guidance, be it teachers assigned to such tasks (n=7) or guidance counsellors (n=3) working in local guidance counselling offices at middle schools (n=3).