

Transition and permeability in vocational education and training in Germany and Switzerland – a comparative perspective

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Flexible transition is one of the key aspects of policy objectives in the context of the European Union. In the paper, this topic will be specifically analysed in relation to the borders between school education, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education in Germany and Switzerland. In Germany, there remains a considerable lack of permeability in the structures of the VET system, especially in the area of transition from school to work and in the pathways from vocational education and training to higher education. In comparison, there have been several different attempts in Switzerland to address the challenge of flexible transition, including the establishment of new structures in the vocational training system. For example, the formation of two-year basic training courses and the Federal Professional Baccalaureate have been designed to lead to more flexible and permeable pathways. This paper aims to contribute to current debates and initiatives by suggesting possible changes for, and perspectives on, increasing permeability within transition pathways in the VET systems of both countries. In this comparison, common features as well as differences in meeting the challenges will be outlined and discussed.