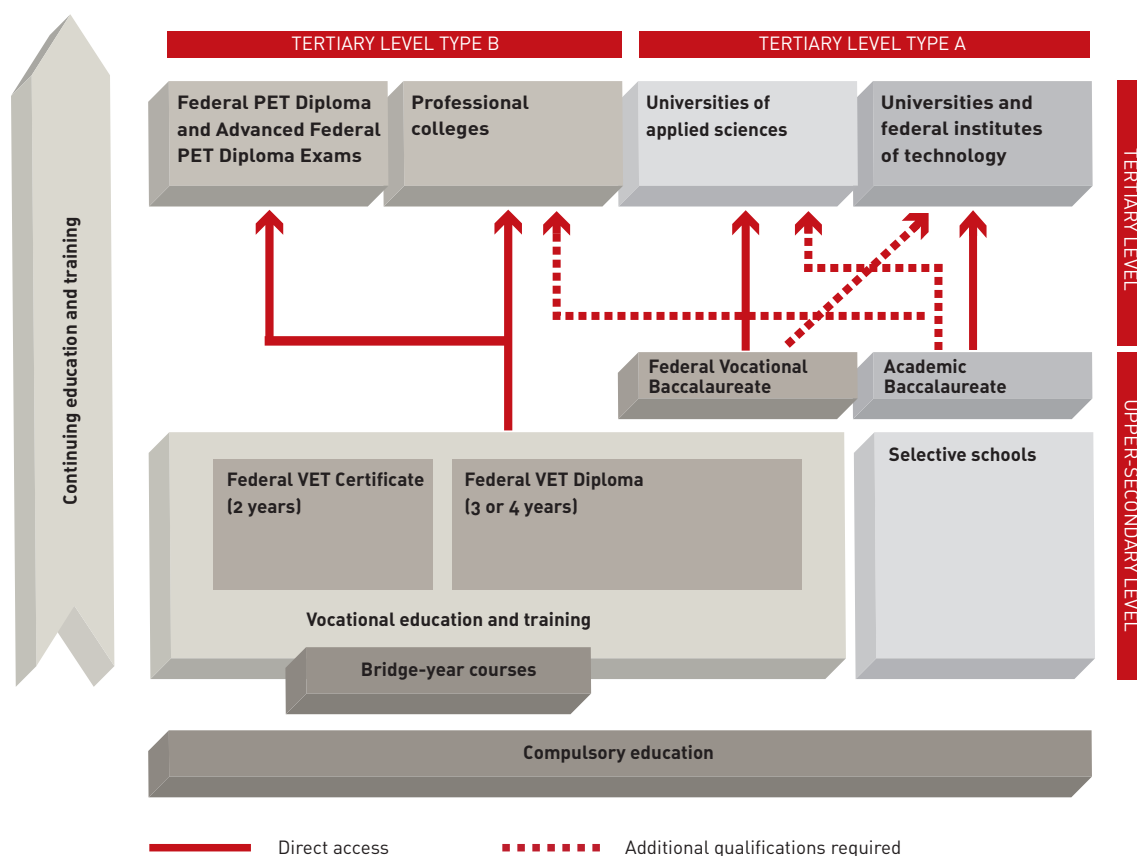


THE SWISS VET/PET SYSTEM

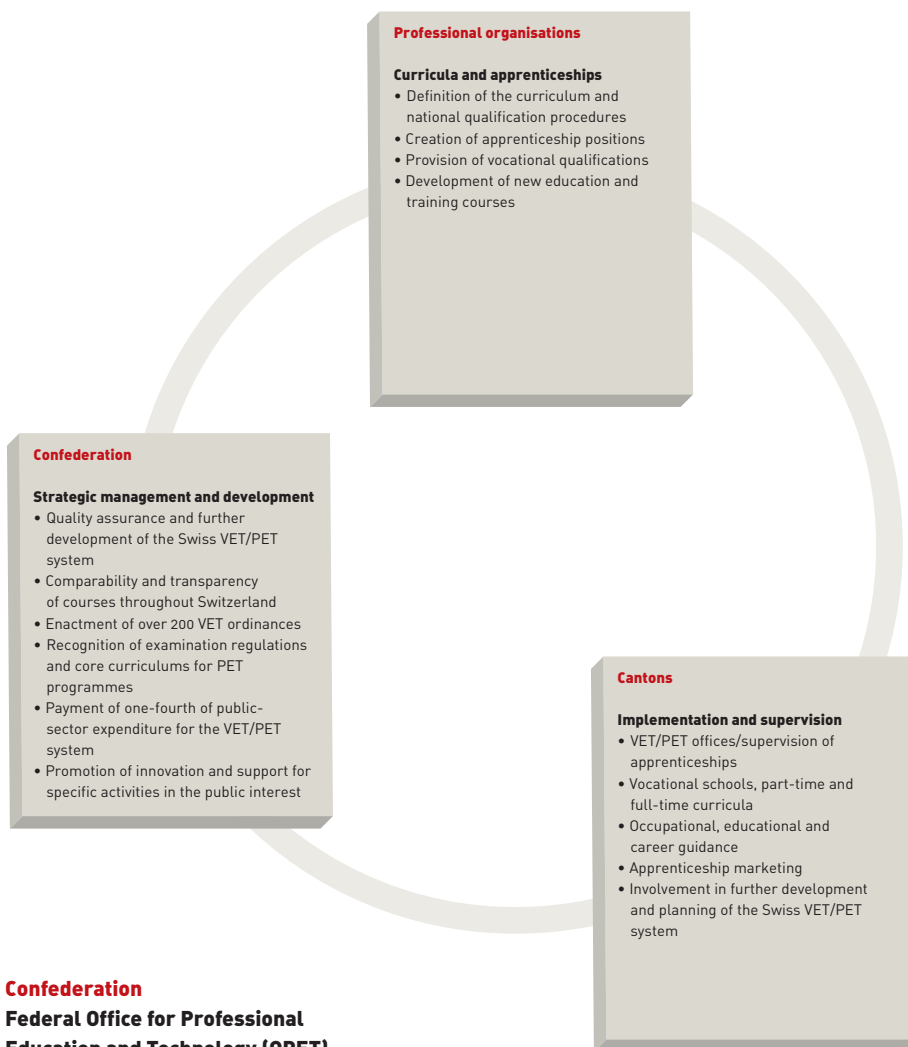
Vocational education and training (VET) is provided at upper-secondary level and professional education and training (PET) is provided at tertiary level. Both VET and PET programmes use clearly defined curriculums and national qualification procedures. They are also characterised by a high degree of flexibility: it is possible for students to pursue additional educational opportunities and change course in their professional life with relative ease. A wealth of continuing education and training (CET) courses also exist at all levels. There is a broad selection of VET and PET programmes available. Courses cater to different abilities and are geared to the needs of different age groups.



Key VET/PET figures	
Lower-secondary school students	88,300
New students enrolling in VET programmes	78,300
Total number of VET students	226,800
VET graduates	59,400
PET graduates	27,200

ONE MISSION, THREE PARTNERS

Vocational and professional education and training is a mission shouldered by the Confederation, the Cantons and professional organisations. These three partners are jointly committed to the highest possible standard of VET/PET and strive to ensure that there is an adequate number of apprenticeships and CET courses.



Confederation

Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET)

Responsible at federal level for vocational and professional education and training needs.

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET)

Mainly provides basic and continuing training to VET/PET professionals, particularly vocational teachers. SFIVET is also involved in research and the provision of services. It has three regional campuses: in Lausanne, Lugano and Zollikofen.

Professional organisations

Trade associations

Define the curriculum and national qualification procedures, organise VET programmes, create VET apprenticeships (upper-secondary level) and PET traineeships (tertiary level).

Social partners, other relevant organisations and VET providers

Together with trade associations, they are also involved in the further development of VET/PET programmes.

Companies

Where possible, companies provide VET apprenticeships and PET traineeships for the chosen occupation, thereby ensuring the next generation of qualified workers. Their involvement in VET/PET programmes is voluntary.

Cantons

Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Education (EDK)

The Cantons are generally responsible for education and training in Switzerland. Inter-cantonal cooperation through EDK helps to strengthen cantonal authority over education.

26 cantonal VET/PET offices

Responsible for implementing vocational and professional education and training at cantonal level, VET/PET offices coordinate their activities through the Swiss Conference of VET/PET Offices (SBBK), one of the EDK's specialised committees.

Occupational, educational and career guidance counselling services

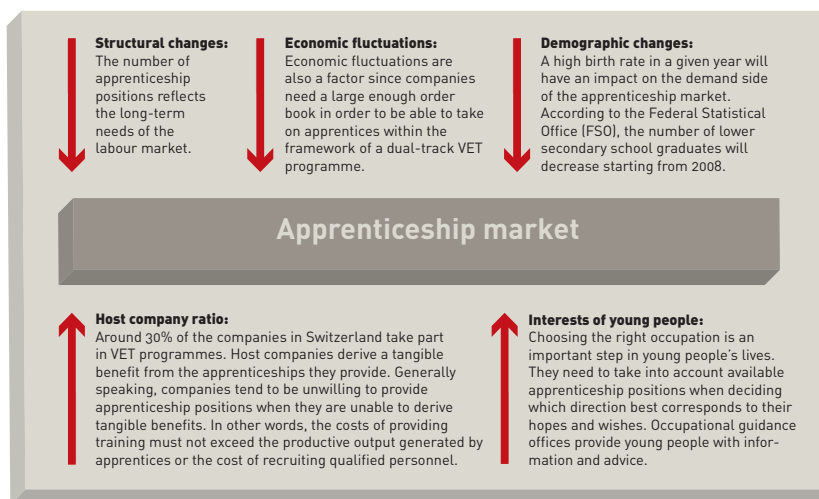
Open to young people and adults.

Vocational schools

Vocational schools generally work with host companies on what is referred to as a dual-track approach to learning: students learn theoretical principles at the vocational school part-time and do an apprenticeship at a host company part time to gain practical skills. Some vocational schools provide students with both education and training on the basis of a full-time curriculum.

THE APPRENTICESHIP MARKET

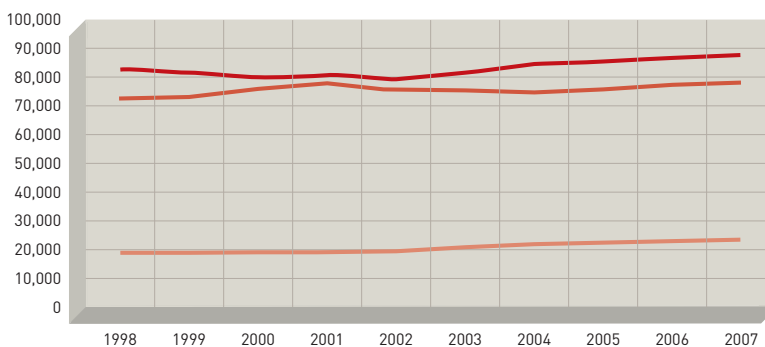
There are two sides to the apprenticeship market: the supply side (host companies offering apprenticeship positions) and the demand side (VET students looking for apprenticeship positions). The State plays a mediating role: it ensures the best possible general conditions for host companies, encourages the provision of apprenticeship positions and helps young people to choose an occupation.



ENTERING THE LABOUR MARKET

Around two-thirds of young people coming out of compulsory education enrol in a VET programme. Dual-track VET programmes (i.e. part-time vocational school, part-time apprenticeship at host company) are by far the most common form of vocational education and training. Full-time VET programmes at vocational schools are more popular among students in the French- and Italian-speaking regions of Switzerland than among students in the German-speaking region.

Students entering upper-secondary level



Lower-secondary school students
Selective school students
Vocational school students*

■	82,300	80,700	80,000	80,400	79,800	81,800	84,300	85,700	87,000	88,300
■	19,200	19,200	19,300	19,300	19,500	20,800	22,000	22,300	23,200	23,400
■	72,800	73,800	76,000	77,800	76,100	75,400	75,100	75,600	78,100	78,300

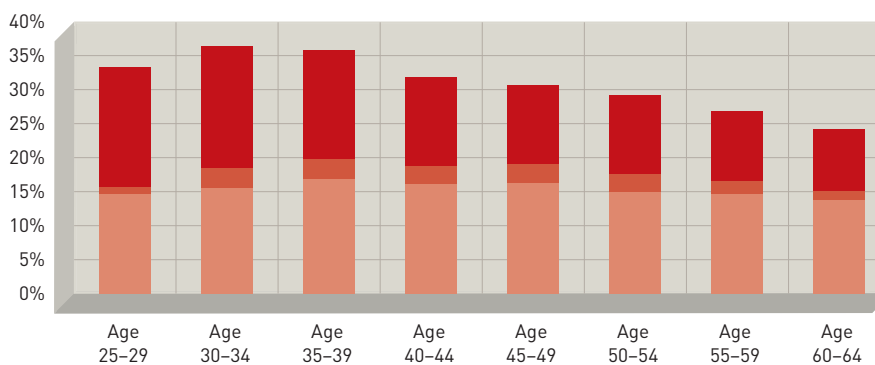
INCREASING NUMBER OF TERTIARY-LEVEL DEGREE HOLDERS

The number of tertiary-level degree holders has steadily increased. In 2007, one-third of the population had a professional college or university degree.

PET qualifications by type

Professional College Degree	2,800	3,300	3,600	3,600	4,000	4,100	4,100	4,200
Advanced Federal PET Diploma	3,200	3,300	3,100	3,000	3,200	2,600	2,900	2,500
Federal PET Diploma	6,100	8,900	9,500	12,400	11,400	12,200	13,200	11,700
Other PET Certificate	8,800	9,000	8,700	8,000	10,700	10,600	9,400	8,800
Total	20,900	24,500	24,900	27,000	29,300	29,500	29,600	27,200
	1995	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007

Tertiary-level degrees by age group 2008

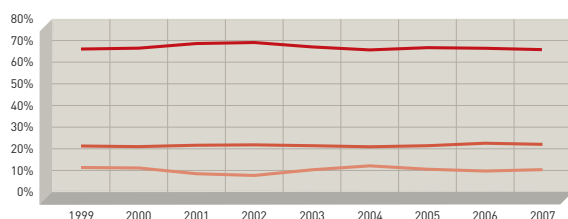


Tertiary-level A	17.7%	18.1%	16.1%	13.2%	11.5%	11.7%	10.3%	9.1%
Tertiary-level A and B	1.0%	2.8%	2.8%	2.5%	2.7%	2.5%	1.8%	1.3%
Tertiary-level B	14.7%	15.6%	16.9%	16.2%	16.4%	15.0%	14.8%	13.8%

GRADUATION RATE OF 90%

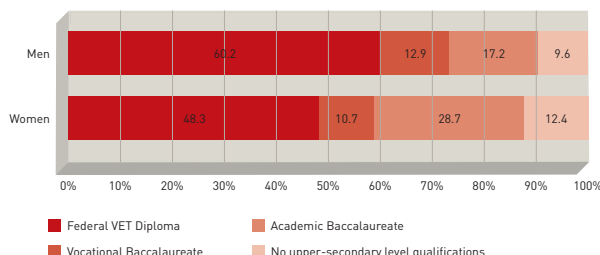
VET qualifications increase a person's job prospects on the labour market and form the basis for lifelong learning. In Switzerland, 90% percent of young people hold upper-secondary level qualifications. The aim is to increase this figure even more in the coming years.

Upper-secondary level graduation rates



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Vocational school	66.1%	66.5%	68.6%	69.1%	67.0%	65.6%	66.7%	66.4%	66.3%
Selective school	21.9%	21.6%	22.2%	22.4%	22.0%	21.6%	22.0%	23.1%	22.8%
No upper-secondary qualifications	12.0%	11.9%	9.3%	8.4%	11.0%	12.8%	11.3%	10.5%	10.9%

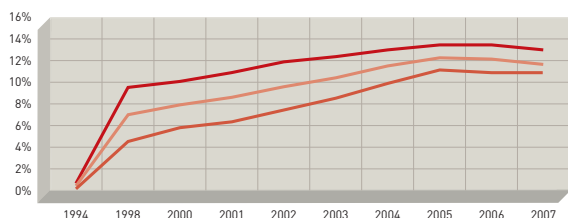
Completed upper-secondary level education and training in 2007



VOCATIONAL BACCALAUREATE: A SUCCESS STORY

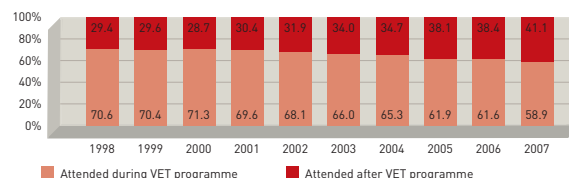
The Federal Vocational Baccalaureate (FVB) was introduced in 1994. It is awarded to VET students with strong academic skills. Issued as a complement to the Federal VET Diploma, the FVB entitles the holder to enrol directly in a Swiss university of applied sciences (UAS). If an FVB holder then takes the University Aptitude Test (UAT), the transition to a cantonal university or either of Switzerland's two federal institutes of technology (FIT) is also possible.

Percentage of VET graduates issued an FVB



	1994	1998	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Men	0.5%	9.4%	10.0%	10.8%	11.8%	12.3%	12.9%	13.4%	13.4%	12.9%
Woman	0%	4.4%	5.7%	6.2%	7.2%	8.4%	9.9%	10.9%	10.7%	10.7%
Total	0.3%	6.9%	7.8%	8.5%	9.5%	10.3%	11.4%	12.2%	12.1%	11.8%

Attendance of FVB preparatory courses



TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

The trademark and strength of VET/PET programmes is their direct correlation with the needs of the labour market. This is reflected in various training arrangements.

Vocational education and training (VET)

In-company training

With the dual-track approach to learning, students attend courses at vocational schools on a part-time basis. The remaining time is spent doing an apprenticeship at a host company where they are taught the practical skills needed for their chosen occupation.

In some cases, host companies may wish to combine their strengths to offer one or more apprenticeships in a modular format. Such host company networks are suitable for companies which have limited staff capacities or which are specialised in only one or more aspects covered by the VET programme.

In-school education

Vocational schools provide in-school education. This consists of vocational instruction and general academic subjects. There are a number of ways in which VET programmes can be organised: the standard way is for students to attend courses one to two days per week at the vocational school and do their apprenticeship at a host company for the remaining three to four days per week; the sliding-scale model (initially more days attending courses at the vocational school and gradually decreasing the number of days to spend more time doing the apprenticeship) is another alternative; basic training years are a third alternative, etc. Some vocational schools also offer a full-time curriculum (e.g. trade schools, commercial schools, etc.) without the need for students to do an apprenticeship.

Industry courses

Industry courses are meant to complement in-school education and in-company training. Industry courses often take place at third-party training centres run by the industries involved.

