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Advanced Skill Formation between Vocationalization and Academization: The Governance of Professional Schools and Dual Study Programs in Germany

Abstract: Changing skill requirements in the labor market and rising educational expectations of individuals have led educational stakeholders and employers to search for new skill formation strategies. In this chapter, we analyze the governance structures of two innovative forms of advanced professional training in Germany: professional schools and dual study programs. While professional schools represent a vocationalization of academic learning, dual study programs are a case of an academization of vocational education. Both combine academic as well as vocational education and training elements, challenging the dichotomous classification commonly found in the political economy and educational policy literatures of skill formation in Germany. We offer an explorative institutional analysis to capture the diverse governance structures of such new forms of advanced skill formation. The chapter identifies new trends related to multi-actor governance constellations at the nexus of vocational training and higher education and discusses consequences for contemporary policy-making.

Keywords: educational governance, academization, vocationalization, professional schools, dual study programs

Introduction: The Governance of Advanced Professional Training

It has long been acknowledged by policy-makers that there is a need to adjust skill formation to technological change and increasing global economic competition, not least to ensure high levels of social welfare (Crouch, Finegold & Sako, 1999). One major response has been

the expansion of *advanced forms of work-oriented professional education and training programs* at the higher education level (henceforth referred to as APET) that strike a new balance between academic general and vocational education and training. A central example is the proliferation of dual study programs and professional schools in Germany. We show that these programs typically arise from the bottom-up initiative of HE organizations and employers at the subnational level, often further driven by strong student demand. Yet, despite their rising significance, we still lack a thorough conceptual understanding of the governance patterns that characterize new forms of APET. The goal of this chapter is to contribute to a better understanding of the governance-related aspects of APET relevant for meeting the increasing demand for practically *and* academically trained professionals across private and public-sector employers.

Germany is traditionally regarded as a distinct ideal type for the organization of skill formation and related educational policies (Clark, 1983; Thelen, 2004). It has, for instance, a strong, highly reputable dual system, which is governed within long-standing structures of social partnership between employers and employees (Rothe, 2001; Greinert, 2005; Deißinger & Frommberger, 2010; Euler, 2013). The German case is typically regarded as a collective skill formation system (Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012); dual apprenticeship training has a long tradition and represents a foundational element of the coordinated German market economy (e.g., Hall & Soskice, 2001). Given the strong position of traditional apprenticeships (Bosch & Charest, 2008) and considering the pronounced institutional divide (“educational schism”) between the spheres of VET and HE in Germany (Crouch et al., 1999; Baethge, 2006), the emergence of an APET field, which straddles the boundaries between the two spheres, is rather striking. Key examples of APET in the German context are dual study programs and professional schools, which have become firmly established in recent years. Dual study programs are offered at the bachelor’s and master’s levels. They combine practice periods at a firm with academic learning at a HE organization. The main driver for the creation of this innovative education format is academization – that is, the goal is to accommodate increasing levels of academic knowledge required in certain occupations (Graf, 2017). Professional schools, on the other hand, are organizations offering

interdisciplinary academic education, mostly at the postgraduate level, combined with practical training elements related to a specific profession, such as business administration, public health, law, or public policy (Römmele & Staemmler, 2012). In this case, the integration of VET features, such as practitioner-led courses or workplace training, into academic programs signifies a vocationalization of HE. This, in turn, derives from the demand to provide more practice orientation in HE programs. Interestingly, an academization of VET and a vocationalization of HE (Severing & Teichler, 2013) both go hand in hand with an increased cooperation of HE organizations and employers in the provision of advanced professional training. However, given that most APET formats have only recently emerged in the German HE landscape, little is known with regard to their governance configurations, especially in comparison to the traditional dual apprenticeship model.

In absence of an established classification for comparing work-oriented university-based forms of professional training, this chapter further develops a recent conceptualization to aid in their identification (Graf, 2016). Dual apprenticeships at the secondary level are included in this comparison as a starting point and point of contrast. We systematically analyze two major types of APET in Germany – dual study programs and professional schools – with a specific focus on the relevant system and governance dimensions and related policy implications. We show that both types resemble each other with regard to their positioning in the overall national education system, but display relevant differences with regard to their governance dimensions. A better understanding of the respective multi-actor configurations is important considering that research on skill formation has mainly focused on either VET or HE. APET, on the other hand, bring together institutional elements and actors from both fields.

In the following, relevant insights from both research fields (VET and HE) are combined. First, we describe our research design and key analytical concepts. This is followed by an analysis of dual study programs and professional schools at the German HE level, which are subsequently compared. The final section discusses the prospects for this new form advanced skill formation.

Analytical Approach and Case Selection

Our interdisciplinary framework combines sociology and political science perspectives related to the study of education and training. Organizational sociology has traditionally focused more on HE, whereas due to its greater affinity with employers, political economy research has usually dealt more with firm-oriented VET. The present chapter brings together the two disciplinary perspectives with the goal of identifying the governance structures of these new forms of training located at the interface between VET and HE.

Our comparative framework takes the German system of dual apprenticeship training at the secondary level as a starting point and analytical touchstone. This system is internationally well known – not least due to the low levels of youth unemployment associated with it (e.g., Busemeyer, 2015). This dual apprenticeship training represents the original model and institutional core of work-oriented professional training in Germany with strong involvement of actors from the world of work. It is presented in a compressed form here, as it has already been described in detail in the relevant existing literature (e.g., Rothe, 2001; Greinert, 2005; Culpepper & Thelen, 2008; Gonon, 2016). Dual apprenticeships, which train skilled workers, are defined in particular by national standardization based on the Vocational Training Act and the Crafts Code, as well as by strong traditions of social-partnership-based governance and decentralized cooperation between firms, for example, via chambers of commerce (Emmenegger, Graf & Tramusch, 2019). The vocational schools, which deliver the theory-based component of the training, rarely play a significant role as independent actors in the organizational field of dual training. While the vocational schools are funded by the state, the firms cover the cost of company-based training and the trainees' salaries.

In this chapter, we move beyond the traditional model of apprenticeships to explore the ongoing proliferation of new forms of APET in the German skill formation system and related governance modes. This system is typically characterized by a strong institutional divide between VET and HE dimensions. New APET formats bridge this divide by adopting features of the respective other system. We compare

one key case of the academization of VET, namely dual study programs, and one of the vocationalization of HE, namely professional schools. The most prominent example of a provider of dual study programs is the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW), which was built on the pre-existing structure of vocational academies in Baden-Württemberg (see Section “Dual Study Programs and the Case of Academization”). Relatively similar forms of work-based HE are also expanding in other countries, as in the form of cooperative study programs (co-ops) offered in the United States (Graf, 2016). A prominent instance of professional schools is public policy schools, which train professionals mainly for the public service. These schools can be seen as particularly striking examples of the recent vocationalization of German HE (see Section “Professional Schools and the Case of Vocationalization”). Globally known examples are the Harvard Kennedy School (Cambridge, MA), the LSE Institute of Public Affairs (London), or the School of Public Affairs at Sciences Po (Paris). In Germany, counterparts are the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt, the NRW School of Governance and the University of Governance in Berlin (Hertie School), all of which were established within the last two decades (Breidenbach et al., 2008).

While our focus lies with the cross-sectional governance analysis of current APET programs, we occasionally reference historical developments for further contextualization. The relevant information and dimensions, including possible overarching context conditions (see Georg, 2005, p. 190), have been drawn from analyzing the limited available secondary literature, policy documents from the fields of VET and HE, and a variety of organizational sources, including websites, mission statements, and institutional data reports.

The next section presents the conceptualization in general terms. In the case study analyses of dual study programs and professional schools the respective conceptual dimensions are then illustrated in detail.

Conceptualizing Advanced Professional Training at the Nexus of Vocational and Higher Education

Our conceptualization, which is adapted from and further develops Graf (2016), includes two key dimensions. First, we present the system dimension, which serves to describe and locate work-based HE within the overall structure of the national education system. The second dimension, which is the main focus in this chapter, pertains to the governance of these new forms of APET.

The system dimensions focuses mainly on structural features that elucidate the positioning of educational programs within their environment. It largely builds on core categories from sociological research on general and academic education (Allmendinger, 1989; Baethge, 2006; Powell & Solga, 2011). However, this perspective is extended such that it can also depict training programs that are located at the interface between the traditional sub-systems of VET and HE. Table 1 lists the four system subdimensions – all of which mainly focus on how education and training is institutionalized at the national level.

Table 1: System dimensions (SYS)

Training level (vertical positioning)	SYS1-Level
Relation to VET and HE systems (horizontal positioning)	SYS2-Relation HE/VET
Standardization of education and training	SYS3-Standardization
Transition to labour market (career prospects of graduates)	SYS4-Careers

Following the well-established classification by Allmendinger (1989), we first locate the respective training forms in terms of the educational level with which it is associated (“vertical positioning,” SYS1-Level). In this context, we distinguish between work-oriented forms of training at the upper-secondary, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels.

The relationship of the educational program in question to the vocational education and university systems (“horizontal positioning”)

is defined in the second system dimension (SYS2-Relation HE/VET). In most countries, these sub-systems (VET and HE) have traditionally been separated by some form of institutional divide (Crouch et al., 1999; Baethge, 2006). In recent years, scholars have pointed out that the institutional embedding of work-oriented education in VET or HE plays a decisive role for its status and performance (e.g., Severing & Teichler, 2013), in addition to shaping patterns of social mobility (Powell & Solga, 2011; Gonon, 2013).

The third system dimension (SYS3-Standardization) concerns the degree of national standardization of work-oriented training programs. The degree of the “provision of equal educational standards nationwide” (Allmendinger, 1989, p. 231) particularly influences the general recognition of qualifications and their transferability between different employers and industrial sectors (see also Busemeyer, 2015).

With the fourth system dimension (SYS4-Careers), we refer to the job positions intended for students. In the case of APET programs, we can broadly distinguish between skilled careers, that is, careers as skilled workers in an occupation for which one is trained and qualified, or membership to the (middle) management with specific professional experience.

Besides system dimensions, governance characteristics – which are well established in political science research on skill formation – are central to the analysis of APET (Table 2). Here, the basic assumption is that it is usually not feasible to establish work-oriented forms of professional training solely through state or market-based governance; instead, more complex interactions are likely to exist at various levels. Potentially relevant stakeholders include educational organizations, public governance organizations, individual firms, employers’ associations, and employees. Thus, this dimension emphasizes multiple actors and their agency and, therefore, to some extent counterbalances the structural focus of the earlier system dimensions. Table 2 lists the four governance dimensions. In complex decentralized systems, such as the German one, these may operate at the national, sectoral, or regional levels (on subnational variation in collective skill formation systems, see Emmenegger, Graf & Trampusch, 2019).

By pointing to the world of work nexus (GOV1), as well as the decentralized cooperation of individual employers (GOV2) (Culpepper,

Table 2: Governance dimensions (GOV)

World of work nexus	GOV1-World of work
Employer cooperation to avoid market failure	GOV2-Inter-employer cooperation
Influence of educational organizations as independent institutional actors	GOV3-Educational organizations as actors
Financing (theory and practice phases)	GOV4-Financing

2003), we take into account two core features that traditionally characterize the governance of dual training systems. The role of actors from the world of work in the educational program is captured in the first governance dimension (GOV1-World of work). In coordinated market economies, a traditional instance of this would be social-partnership governance (e.g., Hall & Soskice, 2001; Greinert, 2005) – and the state’s role in this context. This can involve collective cooperation between employer representatives (e.g., associations and chambers of commerce) and employee representatives (usually trade unions), often under more or less passive supervision of public authorities (e.g., Thelen, 2004). However, in the post-industrial era, the governance arrangement between core actors in industrial relation systems can be configured in more flexible ways beyond traditional forms of social partnership (Martin & Graf, 2019; Emmenegger, Graf & Strebel, 2020). More generally, the GOV1 dimension is about how actors from the world of work are involved in and shape skill formation, which can lead to both practically relevant professional qualifications and successful transitions from the education system into the labor market (Euler, 2013). Furthermore, the arrangements involving employer, employee, schools, and the state can be strongly or weakly institutionalized and display a high or low level of formality.

In the second governance dimension (GOV2-Inter-employer cooperation), we examine the relevance of cooperation between employers in the governance of work-oriented forms of education and training. This is often referred to as the degree of decentralized cooperation of employers in skill formation (Culpepper, 2003; Streeck & Kenworthy, 2005; Culpepper & Thelen, 2008). Such cooperation, again, can be formal or informal and strongly or weakly institutionalized. For instance,

systematic involvement of intermediary organizations like employers' associations or chambers of commerce is usually a sign of a rather high level of institutionalization (Emmenegger, Graf & Strebel, 2020). Of principle interest here is the question of how firms that are usually in competition with each other learn to cooperate successfully – for example, to prevent the poaching of workers.

Given that this is a study about developments at the nexus of VET and HE, it is necessary to also take into account a central insight from organizational theory on the functioning of HE systems, namely the significant influence of educational organizations as institutional actors in their own right (e.g., Brint & Karabel, 1991; Meier, 2009) (GOV3-Educ. organizations as actors). The level of individual organization's actorhood is referred to in the third governance dimension (GOV3). In this context, organizational sociologists (e.g., for community colleges in the United States, see Brint & Karabel, 1991) and education researchers (e.g., Gonon & Maurer, 2012) have demonstrated that the management staff of educational organizations, who usually want to strengthen the position and legitimacy of their own organization, can significantly shape institutional change in their organizational field.

Finally, governance characteristics of educational programs are usually directly related to aspects of financing (GOV4-Financing). Especially in the case of work-oriented training forms – and thus training forms with intensive linkages to employers – the financial aspect is of utmost and potentially conflict-laden importance (e.g., Kell, 2006, pp. 475–479; Busemeyer & Trampusch, 2012, p. 19). The central question is: Who bears the training costs? Here, we can distinguish, for instance, between the financing of the theory and the workplace-based parts of the training. In the case of work-oriented training forms, a mixed-type financing by the government and training firm and (co-) financing by the trainees is common.

Interactions and interdependencies between system and governance dimensions are possible. For instance, the configuration of system dimensions SYS1 (“training level”) and SYS2 (“relation to VET and HE”) impacts the boundaries of the governance context, which includes HE organizations as key actors (GOV3) and is characterized by complex public-private funding structures (GOV4). Moreover, a strongly institutionalized world of work nexus (GOV1) and a

high degree of decentralized cooperation (GOV2) can potentially be linked to a relatively high level of standardization (SYS3) and smooth education-to-work transitions (SYS4) despite limited central government influence. While our two case studies provide first indications of the concrete relationships between the dimensions, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to deal with these interactions in detail. Each case study first offers a systematic analysis and short historical account of the respective APET format and then systematically analyzes it by drawing on the relevant system and governance dimensions.

Dual Study Programs and the Case of Academization

In Germany, the historical development of dual apprenticeships is linked to a strong institutional separation between VET and HE (Baethge, 2006). This divide, however, is increasingly challenged by “academic drift” (Deißinger & Gonon, 2016). One key trend suggesting a gradual change is the expansion of dual study programs (Graf, 2017). Dual study programs are active at the interface between VET and HE (see Krone, 2015), connecting organizational and institutional elements of the classic VET and the classic HE systems. These programs lead to bachelor’s or master’s degrees, sometimes integrating official VET qualifications. They can be seen to represent an academization of traditional VET training.

In 2016, the number of students in dual study programs broke the 100,000 mark (BIBB, 2018, p. 196). While dual programs have existed since the 1970s, they have grown especially rapidly over the last 10 years (Krone, Nieding & Ratermann-Busse, 2019, p. 13). For instance, in Baden-Wuerttemberg – where these programs were first established in the early 1970s – about 10 % of HE students are now enrolled in dual study programs (Statistik-BW, 2018). While the total number of apprentices in the traditional dual system at the upper-secondary level is far higher (approx. 1.3 million) than the number of students in dual study programs (Ertl, 2020, p. 79), the latter can be considered disproportionately relevant because they are increasingly

diverting the most capable and motivated youths from this traditional system, not least due to rising educational aspirations (Faßhauer & Severing, 2016). Dual study programs are particularly common in economics, engineering, and computer sciences, but also in health care – that is, subjects close to the “world of work” and associated with high-skilled jobs. The continuing expansion of dual study programs has led to an increasing differentiation of the German HE landscape in these subject areas. The providers of dual study programs, next to the employers that offer the workplace training, are primarily universities of applied sciences (59 %), vocational academies (15 %), and the DHBW (20 %). In addition, some traditional research universities offer such programs (6 %) (BIBB, 2014, p. 28).

At the bachelor’s level, the *apprenticeship-integrating* dual study programs – which in some cases also involve a vocational school – typically lead to a recognized qualification from the VET system as well as a bachelor’s degree. In addition to this original type, there are *practice-integrating*, *job-integrating*, and *job-accompanying* dual study courses. These types of dual study programs also work on the basic principle of a systematic link between theory-based and practical phases at an organizational and content level, but they are concluded with a bachelor’s degree only, not an additional vocational qualification. At the master’s level, dual study programs typically do not lead to double degrees. However, there are some programs in craft management offering an integrated master craftsman’s diploma.

While dual study programs are formally located at the post-secondary level (SYS1-Level), they are not part of the higher VET system (such as master craftsman or technician training). Instead, they are located within the university system (SYS2-Relation HE/VET). In light of a feared lack of skilled workers and engineers, they provide firms with an attractive opportunity for recruiting high-performing secondary school leavers for middle management positions (e.g., Ertl, 2020), while also catering to a growing group of secondary school graduates with HE entrance qualifications who seek a hands-on, challenging – and salaried – academic training with good prospects of subsequent employment at the training firm (BIBB, 2014; Baethge & Wolter, 2015) (SYS4-Careers). Indeed, employers in part tend to place graduates of dual study programs in positions that used to be filled by individuals

who completed higher VET in addition to dual apprenticeship training (Heidemann & Koch, 2013). In general, the extent to which firms will use dual study programs to complement or substitute dual apprenticeship training and higher VET qualifications will crucially shape the future character of collective skill formation in Germany.

On the basis of the commonly required criteria for the accreditation of bachelor's degrees, the specific form of a dual study program is mainly determined within a negotiation process between the HE organization and the associated firms. This is reflected in an overall lower level of standardization of learning processes in dual study programs in comparison to traditional apprenticeships (SYS3-Standardization). For example, the organization of in-firm learning as well as the payment of students can vary from case to case (see also Becker, 2006). Only for the *apprenticeship-integrating* dual study programs are there more universal in-firm and external standards pertaining to the vocational qualification additionally obtained within the program. More generally, while the practical part of dual study programs is financed by the training firms, the exact mix of private and public funding for the theory part is not standardized at the national level (GOV4-Financing).

The role of unions in the establishment and development of dual study programs is limited; historically, unions play a markedly smaller role in the German HE system than in the traditional dual apprenticeship system. Employers therefore have a structurally stronger influence over dual study programs than they do in the case of dual apprenticeships (see, e.g., Busse, 2009) (GOV1-World of work). In the HE field, the participating firms usually only have to negotiate with universities on how the practice phase of a dual study program should be designed – which is facilitated by German universities enjoying far-reaching autonomy with regard to teaching and research in most fields of study (German Basic Law, article 5, paragraph 3). With regard to the work-based part of the training, the state typically exercises a control function only indirectly via the accreditation agencies for bachelor's and master's degree programs. Thus, while the world of work nexus is based on structured cooperation between the relevant private and public actors, it is less formally institutionalized than in the case of traditional apprenticeship training. The current expansion of dual study programs is governed less by educational policy actors in a top-down manner; instead, it is driven

from the bottom up by large and medium-sized firms that cooperate with HE organizations interested in innovative degree programs. Many HE organizations with an applied orientation have realized that these programs are an efficient way to recruit talented students and position themselves vis-à-vis traditional research universities (Jahn, 1999, p. 19) (GOV3-Educ. organizations as actors).

The policy tradition of an elaborated decentralized cooperation between large, medium-sized, and small firms in organizing VET is called into question by dual study programs (GOV2-Inter-employer cooperation). Especially for smaller firms, it is often too complex and expensive to develop and implement such a program. Conversely, large firms are significantly more relevant for HE organizations than small ones because large firms can sometimes fill entire classrooms or programs themselves (see Krone, 2015). Large firms with a significant proportion of dual students at one site may therefore exert strong influence on the design of the curricula. The result is a sometimes difficult bargaining process in which the various responsible actors from the universities and the firm negotiate the content of the course within the respective study program committees. Furthermore, chambers of commerce, which are a central component of the decentralized cooperation between firms for classic dual apprenticeships, are of little importance within dual study programs (Becker, 2006; Busse, 2009). The strong influence of individual firms on the design of specific dual study programs can jeopardize the holistic quality of both the academic and the vocational components of the training, thus favoring firm-specific content.

In the following, we analyze the case of professional schools, which will then be compared to dual study programs and dual apprenticeships.

Professional Schools and the Case of Vocationalization

Professional schools convey both academic education and practice-oriented training specific to a societal sector such as business,

education, engineering, law, public health, or public policy. Constitutive features of professional school education are interdisciplinarity and a practice-oriented approach to teaching, learning, and research (Weiler, 2003). By combining academic and vocational training elements, professional schools seek to educate both future practitioners as well as future scholars of the respective field. Students are to be initiated into the respective profession while also reflecting academically on its ethics and practices (Diekhoff, 1965 on the US case). This educational mission translates into curricula which include requirements from different academic disciplines and sector-specific skill transmission, for instance, in the form of work placements and practitioner-led training, as well as case studies and simulations (Bertram, Walter & Zürn, 2006; Breidenbach et al., 2008).

Professional schools are either independent educational organizations or sub-units of HE organizations, primarily offering degrees at the postgraduate level (master's and doctoral degrees). The model was first established in the US HE system at the end of the 19th century in response to rapidly changing and increasingly complex professional practices, and a demand for more normatively grounded academic training alongside skill transmission (Banks, 1925; Anheier, 2019). In Germany, the traditional schism between VET and HE hindered the emergence and expansion of academic-vocational forms of HE such as professional schools for a long time. However, since the 2000s, a growing horizontal and vertical differentiation of the HE system and the need to prepare university graduates as professionals for a dynamically evolving labor market have created conditions in which German education stakeholders are increasingly engaging with the professional school model (Römmele & Staemmler, 2012).

While German professional schools have been established in a variety of study domains¹, we scrutinize more closely professional schools of public policy. They are a particularly striking example of the recent vocationalization of German HE, given that in Germany, the domain of politics and public policy was previously firmly in the hands

1 These include business schools, schools of public health, and schools in the law field.

of traditional research universities, without close ties to the profession (Bertram et al., 2006).

Public policy schools unite a triad of foci: (1) policy analysis from an academic perspective, (2) management and administration in a quest for process optimization, and (3) policy-making and politics (Anheier, 2019). Their overall goal is to bestow students with a deeper understanding of the complex social and political contexts within which policies are designed and implemented (Allison, 2008), and to enable them to “develop, assess, and evaluate alternative approaches to current and emerging issues” (Pal & Clark, 2016, p. 284).

The most prominent programs of public policy schools are Master’s degrees for Public Policy (MPP). During the MPP, students complete courses across the social sciences with a particular focus on analytical training, politics, economics, law, sociology, and organizational behavior (cf. Henderson & Chetkovich, 2014). Special emphasis is given to providing students with hands-on experience in the public sector and drawing from the expertise of working professionals. Practice-oriented, vocational elements in the MPP include project courses with external partners and MA theses written in collaboration with practice partners (Grasselt, Hoffmann & Korte, 2009). Leadership courses including project management and presentation techniques are another key aspect of MPP curricula (Breidenbach et al., 2008).

Whereas public policy schools such as the Harvard Kennedy School or the LSE Institute of Public Affairs have long been go-to places of training for future public sector professionals, until the 2000s, no such HE organization existed in Germany. Political science faculties focused on academic training, while public service positions were predominantly assumed by law graduates (Bertram et al., 2006). A shift occurred at the turn of the 21st century, when demand for interdisciplinarily trained governance professionals grew across public-sector related employers such as government offices, political parties, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). At the same time, the Bologna Process enabled the creation of study programs distinctively located at the postgraduate level (Breidenbach et al., 2008; see Bernhard in this volume).

This led to the establishment of the first German public policy schools in the early 2000s. The best-known examples, to which we will

refer in our analysis, are the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt (WBS) founded in 2002, the Hertie School (HS) and the Humboldt-Viadrina School of Governance (HVS) (both established in 2003), as well as the NRW School of Governance at the University of Duisburg-Essen (NRW SoG) (founded in 2006). Organizational survival was not given considering this unprecedented educational format in German HE. While the HVS closed in 2014 due to funding issues, the three other public policy schools have successfully positioned themselves in the German HE system, drawing in application numbers that far exceed available study spots (NRW SoG, 2016).

Public policy schools are formally located at the post-secondary level (SYS1-Level). Quite remarkable for German HE, they only operate at the postgraduate level. This type of post-bachelor's degree education is characteristic of professional schools and allows students with diverse academic backgrounds to enter the MPP programs. Public policy schools are situated within the university system (SYS2-Relation HE/VET). The WBS is an organizational unit of the Faculty of Legal, Social, and Economic Sciences at the University of Erfurt, while the NRW SoG is part of the University of Duisburg-Essen's Institute for Political Science. The HS in Berlin is a private university founded by the Hertie Foundation. All MPP programs designed by the German public policy schools had to undergo accreditation procedures. Local differences exist with regard to core curricula requirements. Nevertheless, each of the three schools makes explicit references to international standards of public policy schools (SYS3-Standardization), partially emulating and adapting successful models and practices from the Anglo-American HE context (Breidenbach et al., 2008; Weiler, 2014). In terms of intended employment for MPP students (SYS4-Careers), a clear focus lies with middle management and leading positions in public sector-related professions across local, regional, national, or supranational levels of governance. These include jobs in political administration, political offices, NGOs, and international organizations (Grasselt et al., 2009). Although public policy schools focus on training public sector professionals, their graduates also assume positions across the private and third sectors, showing that the type of education and skills provided by the schools are in demand by a variety of employers (Breidenbach et al., 2008).

The vocationalization of academic education is highly visible in German public policy schools. Not only does the choice of a professional school model in itself testify to the growing importance of more practice-oriented academic education. Practitioners are also involved in the curriculum design process, and the language used in MPP program descriptions includes frequent allusions to the world of work such as “practice and problem-oriented” learning; “real-world experience”; and “techniques,” “tools,” and “skill development” (Breidenbach et al., 2008; Weiler, 2014). More generally, we find considerable interaction between students and employers fostered by professional schools (GOV1-World of work). For instance, experts from public-sector related professions are very frequently invited to join the schools as visiting faculty, act as guest speakers during regular courses, or get invited to regular public panel discussions alongside academic faculty (e.g., NRW SoG, 2016). Through mandatory internships, students learn to apply their previously acquired theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts. Close contact and partnerships with public institutions, NGOs, and private firms facilitate access to relevant work placement opportunities. For instance, the “Integrated Professional Year” at the HS implies the possibility of a one-year paid internship at one of the HS’s employer partners (HS, 2020a), which signifies an institutionalized cooperation between professional school and employer. Close ties to the world of work are also visible in the “Executive Education” or “Advanced Training” programs. These are specifically targeted toward working professionals in executive positions, who seek to gain knowledge about public policy matters. Executive education is offered in the form of customized trainings or a part-time Master’s program specifically tailored toward working professionals (NRW SoG, 2016; HS, 2020b). While employers are highly involved in the design and provision of education and training at public policy schools, the world of work nexus is rather weakly institutionalized and formalized, with individual configurations depending heavily on the respective school’s management practices.

Considering the variety of potential career paths of MPP students and the diversity of actors involved in curriculum development, the role of unions in the steering of the programs is far less prevalent than in traditional VET. Furthermore, individual employers do not necessarily

coordinate among themselves, but they can exercise collective influence on the professional schools through their advisory role (GOV2-Inter-employer cooperation). This is the case, for instance, with the HS's Practice Council, which consists of representatives from public-sector related organizations, who consult the school on curricula development (HS, 2020c).

All schools developed through bottom-up initiatives usually led by the respective university or, in the case of the HS, a foundation (Breidenbach et al., 2008). Given the far-reaching autonomy that the schools enjoy with regard to teaching and research, and their need to independently establish ties with practitioners and potential employers for their students, the schools themselves act as strong institutional actors. This is further underlined by the observation that management and staff of professional schools of public policy first needed to establish the legitimacy of their organizations given their newcomer status in the German HE landscape (GOV3-Educational organizations as actors). German public policy schools display a variety of financing models (GOV4-financing). For instance, the WBS is publicly funded as part of the University of Erfurt, drawing on additional project-related third-party funding from foundations and private organizations (WBS, 2020). The NRW SoG relies entirely on third-party funding while being affiliated with the public University of Duisburg-Essen. The school's sponsors have included foundations and private firms, primarily from the Ruhr region (Grasselt et al., 2009). The HS is a private HE organization, which derives its main funding from a foundation while also drawing on further third-party funding and tuition fees (Weiler, 2014).

Comparing Dual Study Programs and Professional Schools

In this section, we compare dual apprenticeships, dual study programs, and professional schools based on the system dimensions (Table 3) and governance dimensions (Table 4) addressed above. This comparison shows that by combining VET and HE as well as the interrelated analytical dimensions from sociology and political science in one overarching framework, it is possible to identify shared core features and

governance patterns as well as relevant differences between these work-oriented training programs.

Overall, we find that dual study programs and professional schools within the German national education system display similar characteristics in their institutional set-up at the system level (Table 3). They form a cluster of work-oriented professional training formats that clearly sets itself apart from the classical dual apprenticeship. APET is exclusively located at the postsecondary level whereas dual apprenticeships form part of the secondary training level (SYS1). In addition, both dual study programs and professional schools are part of the HE system (SYS2). While the degree of national standardization (SYS3) is high for dual apprenticeships as they have to meet unified national standards, this is not the case for APET, where vast local differences exist. Interestingly, professional schools explicitly reference international standards of education, implying an education and career outlook that transcends the nation state. The anticipated career paths also differ greatly between apprenticeships and the APET cluster, with apprenticeships preparing students for skilled labor and APET training students mainly for (middle) management positions (SYS4).

Table 3: Stylized representation of the system dimensions of dual apprenticeships, dual study programs and professional schools

	SYS1: Training Level	SYS2: Relation to VET and HE System	SYS3: Standardization	SYS4: Career Prospects
Dual apprenticeships	Secondary	Core of the VET system	Unified national standard	Skilled labour
Dual study programmes	Post-secondary ^a (Bachelor and Master levels)	Part of the university system ^b	Significant local differences	Middle management
Professional schools	Post-secondary, postgraduate (Master and PhD levels)	Part of the university system ^c	Local differences while referring to international standards	Leadership and middle management positions

Source: Synthesis of empirical analysis

^a Sometimes involving dual apprenticeship certificate.

^b In some cases leads to dual qualification of “bachelor” and “vocational training certificate”.

^c Different HE organizational types (independent HE organization or affiliated with research university).

When it comes to the governance dimensions, however, we find that all three types of work-oriented training exhibit some distinctive properties (Table 4). Most strikingly, the degree of institutionalized employer influence varies among the different training formats (GOV1). In the case of dual apprenticeships, which represent the very core of the coordinated economy social-partnership model, the world of work nexus is strongly institutionalized and formalized. Dual study programs display less institutionalization and formalization with regard to the influence of actors from the world of work. In the case of professional schools, world of work interactions are even less institutionalized and formalized. There is also weak and mostly indirect inter-employer cooperation when it comes to professional schools. In dual study programs, we find some more inter-employer cooperation, for instance via consultation on advisory boards. The traditional dual apprenticeship, on the other hand, is typically characterized by strong inter-employer coordination, for instance, in the form of associations or chambers (GOV2). Vocational schools, as constitutive parts of dual apprenticeships, do not act as strong institutional actors, whereas in dual study programs, the HE organizations have considerable autonomy in designing programs. Professional schools act as very strong institutional actors given that they independently design their programs and establish relations with potential employers (GOV3). Financing is handled similarly in apprenticeships and dual study programs. Here the state is key in financing the theoretical education and the practice phase is paid for by the employer. At professional schools, the funding models vary across both theory and practice with a potentially bigger financial involvement of the student (GOV4).

Our analysis suggests that the differences in the governance of APET are linked to the different developmental trajectories of the training formats. More specifically, dual study programs represent a case of *academization* of vocational education. Here, governance features are still rooted to some extent in the formalized social partnership that characterizes apprenticeships, albeit with a weaker presence of unions and an added involvement of a HE organization. Professional schools, on the other hand, are HE organizations which have integrated significant vocational elements into their programs, signifying a process of *vocationalization*. However, they directly build on the institutional

Table 4: Stylized representation of the governance dimensions of dual apprenticeships, dual study programs and professional schools

	GOV1: World of work nexus	GOV2: Inter-employer cooperation	GOV3: Role of educational organisation as an actor	GOV4: Financing (theory; practice)
Dual apprenticeships	Strongly institutionalized; formalized*	High (e.g., through associations and chambers)	Marginal	Theory: state; Practice: employer
Dual study programs	Medium-level institutionalization; less formalized	Limited (e.g., via consultation in supervisory boards of the programs)	Strong, yet sometimes employers can dominate program design	Theory: state and partly employer; Practice: employer
Professional schools	Weakly institutionalized; limited formalization	Weak (e.g., through practice council); mainly indirect	Very strong	Theory: varying, depends on public or private status; Practice: varying; can be (partly) compensated

Source: Synthesis of empirical analysis

*Regulated by National VET Act

autonomy typical of German universities and therefore develop ties to the world of work that tend to be less institutionalized.

While established classifications of skill formation systems – such as the ones by Estevez-Abe, Iversen and Soskice (2001) or Busemeyer and Trampusch (2012) – are well suited to explain the institutional configurations of dual apprenticeship training, our analysis indicates that the analytical dimensions applied here can account more specifically for expanding APET programs. This integrated view is especially relevant in the case of countries in which VET and HE fields have traditionally been separated but where this division is increasingly challenged, for instance, by the expansion of the service and knowledge economy.

Outlook: New Forms of Advanced Work-oriented Professional Education and Training

In this chapter, we provided an institutional analysis and refined conceptualization to capture the system and governance characteristics of new and expanding forms of advanced skill formation in Germany. We explored two innovative forms of advanced professional training in German HE: dual study programs and professional schools. In the former case, the main driver is academization to accommodate the increasing level of academic knowledge required in certain occupations. In the latter case, the key trend we observed is vocationalization to enhance practice-oriented knowledge. In both cases, these programs serve employers who are seeking new strategies to recruit and train people in the face of a dynamically evolving economy and rising educational expectations on the part of individuals. That is, employers increasingly cooperate with HE organizations to recruit talented young people that would otherwise pursue a “purely” academic *or* “purely” vocational education, and train them as highly skilled specialists typically for middle management positions. Furthermore, both combine academic as well as vocational training elements, challenging the common dichotomous classification of VET and HE found in the political economy and educational policy literatures on skill formation in Germany. The two APET types form a new cluster and differ from the traditional social-partnership model of dual apprenticeship training, for instance, with HE organizations assuming more active roles in the education design and delivery. At the same time, dual study programs and professional schools show distinct governance characteristics, especially as the influence of employers is more institutionalized in the case of the former – albeit less than in traditional dual apprenticeship training.

The analysis of APET invites us to reconsider some traditional concepts of employer influence in skill formation in a coordinated market economy like Germany. However, further research is needed to provide a systematic mapping of all APET programs and, thus, to provide the ground for detailed quantitative analyses. A crucial next step would be to conduct in-depth internationally comparative studies on APET,

not least to uncover the respective logics and potential points of contention related to APET in different institutional contexts. One main challenge for educational policy-makers relates to the lack of national-level standards for APET, which is typically characterized by the bottom-up cooperation of various private and public actors at the subnational level. The resulting higher degree of differentiation can imply new inequalities but also opportunities to create significant institutional and organizational innovation. More generally, as advanced professional training formats at the HE level are typically not embedded in traditional social-partnership-based collective governance structures, a wider debate about their social role and potentially more systematic regulation seems useful considering their increasing popularity. This refers, for instance, to the future role of unions in the governance of new forms of work-based skill formation, which is currently limited and can pose challenges with regard to the balancing of diverse interests in the program design. Another example for an increasingly salient governance issue is the relationship and cooperation between small and large employers, which looks more fragile in the case of dual study programs than for traditional forms of work-oriented training. From this differentiated perspective, the emergence of APET is not only of interest to educational scholars and policy-makers but also to all those interested in changing corporatist governance structures more generally.

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Governance Revisited

Challenges and Opportunities for Vocational Education and Training

Regula Bürgi and
Philipp Gonon (Eds.)



PETER LANG

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Governance Revisited

Global trends, such as an ever-rising service economy, rapid technological change and digitalization, challenge skill formation systems. Focussing on European countries, this edited volume examines the variety of European VET governance and VET governance research. In particular, it provides insights into regional, local and decentralized governance at meso (e.g. professional associations) as well as micro level (e.g. learning arrangements). As such, the edited volume sheds light on the hitherto far less explored dimensions of VET governance and highlights challenges as well as opportunities in VET governance in the 21st century.

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Peter lang

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