

# Empirical investigations of costs and benefits of vocational education and training

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# Propositions

of the doctoral thesis

## Empirical Investigations of Costs and Benefits of Vocational Education and Training

by Harald Pfeifer

1. Countries can improve their competitiveness by introducing a transparent and standardized vocational education and training system (Chapter 2).
2. For the individual, occupational specialization in a dual vocational training system bears risks when changing the occupation. However, the skills obtained during the training are highly transferable within occupational clusters (Chapter 4).
3. Firms profit from having access to vocationally trained workers because employing VET workers generates organisational spill overs, like the saving of higher educated workers (Chapter 2).
4. Labour market institutions reduce the risk of poaching. They raise firms' incentives to finance apprenticeship training by increasing their returns on human capital (Chapters 5 and 6).
5. Apprenticeship systems can still function well in countries *without* strong labour market institutions, if firms' benefits (productivity of apprentices) outweigh firms' costs already during the training period (Chapter 5).
6. An important benefit of apprenticeship training to the firm is the saving of recruitment costs of skilled workers. Because average recruitment costs increase with the number of hires, financing apprenticeship training becomes more attractive the more skilled workers are needed in the firm (Chapter 7).
7. Learning while performing productive (skilled) tasks in the firm increases the training quality and at the same time reduces firms' training costs.
8. The excessive youth unemployment in several European countries nowadays cannot be solved solely by implementing large scale apprenticeship programmes.
9. The relationship between the likelihood of successfully finishing a PhD and the time the student spends with a PhD follows a "hump-shaped" pattern.