

The Europe and Central Asia Education Unit presents

The Future of VET

Online | Monday, December 7, 2020 | 10:00-11:30 AM | Washington DC Time

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Presenters: **Rita Almeida**, Economist and Human Development Program Leader for Central America

Ludger Woessmann, Director, Info Center for the Economics of Education and Professor of Economics at the University of Munich

Stefan Wolter, Managing Director, The Swiss Coordination Centre for Research in Education and a Professor of Economics at the University of Bern

Moderator: **Harry Patrinos**, Practice Manager, Education Global Practice, World Bank

Motivation

Vocational Education and Training (VET) can reduce skills mismatches, boost productivity and play a pivotal role in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase. However, in a more dynamic market, identifying the professional competences that will be demanded in the future and adjusting the provision of VET services can be challenging, making many vocational and training programs ineffective (Mckenzie 2017; Kluve et al 2019). On the contrary, the demand for foundational skills is set to increase with technological progress and further integration of international markets (World Bank, 2018).

Recent evidence shows that providing VET graduates with professional competences can improve short term employment and wages, but in the long-term, having a stronger set of foundational skills seem to produce better results. Moreover, exam-based placements into general versus vocational upper secondary education (tracking) introduces an equity angle of VET. If vocational systems do not provide a labor market advantage over general education graduates, the tracking system could reproduce or even exacerbate existing inequalities.

Objectives

Bring together a group of experts on skills provisions to identify policy options to modernize VET services. The discussion will be guided by the following questions: how can we use existing evidence to modernize and improve the effectiveness of VET systems? What policy decisions, within the realm of the politically and economically feasible, should be taken to build a system that provides all its graduates with the needed skills for a productive, healthy, free life.

Format

Each participant will have 10 minutes to present their views (no power point needed) and this will be followed by a discussion and question and answer.

About the Presenters:



Rita K. Almeida is a World Bank lead economist and human development program leader for Central America. Since joining the World Bank in 2002, Rita has held different positions including Senior Economist in the Education and in the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practices, and Economist in the Development Economics Research Group. During this tenure, Rita served as the Bank skills global lead and managed lending and analytical work across Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. A Portuguese national, she earned her PhD in Economics from Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain, and a bachelor's degree in Economics from Portuguese Catholic University. She is a fellow of the Institute for the Study of Labor since 2003.



Ludger Woessmann is Director of the ifo Center for the Economics of Education and Professor of Economics at the University of Munich. He is also Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. Being interested in the determinants of long-term prosperity of mankind, his main research focus is in the economics of education, especially the importance of education for economic prosperity and the effects of school systems on educational achievement and equality of opportunity. He is Fellow of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, the Academic Advisory Council of the German Federal Ministry of Economics, and the International Academy of Education.



Stefan Wolter is Managing Director of the Swiss Coordination Centre for Research in Education and a Professor of Economics at the University of Bern, where he heads the Centre for Research in Economics of Education. Among others he is also member of the Governing Board of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) and Member of the Education Policy Committee of the OECD in Paris. His main research interests are labor economics and economics of education. Together with Prof. U. Backes-Gellner (University of Zurich) he is co-director of the Swiss Leading House on Economics of Education (www.leadinghouse.ch).