

## SWITZERLAND INTERVIEWS

**Dr. Stefan C. Wolter**

**Director, Swiss Coordination Centre For Research In Education ,  
Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA)**



[http://www.iza.org/en/webcontent/personnel/photos/index\\_html?key=247](http://www.iza.org/en/webcontent/personnel/photos/index_html?key=247)

Stefan is head of the IZA a body co-funded by the federal and cantonal levels of Swiss government to ensure the harmonization of education research across Switzerland. Wolter has researched widely in the economics of education, including topics such as labour-market returns to education, apprenticeship training and job mobility, educational transitions, and students' labour market expectations. He provides expert advice throughout the EU and in the US and Canada.

**Stefan Egger**

**SMU Education Centre**

<http://www.smu.ch/cms/index.php?id=808>

Egger is the project manager for Schweizerische Metall-Union, a Swiss training center for agricultural machine mechanics, heavy equipment mechanics and motor mechanics. About 400 students a year begin an apprenticeship in these fields and they are all assured a job when they graduate. Employer groups are heavily involved in Swiss vocational training. They set up standards, curriculum and exams. Collectively, participating companies invest \$5.4 billion into three-year VET programs to cover the cost of apprentices' salaries, training materials, and instructors.

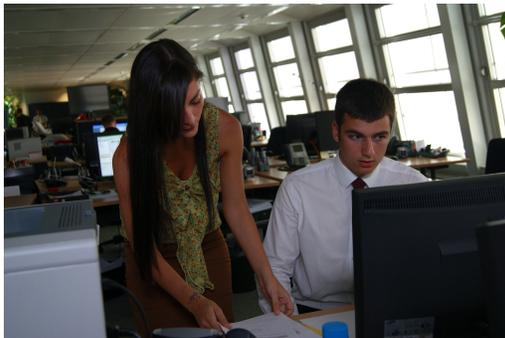
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## Lucas Grüter



At 19 years old, Lucas Gruter is already a 4<sup>th</sup> year Agricultural Mechanic Apprentice mechanic in Berne Switzerland. Here, students have to make a choice about their future when they complete grade 9: academic or vocational stream. Two thirds of 15 and 16 year olds choose to continue their education through Vocational Education and Training (VET), a system that churns out skilled workers who are the backbone of the country's thriving economy.

## Basil Vifian



17-year-old Basil could have gone to University, but he opted for a commercial apprenticeship with BCBE – a Swiss state bank. He spends four days a week working at the bank (and earning a salary) – the fifth day he attends school. When he finishes his apprenticeship Basil is assured a job in a bank, or any other commercial business. Or, still young at 18, he could opt to go to University. The Swiss system makes it easy for students to move between the academic and apprenticeship streams.

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## Stefanie Petkova



17-year-old Stefanie is doing an apprenticeship at BCBE – a Swiss state bank. It's a sought after apprenticeship among Swiss youth, and she's assured a job when she graduates. Stefanie works with clients and learns the basics of banking. She says the experience has helped her grow up fast because she has taken on responsibility, and she earns her own money.