



# Higher Education Institutions and Employment

## Advisory service

### The challenge

The pace of social, economic and technological innovation is increasing in many of our partner countries. However, higher education is often unable to keep up with this. Higher education institutions lack modern curricula, practice-oriented teaching, international exchange, cooperation with industry and technical equipment. As a result, the growing number of students is not prepared for the demands of the labor market. Many graduates cannot find employment or are employed below their educational level.

### Our approach

The higher education system needs to be more closely aligned with the requirements of the labor market. Students should be empowered to acquire key competences at the higher education institutions that go beyond technical skills. These key competences are above all independent, solution- and welfare-oriented, cooperative, innovative and entrepreneurial thinking. Higher education institutions should also position themselves as providers of high-quality lifelong learning. GIZ supports higher education institutions that want to approach these challenges. To support fundamental reforms, we advise the ministries of higher education and science. We also work closely with the private sector and civil society. While doing so, we always focus on our main goal: improving the employability of graduates. We start by addressing key issues. The development of practice-oriented degree programs and dual study programs with practical phases is particularly important. We promote interaction and exchange in networks and establish contact with German higher education institutions. Digital solutions should bring tangible improvements of learning. For this reason,

we promote e-learning solutions whenever they are meaningful, implementable and sustainable.

### Our services

We enable higher education institutions to prepare their students for the job market in the best possible way. Experience shows that some approaches bring success quickly. These include internship and trainee projects for students in companies, associations and the public sector. Even those who have already completed their academic or vocational training often benefit from short-term qualifications offered by higher education institutions. In addition, we support higher education institutions in giving students the tools they need to become self-employed. We also promote measures that have a medium-term effect and ensure that graduates find suitable employment in the long-term. We advise higher education ministries on the establishment and expansion of dual higher education institutions and support the development of practice-oriented Bachelor's and Master's programs in cooperation with companies. Modern formats such as blended learning, meaning a combination of traditional and digital courses, are used. Teachers are trained for up-to-date lecturing and using modern teaching methods. Jointly with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), we support degree programs at German and international higher education institutions. In addition, we support cooperation between higher education institutions and the industry. It is important to us to involve higher education institutions in local and regional employment and business forums and to establish them as partners for training and technology transfer. Alumni networks are a valuable network for graduates, and we support their establishment. These professional networks facilitate job searches and professional careers.



## The benefits

High-performing higher education institutions make a decisive contribution to a country's economic, technological and social development: higher life expectancy, better health protection, family planning, higher income and active participation in society are improvements that can be attributed to a high level of education. A good tertiary education therefore pays off not only for the individual, but for society as a whole. Higher education institutions are catalysts for innovation in many social and economic sectors. They are partners for private and public companies, as they train urgently needed skilled workers and managers and prepare them for the demands of the labor market. Countries with high-performing higher education institutions and skilled workers and executives attract investments.

## An example from the field

Dual study programs close the gap between theory and practice. The Al-Quds University in the Palestinian territories is the only university in the region where young people can complete in-company training and at the same time obtain a university degree. Four dual study programs are available: electrical engineering, business administration, information technology and industrial engineering. More than 340 students are enrolled. The program, which was launched in 2015, thrives on the close cooperation between Al-Quds University and the Palestinian private sector. More than 220 companies are involved in the dual study programs. The university and the companies jointly develop the theoretical and practical phases of the four dual study programs. The firms provide training places and ensure that students are paid appropriately during the practical phases. In addition, the companies finance and equip teaching and practice rooms, including modern elec-

trical engineering and information technology. The aim is for more than 800 students to be taken on by the companies after graduation.

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