

**WHY HAS THE US FAILED TO RECOGNIZE THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF APPRENTICESHIPS TO ITS ECONOMY AND SOCIETY?**

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[dx.doi.org/10.18374/JIMS-20-1.4](https://doi.org/10.18374/JIMS-20-1.4)

**ABSTRACT**

Over the past several decades, there have been some common trends in apprenticeships particularly in developed countries: an increasing participation of employers and employees (including women and minorities), expanded range of occupations, and greater alignment with national and international qualification standards. However, despite these commonalities, the US has clearly lagged behind many advanced countries, like Germany and Switzerland in number, quality, and variety of apprenticeships. The scope of the paper is to understand the reasons, as well as the consequences of this shortcoming on the economy and society, and to provide recommendations to improve the challenges facing 21st century America.

Keywords: *apprenticeships, economy, society*