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### **German Chancellor Angela Merkel visits Siemens vocational training center in Berlin**

“Training young people – Ensuring competitiveness”

**German Chancellor Angela Merkel has visited Siemens’ training center in Berlin. In a tour of the facility with Siemens President and CEO Peter Löscher, she talked to trainees and participants in work-study programs about their daily work and routines. Afterwards, Merkel and Löscher discussed the challenges of preparing young people for their future careers with a trainee, a vocational school teacher and the representative of a company in Berlin that provides vocational training. Against the backdrop of high youth unemployment particularly in southern European countries, the advantages of Germany’s work-study system and its possible use as a model in other countries were also discussed.**

**“Knowledge is the backbone of our competitiveness,” said Löscher. “That’s why the training of young people is a joint leadership responsibility – for us as a company, for governments and for educational institutions.”**

Combining theory and practice, Germany’s work-study system is also attracting increasing attention in other countries. Just last January, in his State of the Union address, U.S. President Barack Obama mentioned Siemens as a role model for its vocational training offensive. In his speech, he singled out a pilot project at the company’s location in Charlotte, North Carolina, in which young people are being trained in a program based on the German model. Siemens is also implementing training projects in cooperation with educational partners in Brazil, Russia and the Middle East in order to link “the workbench with the classroom.”

Currently boasting some 10,000 trainees, of whom about one-third are enrolled in work-study programs, Siemens is one of Germany’s largest private-sector providers of vocational training. In the fall of 2012, the company will again open its doors to roughly 2,300 new trainees. To enable applicants who were not successful in the selection process due, among other things, to below-average school results, these trainees will also include, for the fifth time in a row, 250 disadvantaged young people.

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Berlin is Siemens' largest training location, offering vocational training to more than 1,000 young people. Every year, some €30 million is invested at the location in the vocational training and further education of company employees. The concept of integrated vocational training – which has proven its value over a period of many years – combines vocational school and hands-on vocational training under one roof. Due to its more intensive practical orientation and more flexible training structure, the approach makes learning faster and, thereby, more cost-effective.

Starting in the fall, Berlin will also be the place to go for young people from all across Europe. With its Europeans@Siemens training program, the company will enable more than 30 applicants from 14 EU countries to earn a degree from the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce by completing a German vocational training program. Participants will receive instruction in English and German, gain practical job experience at local company facilities and then apply the knowhow they've acquired in their home countries.

[www.siemens.de/ausbildung](http://www.siemens.de/ausbildung)

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