

Tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 DENMARK

Timeline



ID number 41055

Background

Danish apprentices are entirely on their own in searching for a contract with a company, and many companies offer short-term contracts that often reduce the coherence of the training course. The initiative aims to ensure a more secure and coherent training course for apprentices and the intention is to increase the number of VET students.

Objectives

The tripartite agreement intends to ensure an increase in the number of VET students.

The agreement was intended to ensure that students in vocational education and training programmes (VET) had a more secure and coherent educational pathway.

The main elements of the initiative are:

- (a) support students searching for an apprenticeship;
- (b) ensure that students get a contract with a company as early as possible;
- (c) strengthen coherence in training courses for apprentices;
- (d) allow an increased number of school weeks in VET education;
- (e) recruit and train more adults in VET education;
- (f) ensure that the attractiveness for companies of having apprentices is supported; there will be an increase in reimbursements to companies with apprentices.

The intention of this agreement is that more students will complete their education without interruption and retained through early contracting and more apprenticeships. It is ambition is that it will also increase the attractiveness of vocational education and attract more talented young people and adults to the programmes.

Description

In November 2020, the government and the social partners signed a tripartite agreement with initiatives worth EUR 66 million (DKK 500 million) annually.

According to the agreement and as from 1 January 2022

(a) Students must not be left on their own when searching for an apprenticeship

The VET institution must provide information on apprenticeships to students who cannot find one; this is to minimise the responsibility that today is placed entirely on the student.

b. Early apprenticeship contracts

VET colleges must ensure that at least 80% of VET students have an apprenticeship contract before completing basic course 2 (GF 2) to ensure a coherent education. GF2 is the second part of the basic training before entering the main apprenticeship with a company contract. The first part (GF1) is a 20-week course for students attending directly from lower secondary school; GF2 is available to all other students. EUR 15.86 million (DKK 119 million) has been set aside for this initiative to monitor and support the VET colleges.

c. Reducing short apprenticeship contracts

A company and a student can only sign one short contract. Thereafter the company and the student must sign a contract that covers the rest of the apprenticeship period.

d. Increasing flexibility in VET education

EUR 5.37 million (DKK 40 million) has been set aside to increase flexibility in VET education from 2022. This will allow VET colleges to increase the number of school weeks to be devoted to vocational education, where, for example, technological development creates a need for this.

e. Increasing the number of young adults in VET education

The number of people between the ages of 18 and 24 who begin vocational education fell by almost 20% between school years 2015/16 and 2019/20. EUR 0.666 million (DKK 5 million) annually from 2021 onwards is to help to recruit and retain more 18-24-year-olds in vocational education. The social partners and the government will agree on the exact distribution of the money. There is not yet a time frame.

f. Increasing the reimbursement to companies with apprentices

EUR 29 million (DKK 220 million) in 2021 and EUR 10 million (DKK 80 million) yearly to increase the reimbursement of companies when apprentices are in school.

The initiatives in the agreement are permanent (unless otherwise stated in the text of the agreement). The parties agreed to evaluate the agreement's initiatives in 2025 to discuss any adjustments to the allocated framework of EUR 67 million (DKK 500 million). Towards the evaluation, an annual status discussion will be held.

2020 Approved/Agreed

The initiative was agreed in November 2020.

2021 Implementation

All the developments from (a) to (f) were negotiated in 2021.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the focus of the initiative was to strengthen the responsibility of the VET schools to establish apprenticeship contracts. VET schools hired and trained persons to be responsible for communication with companies to establish apprenticeship contracts. Significantly more VET students got an apprenticeship at the end of the basic programme. The share of students who signed a training agreement with an employer at the end of the second part of the basic course increased from 44 per cent in 2020 to 65 per cent in 2022.

2023 Implementation

The tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET was operational and ran as regular practice.

Although, as it was agreed in 2020, the initiatives in the agreement are permanent the parties involved will evaluate the agreement's initiatives in 2025 with a view to discussing any adjustments to the allocated funding.

2024 Implementation

The tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET was operational and ran as regular practice.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Children and Education

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Entities providing VET

Companies
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Optimising VET funding
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

Ministry of Children and Education.(n.d.).Tripartite agreement for more apprenticeships and clear responsibility

[Tripartite agreement for more apprenticeships and clear responsibility \(description\)](#)

Ministry of Children and Education.(n.d.).The tripartite agreement for more apprenticeships and clear responsibility: main initiatives

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Tripartite agreement for increasing apprentices in the health sector

In November 2020, a tripartite agreement was made between the government, Local Government Denmark (KL) (the national association of municipalities), the national association of the Danish Regions and the largest trade union confederation in Denmark (FH).

 DENMARK

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET: Denmark. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/41055>