

Responsive cross-over qualifications

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NETHERLANDS

Timeline

2016 Pilot 2017 Pilot 2018 Pilot 2019 Pilot 2020 Pilot 2021 Pilot
2022 Pilot 2023 Pilot 2024 Pilot 2025 Completed

ID number 28440

Description

Cross-over qualifications combine elements of several qualifications from different domains to create innovative training programmes. The first application period for the experiment (pilot) in cross-over qualifications in MBOs lasted until 15 September 2016. Applications submitted before this date could offer cross-over qualifications in the school year 2017/18.

This initiative offered an alternative route for developing cross-over qualifications. Apart from the regular route where qualifications are drawn up by national sector chambers under the direction of the SBB (Cooperation organisation of VET and the labour market), there is a second experimental cross-over route. In the latter, qualifications are developed by an education institution (MBO school) in cooperation with local industries, based, however, on parts of formal (SBB) qualifications. Part of this initiative is to examine whether the second route can be seen as an additional one, suitable for combining specific qualifications, focussing on innovative, fast growing cross-sectoral occupations.

Regardless of the route, the quality of qualifications has to be reviewed by SBB.

This experiment runs until July 2025. It is related to the Making room for the region initiative; they have similar goals and challenges.

2016 Pilot

2017 Pilot

2018 Pilot

2019 Pilot

In 2019, 36 cross-over qualifications had already been developed in the pilot project.

2020 Pilot

The first evaluation report of the experiment showed that in the first three application rounds, a total of 52 applications were approved, 28 of which were in the third round. By mid-March 2020, the fourth application round had had 47 applications approved. The primary motive for participating in the experiment was a changed or new profession and a concrete demand from companies. The number of students in cross-

over programmes is increasing. In 2019/20, approximately 3 350 students followed a cross-over course, twice as many as a year earlier.

VET colleges and companies work closely together to develop cross-over qualifications. They sign a mandatory cooperation agreement as part of the application. A side effect of this agreement is that the cooperation remains intensive.

The education ministry stated that the experiment showed that having influence on the content of qualifications increased commitment and ownership of schools and the business community. However, schools are not used to developing qualifications. Developing qualifications requires expertise from the SBB. In a letter to parliament, the Minister for Education announced that a new working method will be designed, in which SBB and the education and business sectors will cooperate in formulating new qualifications.

2021 Pilot

In December 2021, the education ministry published a newsletter about the follow-up to the 4-year crossovers after the end of the experiment in 2025. In this experiment, VET institutions have developed seven crossovers at level 4 with the regional business community. The crossovers have been established by the education ministry but are not part of the regular qualification structure. At request of the education ministry, SBB has issued an advice on the follow-up of the seven 4-year crossovers. The aim of the advice is to safeguard the valuable components of these crossovers when the experiment ends on 31 July 2025. Registration is no longer possible for four crossovers for the 2022/23 school year. For these crossovers, education and the business community advises a suitable solution within the current regular qualification structure. For the other three crossovers, SBB advised the education and the business community to ensure substantive follow-up in the regular qualification structure. This concerns the following crossovers: middle management officer smart building, middle management officer smart industry and personal supervisor care farm. The education ministry, the VET council and SBB are calling on VET institutions that do not offer the 4-year EQF level 4 crossovers to use the final (revised) qualification files in 2023/24 in which the crossover qualifications are incorporated.

2022 Pilot

At the request of the Education Ministry, SBB has issued an advice on the follow-up of the 2- and 3-year crossovers that VET institutions developed with the regional business community in the experiment. This follows the advice on the 4-year level-4 crossovers (2021). The advice considers 30 3-year cross-overs and seven 2-year cross-overs.

In the advice there are 3 options:

- (a) 13 3-year and six 2-year cross-overs will not be followed-up. Two reasons are given: Either education and employers (working together in SBB) have concluded that there are enough possibilities within the existing qualification structure for these cross-overs; or there is no labour market relevance at the national level.
- (b) seven 3-year and one 2-year cross-overs will be followed-up by changing an existing qualification, or developing a new optional module (*keuzedeel*).
- (c) 10 3-year cross-overs will be followed-up in the qualification structure at a later stage. For the time being they will be included in the qualification structure temporarily without modification.

2023 Pilot

There is no additional information available on the status of the pilots since 2023.

2024 Pilot

There is no additional information available on the status of the pilots since 2023.

2025 Completed

The experimental scheme 'Decision on the experiment cross-over qualifications' ('Besluit experiment cross-over kwalificaties') was ended on 31 July 2025.

According to the 'Decision on the Experiment of Cross-over Qualifications', which established the legal framework for a national pilot (2017-2025), the experiment allowed deviations from standard VET legislation to facilitate flexibility but remained temporary. As stipulated in the regulation, it expired on 1 August 2025, after which no further enrolments or new cross-over qualifications can be established under this scheme.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Council for upper secondary VET schools (MBO Raad)
- Cooperation organisation for VET and the labour market (SBB)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Draft decision on the cross-over qualification experiment](#)

[Letter to parliament on future perspectives on the qualifications framework](#)

[2020 progress report Evaluation experiment cross-over qualifications, 16 December 2020](#)

[Newsletter of the Ministry of Education \(December 2021\) on the follow-up of 4-year level 4 crossovers pilots after 2025](#)

[Newsletter of the Ministry of Education \(30 June 2022\) on end experiment cross-overs and follow-up three- and two-year cross-overs](#)

[Decision on experiment on cross-over qualifications](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Pilot

Making room for the region: qualifications with regional specialisation

The Making room for the region initiative, approved in 2018, will allow VET colleges (MBO schools) to draw up regional elements in national qualifications in cooperation with the (regional) business community.

 NETHERLANDS

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Responsive cross-over qualifications: Netherlands. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28440>