

Alternative VET pathways at upper secondary level

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NETHERLANDS

Timeline

2015 Pilot 2016 Pilot 2017 Pilot 2018 Pilot 2019 Pilot 2020 Pilot
2021 Completed

ID number 28434

Background

Upper secondary VET programmes are offered in four sectors: green/agriculture, technology, economics and care and welfare. Two equivalent learning pathways are running in parallel: in the school-based pathway, students spend at least 20% of their time on work placement while the dual pathway often involves four days' work a week and one day at school. The need to test alternative VET pathways combining both tracks comes as a follow-up to the Technology pact (*Nationaal techniekpact*) and the Focus on craftsmanship 2011-15 action plan (*Focus op vakmanschap*).

Objectives

The pilot is intended to address the need of VET schools and companies for more flexibility between VET tracks (school-based VET/BOL and dual VET/BBL) and to stimulate cooperation between schools and companies to offer good quality training that suits labour market needs.

Description

Pilots integrating the school-based (BOL) and dual/apprenticeship track (BBL) are referred to as GLBB (*Gecombineerde Leerweg* BOL/BBL). They are taking place between May 2015 and July 2021 in upper secondary VET schools (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* at MBO levels 2 to 4). They are being run under the cooperation of the Council for upper secondary VET schools (*MBO Raad*) and the Cooperation organisation for VET and the labour market (SBB). Students start in the school-based track and switch to the dual track after having obtained the relevant theoretical and practical skills.

The first results in 2018 showed that although the number of participants was still low (23 VET courses, 300 participants), the pilots met the needs of employers and learners. The government has called on all VET actors to collaborate to offer more dual training places, especially in sectors where dual VET is less common or has no historical roots.

The final evaluation of this pilot is expected in 2021.

2015 Pilot
2016 Pilot
2017 Pilot
2018 Pilot
2019 Pilot Pilot is ongoing
2020 Pilot The 2020 progress report shows that throughout the entire period 67 applications were submitted, of which 48 were granted and 41 actually started. About a quarter have gradually stopped, mainly because of too low an intake or the preference of companies and students for regular apprenticeships (BBL). The remaining programmes 'Combined VET learning pathways' (<i>Gecombineerde Leerweg</i> BOL/BBL -GLBB) jointly have an annual intake of approximately 450 students. The cooperation between school and company/companies in some of the GLBB courses is intensive. Having to enter into a cooperation agreement has contributed to this because agreements have been made from the start and there is regular consultation and evaluation. In other words, the intensive cooperation leads to educational innovation. In some of the GLBB courses, intensive cooperation and a higher quality of education are not on the agenda. Not much has changed in the content and design of these courses, at least not because of the GLBB.
2021 Completed As of August 2021, the pilot GLBB has been nationally adopted. From that point, all VET colleges are allowed to offer a combined learning pathway 'BOL-BBL'.

Bodies responsible

- Cooperation organisation for VET and the labour market (SBB)
- Council for upper secondary VET schools (MBO Raad)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Entities providing VET

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

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

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

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[2018 evaluation report from pilots combining the two learning paths, BOL and BBL](#)

[Preliminary findings of the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands study on WBL in VET](#)

[National education research directorate 2017 announcement of the combined learning pathways in upper secondary VET](#)

[2020 progress report evaluating the experiment on vocational training combined learning pathways bol-bbl \(GLBB\)](#)

[Handout on combined pathway bol-bbl, September 2021](#)

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