

State subsidies to acquire teaching certificate

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 BULGARIA

Timeline

2017 Implementation	2018 Implementation	2019 Implementation
2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation	2022 Implementation
2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation	2025 Implementation

ID number 28068

Description

Acquisition of a teaching certificate is funded, as a priority, by the State budget through subsidies to State universities. These subsidies cover teachers' initial training, but do not include their continuing professional development (CPD) which is funded under a separate framework. In March 2017, the council of ministers added teachers' initial training programmes and pedagogy to the list of priority professional areas in higher education, so these programmes are supported by the State budget through State subsidies to students. Additional funds are earmarked for initial teacher training (and CPD) by the programme Science, education and smart growth, through the project Students fellowships, which was launched in March 2016 and has a total budget of EUR 13.30 million (BGN 26 million).

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

The number of State-subsidised places in the subjects 'pedagogy' and 'pedagogy of training in' has increased during the academic year 2019/20 because of the expected shortage of teachers in various subjects.

2020 Implementation

Additional scholarship of EUR 51 (BGN 100) was introduced in the beginning of 2020, aiming at attracting to pedagogical programmes motivated and well-performing students (with Bulgarian language matriculation results among top 10% in the country). The funds for scholarships were transferred from the education ministry to universities. Additionally, with the amendments in the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 2020, tuition fee exemptions were introduced for students enrolled in the professional areas of 'pedagogy of training in...' (which is part of a list approved by the Council of Ministers; 'pedagogy of training in ...') because this professional area (with all the relevant specialties included in it) was considered as an area with expected shortage in the labour market. In 2020, with the amendments to HEA, tuition fee exemptions were also introduced for students at public higher schools, who are enrolled in

professional fields and protected specialities with the highest expected shortage in the labour market, from a list approved by the Council of Ministers; 'pedagogy of training in ...'

In 1 January 2020, an additional scholarship of EUR 51 (BGN 100) was introduced for students enrolled in 'pedagogy', 'pedagogy of training in ...' for the year they complete secondary education and if they meet certain conditions related to their results to the State matriculation exams (amendments to the Council of Ministers' Decree No 90 of 26 May 2000 on the terms and procedure for granting scholarships to students, PhD students and postgraduates from State higher schools and scientific organisations).

2021 Implementation

About 5 159 State-subsidised places in pedagogical sciences were offered during the academic year 2021/22, reflecting the need to tackle the expected shortage of teachers in various subjects. Students enrolled in 'pedagogy of training in...' (where the expected shortages are larger) do not pay tuition fees. The State budget also provided a subsidy for additional scholarships for students enrolled in ;pedagogy; and 'pedagogy of training in ...' (EUR 51 (BGN 100) per month), aiming to attract motivated and high-performing students to pedagogical programmes.

In 2021, Bulgaria adopted a new national programme aiming to enhance the competences of tutors at State-owned universities preparing future teachers. The programme also provides funding for updating the curricula and syllabuses in higher education institutions and also aims to introduce competence-based initial teacher training and to reflect the current trends related with the digital transformation of education.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the Bulgarian government continued to encourage enrolment of students in 'pedagogy' and 'pedagogy of training in...' by providing additional scholarship of EUR 51 (BGN 100) per month. Students enrolled in 'pedagogy of training in...' were also exempted from tuition fees as the legislative framework in force stipulates.

In 2022, Bulgaria introduced the national programme Motivated teachers and qualifications aiming to improve quality of school education by attracting new teachers, improving and enriching the key competences of the pedagogical specialists and implementing a system for monitoring the impact of training on teachers CPD. The first module of the Motivated teachers and qualifications programme provides support for training of specialists that are new to the school education system, to acquire the professional qualification 'teacher' and supports their inclusion in the educational process in schools with a shortage of specialists. The module includes:

- (a) attracting and selecting candidates;
- (b) provision of training in a pre-approved university programme for the acquisition of professional qualification 'teacher' and 'teacher of...' for a period of one year depending on the professional qualification to be acquired. This training is expected to provide the basic pedagogical and psychological knowledge and skills needed for effective teaching;
- (c) provision of additional intensive advanced theoretical and practical training before the actual entry into the school class;
- (d) priority appointments in schools where there is a shortage of specialists and/or in schools with low achieving students, students with low motivation for learning and/or students with low socio-economic status;
- (e) follow-up training and supervision by a specialist with experience in practical support of novice teachers during the school year;
- (f) training of mentor teachers in established programmes;
- (g) one-to-one support for newly recruited teachers by a mentor teacher.

Although the programme is not specifically designed for VET teachers, professionals interested in a career in VET teaching are eligible for initial support of this kind.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the Government increased the additional scholarship for students enrolled in state higher education institutions in *Pedagogy* and related fields to 140 BGN (approximately EUR 70), provided they achieve high results in specific state matriculation examinations, either by scoring close to the highest national scores or by meeting certain percentile thresholds relative to national averages. In addition, students enrolled in the ‘pedagogy of training in...’ programme are exempt from tuition fees.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, the Government increased the average annual tuition fee for students enrolled in *Pedagogy* from BGN 720 to BGN 820 (approximately EUR 419) for the 2024/25 academic year. Despite this increase, the tuition fee remains below the average tuition fee at Bulgarian state universities, which is approximately BGN 1 010 (approximately EUR 516). Students enrolled in the ‘pedagogy of training in...’ programme remain exempt from tuition fees.

The additional scholarship amount remains at BGN 140 (approximately EUR 70).

2025 Implementation

In 2025, the Bulgarian Council of Ministers continued to treat initial teacher training as a strategic priority, maintaining targeted subsidies and adjusting financial parameters to address teacher shortages.

In June 2025, the Bulgarian government set new tuition bands for pedagogy programmes across state universities. Both state-subsidised ‘pedagogy’ bachelor’s programmes and ‘pedagogy of teaching in ...’ programmes now fall within the same fee range of approximately BGN 500–1 100 (EUR 255–563), with the exact amount varying by institution. The lowest fees (BGN 500 / EUR 255) remain unchanged at institutions such as Shumen University, whereas mid-range universities now charge between BGN 800 and 900 (EUR 409 – 460), and the highest tiers (Veliko Turnovo, Burgas and South-West Universities) have risen to BGN 960 – 1 100 (EUR 491 – 562).

Compared with the previous academic year (2024/25), most universities implemented moderate increases of 6–10 %; for example, average tuition for pedagogy rose from BGN 820 (EUR 419) to BGN 870 (EUR 445). Despite these increases, pedagogy tuition remains below or around the average university fee (BGN 1 050) proposed for 2025/26.

Moreover, programmes classified as ‘pedagogy of teaching in ...’ remain on the protected list of professional areas, meaning students do not pay these tuition fees directly—the costs are borne by the state. The protected specialisations include pedagogy of teaching mathematics, informatics, information technology, physics, chemistry, natural sciences, religion (and its combinations with other subjects), as well as combinations of these disciplines. By keeping these subject-specific teacher education programmes tuition-free, the government aims to address critical shortages in STEM and related fields and to encourage enrolment in high-demand areas.

Government measures also addressed financial incentives, including enhanced remuneration for practical training since October 2024. The hourly rate for student internships was increased from BGN 2.50 to BGN 4.50 (approximately EUR 1.2 to EUR 2.3) —an 80 % rise. This policy applies across all fields of study but is particularly consequential for pedagogy students, as extended school-based practice is an obligatory component of initial teacher education.

In September 2025 the Council of Ministers raised scholarships for tertiary students and doctoral candidates. Doctoral stipends increased by 27.3 % to BGN 1 562 (approximately EUR 798) per month, while student scholarships rose by 15 %, raising the minimum monthly amount from BGN 120 to BGN 150 (approximately EUR 61.3 to EUR 76.6) and the maximum from BGN 200 to BGN 250 (approximately EUR 102.2 to EUR 127.8). These increases benefit pedagogy students alongside other

disciplines.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Science

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Attractiveness of the teaching and training profession/career

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Higher Education Act](#)

[Council of Ministers' Decree No 90/ 26.05. 2000 on the terms and procedure for granting scholarships to students, PhD students and postgraduates from State higher schools and scientific organisations](#)

[Decision No. 437 of 02.06.2021 of the Council of Ministers on the approval of the number of students and doctoral candidates admitted for studies in the state higher education institutions and scientific organisations of the Republic of Bulgaria](#)

[Decree No 283 of 19.8.2021 adopting the List of professional fields and protected specialities under Art. 95, par. 7\(8\) of the Higher Education Act](#)

[National programme Motivated teachers and qualifications](#)

[Announcement regarding the additional scholarship based on the results of the state matriculation exams for the academic year 2023-24](#)

[Resolution of the Council of Ministers for approving the application and tuition fees in State higher education institutions for the academic year 2024/25](#)

Decree No. 188 of 18 September 2025 amending Decree No. 90 of the Council of Ministers of 2000 on the terms and procedure for granting scholarships to students, doctoral candidates and postgraduates in state higher education institutions and research

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Teacher continuous professional development (CPD) framework

The 2016 pre-school and school education Law regulates the career development of teaching staff, identifies continuous professional development (CPD) as a significant factor for career advancement, and introduces a qualification-credits approach that may lead to certified CPD.

 BULGARIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

State standards for teaching qualification

In November 2016, the Council of Ministers adopted the ordinance for State education standards (SES) for obtaining a professional teaching qualification. The ordinance increases the number of learning hours for teacher initial training by 30% to 50%.

 BULGARIA

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Amendments to the VET Act

The VET Act of 1999 was amended in August 2016 (entered into force in August 2017), confirming that apprenticeships should offer the possibility to acquire professional qualifications through practical training, organised in cooperation with enterprises.

 BULGARIA

Type of development

“ … ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28068>