

# 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

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).

## 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

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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

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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

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National programme Motivated teachers and qualifications

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Announcement regarding the additional scholarship based on the results of the state matriculation exams for the academic year 2023-24

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

## Related policy developments

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2024 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.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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2024 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%.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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## 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.

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Regulation/Legislation

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IVET CVET

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