

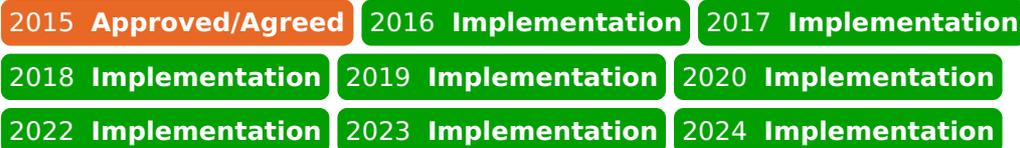
Legal framework for the implementation of dual VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 BULGARIA

Timeline



ID number 28045

Background

The practical guide for dual training was designed with the financial support of the Swiss Confederation through a thematic fund for the project DOMINO. The guide builds on the experience gained under the DOMINO project, as well as under other relevant pilot projects in Bulgaria, and aims to assist relevant institutions (schools and companies) in organising and ensuring the quality of dual VET.

Description

An Ordinance that regulates dual vocational education and training (DVET) came into force at the beginning of September 2015. Learning through work (DVET or dual training) applies to two groups of people: learners, aged 16, in class XI and XII, and people aged 16 and over who have entered the labour market. Learning through work for people in the labour market is related to acquisition of a vocational qualification. Learning through work is implemented in a partnership between an educational institution/provider (vocational school, college or vocational training centre) and one or more employers. Training includes a practical training component in a real working environment under the guidance of a mentor assigned by the employer, and a component where training occurs in a VET institution. Practical training is implemented through a labour contract for training at work (Article 230 of the Labour code) between the learner and the employer. The duration of training ranges from one to three years depending on the level of vocational qualification. Employment Promotion Act (EPA) amendments at the end of 2015 (State Gazette, 101/22 December 2015) provided new measures for stimulating employers to create places for training through work (DVET) for unemployed people who are out of the education system. For each place they create employers receive financial support for the training (up to 36 months, payment for mentors included). The sum available under the measure for 2016 is BGN 200, as well as additional remuneration in the minimum sums set out in the Labour code and regulations for its implementation, and salaries for paid annual leave (according to Art. 155 and 319 of the Labour code) and temporary disability (according to Art. 40, paragraph 5 of the Social Security Code). The measure provides financial support for social and health insurance. The trainer/mentor receives monthly a sum of BGN 140. DVET is implemented in a partnership between a training provider and an employer. During the period of DVET, the training institution receives financial support for every learner with a

contract for DVET as follows:

- (a) BGN 600 for training in first degree (EQF level 2) of a vocational qualification (300 hours);
- (b) BGN 1 200 for training in the second degree (EQF level 3) of a vocational qualification (660 hours);
- (c) BGN 1 800 for training in the third degree (EQF level 4) of a vocational qualification (960 hours).

Bulgarian VET qualifications comprise of four degrees relevant to the complexity of the acquired competences. Dual VET offers qualifications from first to fourth degree (equivalent to EQF level 5-but so far, no training institution offers DVET in the fourth degree-EQF level 5).

2015 Approved/Agreed

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

In accordance with the amendments to the VET Act in 2018, the education ministry established the National programme for in-company mentor training.

2019 Implementation

The National programme for in-company mentor training was approved at the beginning of April 2019 by the Ordinance No RD 09-997 of 2 April 2019 of the education minister. The programme identified the key themes of 32 training hours for acquiring basic knowledge in pedagogy and physiology, developing skills and competences for planning, organising, delivering and assessing dual training, as well as discussing case studies and good practices implemented in different enterprises.

Those individuals who wish to be mentors in enterprises and conduct on-the-job training are defined as the programme's target group. The training programme includes the following elements:

- (a) the training objectives;
- (b) the allocation of study time;
- (c) the content and the expected learning outcomes.

The programme explains the legal framework for delivering on-the-job training (dual training system) and also for its planning, implementation and evaluation.

Ordinance RD No 04-4 of 8 November 2019 of the economy ministry determined conditions for the creation and maintenance of a register of employers who meet the requirements for DVET partnerships. The inclusion of an employer in the information database is voluntary and does not require any fees. The employer must have the required facilities for providing the practical training for the profession in accordance with the State education standard for acquiring qualification in a profession. The employer must also have employees experienced in the profession for which dual training is provided (meeting the requirements for mentors according to Art. 17a 1, para. 2 of the VET Act).

2020 Implementation

In 2020, opportunities for the choice of profiled or vocational education- depending on the needs of the labour market, the interests of learners and the opportunities for schools by planning the State admission plan for 2020/21- in the direction of promoting training in STEM professions were provided by Decision No 285 (30 April 2020) of the Council of Ministers which approved the National programme Building a school STEM environment.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, DVET had been implemented as a regular form of formal secondary school education for a total of 7 years (since 2015). The legal framework for DVET provides the basic conditions for the application of the model, but the experience gained on the level of implementation, i.e. by VET schools and by employers, highlighted aspects of possible improvements of the model. To take account of this valuable feedback, the Ministry of Education and Science made use of various stakeholder involvement formats (round tables, the Consultative Council on VET, etc.) to collect suggestions for legislative amendments.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the Consultative Council for VET supervised by the education ministry adopted a *Strategic vision for the development of dual VET(DVET)* in Bulgaria. This vision outlines a commitment to enhance the DVET system by 2030, focusing on flexible admissions, providing incentives for employers, and transforming them into pivotal players in the training process. These strategic objectives aim to strengthen the role of DVET in Bulgaria's educational landscape.

Also in 2023, a working group was formed by the education ministry, mandated with the task of revising *Ordinance No 1 on the conditions and procedures for conducting dual training* and to streamline and support the DVET process, analysing related regulations needing amendments.

2024 Implementation

The education ministry published the updated *Ordinance No 1 on the conditions and procedures for conducting dual training* in the State Gazette on 30 August 2024.

The changes in the Ordinance were related to:

- (a) the need to align the Ordinance with the adopted amendments of the VET Act (VETA);
- (b) students' career guidance and the need to familiarise them with the partner enterprise in the dual system;
- (c) the creation of conditions for efficient and flexible practical training in a real working environment;
- (d) the consideration of requests from employer partners in the admission plans in school education;
- (e) the regulation for the training in a real working environment of students in XI class who have not reached the required age to have an employment contract.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy(MLSP)
- Ministry of Economy (until 2021)
- Ministry of Economy and Industry

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Adult learners

Education professionals

Teachers

Trainers
Guidance practitioners

Entities providing VET

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

Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

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
Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

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

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

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

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Osnabrück Declaration

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[VET Act](#)

[Ordinance issued by the Minister of Economy on the database with employers meeting criteria for being involved in dual training](#)

[Order of the Minister of Education for in-company mentor training](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Strategic vision for the development of dual VET (DVET)-2030

The *Strategic vision for the development of dual VET (DVET) in Bulgaria-2030* (hereinafter *Strategic vision for the development of DVET*) was drafted by an expert team, with the financial support of the Fund for the preparation of support measures under the Swiss

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

Register of employers who meet the requirements for establishing dual VET partnerships

Ordinance RD No 04-4 of 8 October 2019 of the economy minister sets the conditions for creating and maintaining a register of employers who meet the requirements for dual vocational education and training (DVET) partnerships.

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Training programme for mentors in the dual training system

The education minister approved a training programme for acquiring basic pedagogical and psychological knowledge and skills aimed at mentors involved in on-the-job training (dual training system). The changes in Art.

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2022 Completed

Support for success

Within the 30-month implementation period more than 47 000 students in 1 500 schools will be involved in career guidance activities through personality development support centres across the country.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Incentives for offering apprenticeships to adults

The 2015 Employment Promotion Act (EPA) provides employers with financial incentives for offering apprenticeship places to unemployed people directed to them by the public employment service. Incentives include financial support for training, mentors, social and health insurance.

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2024 Implementation

Forecast model to align admission plans with labour market needs

The VET Directorate of the education ministry developed at the end of 2017 a (pilot) forecast model, in cooperation with the nationally representative employers' organisations, to inform admission plans in line with labour market needs.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

2024 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**

Regulation/Legislation

SubsystemIVET CVET

2024 Implementation**Developing dual VET**

Piloting started in the 2015/16 school year for seven professions in five secondary VET schools in different regions of the country. In 2016/17, 12 professions and 17 schools in total were involved in the experiment. Dual VET(DVET) is supported by the municipalities and the social partners.

 BULGARIA**Type of development**Practical
measure/Initiative**Subsystem**IVET CVET

2024 Implementation**VET provision financial incentives for qualifications in demand**

The latest amendments in the Pre-school and School Education Act (into force since January 2018) envisage financial stimulus for schools which provide VET training for qualifications needed in the labour market.

 BULGARIA**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

SubsystemIVET CVET

The consultative council for VET

In 2018, a consultative council for vocational education and training (VET) was established by the education ministry with the participation of other ministries, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training (NAVET), organisations of employers and trade unions and other bodies and civ

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Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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