

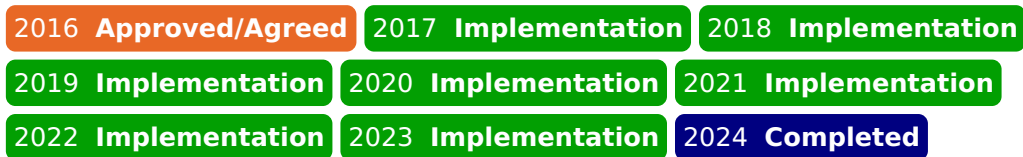
Extending double certification of apprentices in BEDE and Germany

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 BELGIUM-DE

Timeline



ID number 27999

Background

The development of the double certification policy for apprentices in German-speaking Belgium and Germany responds to the growing need for greater cross-border professional mobility within the European Union. Despite the close economic and geographic ties between neighbouring regions, differences in vocational education and training (VET) systems have traditionally limited apprentices' ability to work and train across borders. At the same time, companies operate in cross-border markets and need a more flexible and mobile workforce.

Objectives

This agreement was concluded to facilitate the mobility of graduates from apprenticeships and to counteract future possible skill shortages. This measure is also expected to attract more learners and might be extended to other professions.

Description

In October 2016, an agreement was signed between the authorities from the German-speaking Community (IAWM and the Ministry) and German authorities. This agreement offers cabinetmaking apprentices the opportunity to acquire a certificate of apprenticeship from both countries, one from Belgium and one from Germany. In order to receive the certificate from both countries, the apprentice needs first to complete the apprenticeship in one country and then pass an additional exam in the other.

This form of double certification existed already in the following five professions: hairdresser, carpenter, car mechanic, retail trader and forwarding merchant. Each year, there are overall 10 to 20 young people who pass this additional exam.

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the measure was operational and ran as a regular practice.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the measure was operational and ran as a regular practice.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, the measure was operational and ran as a regular practice.

2022 Implementation

In 2022, the measure was operational and ran as a regular practice. For the last 3 school years, the number of double qualifications done in the different professions were: 8 in retail trader, 14 in hairdresser, 6 in carpenter, and 26 in car mechanic.

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the number of double qualifications done in the different professions were as follows: 9 in retail trader, 4 in hairdresser, 5 in carpenter, 8 in car mechanic, 5 in forwarding merchant, and 6 in restaurateur master craftsman apprenticeships.

2024 Completed

In 2024, the number of double qualifications done in the different professions were as follows: 9 in retail trader, 11 in carpenter, 8 in car mechanic, 8 in forwarding merchant, and 12 in restaurateur master craftsman apprenticeships.

Double qualifications are regularly reviewed and updated as standard practice.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of German-Speaking Community

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Thematic categories

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Using EU transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ESCO, ECTS, ECVET principles)

European and international dimensions of VET

Mobility of learners and staff

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

Double certification of Freight Forwarding Agents

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Extending double certification of apprentices in BEDE and Germany: Belgium-DE. 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/27999>