

# A coherent plan for the education system

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 DENMARK

## Timeline

2023 Implementation

2024 Implementation

2025 Implementation

ID number 46039

## Background

The government wants to create an education system that in all educational levels, i.e. from primary school to higher education equips all children and young people with a broad knowledge of their own abilities, aspirations and the opportunities working life offers.

## Objectives

The objective of the plan and its initiatives is to create a more coherent national educational landscape.

## Description

The coherent plan for the education system consists of different reforms and initiatives across the entire education system thus targeting a wide array of groups. Although the plan is not an explicit national implementation plan (NIP) measure, many of its initiatives could be considered relevant touching upon various EU priorities. More precisely the intervention areas are the following:

- (a) *Prepared for the future I - new flexible university paths.* This reform aims to provide students with new and more flexible pathways to a master's degree, enhance the quality of university education, and improve opportunities for lifelong learning;
- (b) *Prepared for the future II - freedom and depth.* This reform focusses on primary and lower secondary school education. One of the main goals of the reform is to reduce central management in favour of increased local autonomy;
- (c) *Prepared for the future III - more skilled workers for healthcare and elderly care.* This agreement aims to improve the quality of social and health care education (SOSU) and ensure more people enrol in and complete SOSU programmes;
- (d) *Prepared for the future IV - more skilled workers for the green transition.* The aim is to make VET more attractive to young people and also includes significant investments to support the green transition. It includes investments in modern equipment, green teacher competencies, and training programmes in VET based on the latest technology;
- (e) *Prepared for the future V - more students in upper secondary education.* This is still a proposal. The government aims to create a new youth education landscape, where most young people will attend upper secondary school;

- (f) *Prepared for the future VI - future-oriented professional and vocational higher education*. This is still a proposal. The government will invest significantly in improving the quality of higher VET. The goal is to provide students with more and better teaching, establish flexible education options, and enhance opportunities for lifelong learning;
- (g) *Agreement on strengthened Preparatory Basic Education (FGU)*;
- (h) *Tripartite agreement on long-term investments in adult, continuing, and further education*.

The coherent plan is not yet completed, some parts have only been proposed by the government, and more reforms are in the pipeline, while other initiatives in the different intervention areas have been and are being implemented.

### 2023 Implementation

In March 2023, the Danish government launched its *Prepared for the future I* initiative, marking the beginning of a comprehensive reform strategy for the education sector. This proposal outlines a new graduate landscape that offers university students greater flexibility in their educational options. Later in 2023, the government launched *Prepared for the future II*, which is the government's overall proposal for a strengthened primary and lower secondary school.

In September 2023, the government along with social partners signed a tripartite agreement aimed at preparing the workforce for future demands and labour market needs. This agreement focusses on long-term investments in adult education, continuing education, and further training.

Finally, in November 2023, the government and the majority of parties in parliament made an agreement on strengthening Preparatory Basic Education (FGU).

### 2024 Implementation

In 2024, the government launched *Prepared for the future III; IV, V, and VI*, which focus on strengthening the education system and the VET system through different initiatives concerning skills for the green transition, the mobility of VET learners, the knowledge centres for VET, the attractiveness of VET and securing more skilled workers for healthcare and elderly care. Some initiatives in the plans started being implemented in 2024, while others were proposed and will be discussed in 2025.

### 2025 Implementation

In February 2025, the government and two other parties agreed on the establishment of a new vocational and professional upper secondary education programme, EPX.

This initiative is the result of the government's ambition to create a more coherent education system in which more young people eventually choose a vocational or professional education. The overall objectives are:

- (a) that all young people, after completing compulsory schooling, have access to an upper secondary education close to their place of residence;
- (b) that these institutions offer a strong youth environment; and
- (c) that they provide pathways to further education.

EPX will be introduced in 2030.

In March 2025, a reform of the professional bachelor's and academy profession programmes in Denmark was introduced. The reform represents a concrete implementation of the ambitions outlined in *Prepared for the Future V* and is supported by the majority of parties in the Danish Parliament.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Children and Education
- Ministry of Higher Education and Science
- Ministry of Employment

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
 Young people (15-29 years old)  
 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)  
 Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
 Adult learners  
 Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)  
 Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

### Education professionals

Teachers

### Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

## Thematic categories

### Modernising VET infrastructure

Making VET institutions sustainable and green

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses  
 Developing and updating learning resources and materials  
 Integrating green transition and sustainability in VET curricula and programmes  
 Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships  
 Supporting Centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs)

### Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Attractiveness of the teaching and training profession/career  
 Supporting teachers and trainers for green transition and sustainability

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning  
 Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education  
 Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

### European and international dimensions of VET

Mobility of learners and staff  
 EU and international skills competitions

## European priorities in VET

## VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

## Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Sustainability - a green link in VET

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[Prepared for the future IV: More skilled workers for the green transition \(in Danish\)](#)

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[Tripartite agreement on long-term investments in adult, continuing and further education \(in Danish\)](#)

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[Agreement on strengthened Preparatory Basic Education \(FGU\) \(in Danish\)](#)

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[Ministry of Higher Education and Science. \(n.d.\). Prepared for the future: reforming the Danish educational landscape](#)

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[Agreement on the reform of professional bachelor's and academy profession programmes in Denmark](#)

## Related policy developments

### 2025 Implementation

## A substantial reinforcement of VET

The agreement contains 31 initiatives that have the purpose of improving Danish VET. Many of the initiatives included in the agreement are linked to other agreements within the VET area.

 DENMARK

### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

## Subsystem

IVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## Prepared for the future V: reforming upper secondary education by introducing a new VET pathway (EPX)

The government presented a reform of the youth education system, including significant investments in the area, along with their proposal for a new upper secondary education programme, the vocational and profession-oriented gymnasium (EPX), which they aim to implement by 2030.

 DENMARK

### Type of development

Strategy/Action  
plan

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## More skilled workers for the green transition

The *Prepared for the future IV - more skilled workers for the green transition* agreement is a component of a holistic education reform plan encompassing various education levels.

 DENMARK

### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

## Training abroad and Erasmus+ activities

The *Training abroad* scheme(OPU) is a Danish mobility programme that allows students in Danish VET to gain international experience by completing training periods abroad after finishing their basic course. The trainee/apprentice can spend all or part of their training abroad.

 DENMARK

### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

### Subsystem

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**2025 Implementation****Political agreement on better pathways to education and jobs (2017): Preparatory Basic Education (FGU)**

In 2017, a committee of experts was set up by the Danish parliament to address the declining number of applications to IVET and to rethink pathways that would facilitate the transition from compulsory schooling to IVET.

 DENMARK**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**2025 Implementation****Tripartite agreement for increasing apprentices in the health sector**

In November 2020, a tripartite agreement was made between the government, Local Government Denmark (KL) (the national association of municipalities), the national association of the Danish Regions and the largest trade union confederation in Denmark (FH).

 DENMARK**Type of development**Practical  
measure/Initiative**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/46039>