

REFERENCE YEAR 2023

UNDERSTANDING OF APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Content updates and contributors

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Q1. Is there a stable legal basis for apprenticeships in your country?



✓ YES

✓ NO

✓ IN
DEVELOPMENT

The Law on Education and Vocational Education and Training (Wet educatie en beroepsonderwijs) was adopted on 31 October 1995. It was recently revised in 2023 (in force since 01-01-2023).

The law defines key elements of apprenticeships at system level, for example:

- the country-wide structure of qualifications;
- duration of study and the minimum duration of an apprenticeship
- responsibilities of stakeholders (Ministry of Education, education institutions, social partners, companies, etc.) in relation to setting up educational programmes;
- responsibilities of stakeholders in relation to ensuring learning objectives are in accordance with contractual agreements at international level.

An important part of vocational education and training consists of learning in practice, known as work placement (beroepspraktijkvorming, bpv).

There is a distinction between practice placements (school-based pathway, BOL) and apprenticeships (dual pathway, BBL). The work placement (BPV) in the school-based pathway (BOL) is between 20% and 60% of the total programme duration. In the apprenticeship dual pathway (BBL), work placement (BPV) is 60% or more.

Q2. Is there an official definition of 'apprenticeship' or 'apprentice' in your country?



Answer by referring to the legal basis (law, national strategies or other official governmental documents) that regulates apprenticeships as a basis.

The Education and Vocational Education Law clearly defines requirements for the dual pathway (beroepsbegeleidende leerweg or BBL).

According to the law, Article 7.2.7, apprenticeships are educational programmes leading to a vocational qualification.

The programmes must comprise at least 850 hours of education per year, of which at least 200 hours must be school-based instruction (begeleide onderwijsuren) and of which at least 610 hours must be work placement (beroepspraktijkvorming, bpv).

In practice, this means that apprentices usually spend 1 day per week in the education institution and 4 days per week in the company.[1]

[1] ROA (2015), Schoolverlaters tussen onderwijs en arbeidsmarkt 2014, p.4

Q3. At which level do apprenticeship schemes exist in your country?



✓ AT UPPER
SECONDARY LEVEL



✓ AT POST-
SECONDARY (NOT
TERTIARY)



✓ AT TERTIARY
LEVEL



✓ AT SECTORAL
LEVEL

Four types of vocational programmes (MBO) exist at upper secondary level.[1]

- Entry-level programmes (1-1.5 years, ISCED 254, EQF1).
- Basic vocational programmes (2 years, ISCED 353, EQF2).
- Professional education programmes (3 years, ISCED 353, EQF3).
- Middle-management VET programmes (3-4 years, ISCED 354, EQF4).

All four programmes can be followed in different pathways; as an apprenticeship (BBL)

or in the mainly school-based pathway (beroepsopleidende leerweg or BOL) with shorter periods of workplace training.

There's also the possibility to follow a programme in a third pathway, not funded by the government: in that case, work placement (beroepspraktijkvorming, bpv) is mandatory, but without the requirement to define minimum hours of BPV.

A substantial number of students follow the apprenticeship pathway (BBL) in the Netherlands. In the 2022/2023 school year, this refers to nearly 136,000 students (28% of the total number of upper-secondary VET (MBO) students).

After graduation students may enter Associate Degree (EQF 5) or Higher Education (EQF 6).

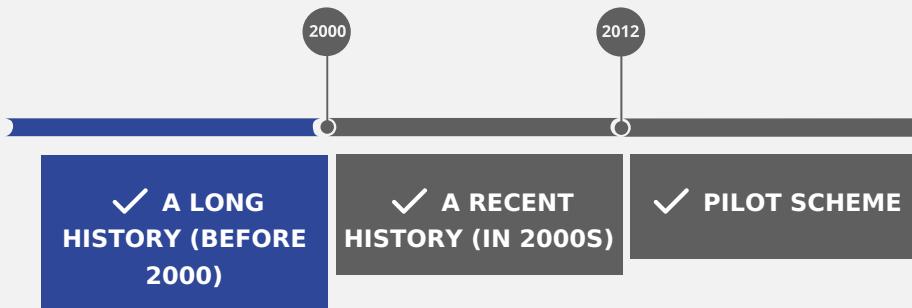
After finishing a middle management VET programme there's a possibility to enroll in a specialisation programme at post-secondary level (1-2 years, ISCED 453, EQF4), for which a diploma of a professional education programme of the same vocation is required [2].

It is an exception for a learner to follow a second course on level 4.

[1] Cedefop (2016), Spotlight on VET: The Netherlands.

[2] Cedefop, VET in Europe database: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/netherlands...>

Q4. How well-established are apprenticeship schemes in your country?



The current VET system is based on the 1995 Law on Education and Vocational Education and Training. VET education, including apprenticeships, existed long before that but in a different, more granular structure.

Q5. Relevant information that is essential to understanding the specificity of apprenticeships in the country.

In the Netherlands work based learning (praktijkleren) is in the heart of VET. Work based learning in VET is also of importance for different programmes for learning on the job and lifelong learning, for both youngsters and adults, working, unemployed and/or disabled. Apprenticeship is mostly a combination of an employment contract and a separate learning agreement. Those are normally not connected as one contract.

Professional practical training takes place at a company or organisation with a recognition pursuant to Article 1.5.3. The Foundation for cooperation on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB) is responsible by regulation for determining the conditions for recognition for companies and other organizations that provide vocational practical training. The SBB recognizes, on request, a company or organization that meets the conditions for recognition as a training company for vocational practical training.

The company or organisation that provides the practical training takes care of the supervision of students within the company. The competent authority of the school assesses whether the student has completed the vocational practical training with a positive assessment. In this assessment, the competent authority shall take into account the opinion of the company or the organisation, taking into account the relevant rules included in the education and examination regulations.