
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

DENMARK

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



VET IN EUROPE 2023

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CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

Summary of main elements

Vocational education and training (VET) plays a key role in the Danish strategy for lifelong learning, alongside meeting the challenges of globalisation and technological change.

Danish education and training provide qualifications at all levels, from compulsory schooling to doctoral degrees, and a system of parallel adult education and continuing vocational training (CVET). The two systems offer equivalent qualifications at various levels, enabling horizontal permeability.

VET jurisdiction is with the education ministry. Initial VET (around 100 programmes) is organised into four broad entry routes: care, health and pedagogy; office, trade and business services; food, agriculture and 'experiences' (an umbrella term for tourism and recreation); and technology, construction and transportation. Programmes are organised according to the dual principle, alternating between periods of college-based and work-based learning (apprenticeship training) in enterprises. A typical initial VET programme (EUD) lasts 3.5 years with a 2:1 split between workplace and college-based training, although there is considerable variation among programmes. Individual study plans are compiled for all students. VET colleges and social partners share the responsibility for developing curricula to ensure responsiveness to local labour-market needs. Qualifications at this level provide access to relevant fields in academy professional programmes (KVU) and professional bachelor programmes at the tertiary level. Professional bachelor programmes in Denmark correspond to EQF level 6, indicating that students' performance is equivalent to programmes at bachelor's and diploma degree and that students have acquired the required, advanced skillset.

Alternative routes to VET qualifications include:

- combined vocational and general upper secondary education (EUX, an academic preparation programme), a relatively new pathway, which lasts around 4 years. It enables highly motivated students to obtain access to higher education along with a vocational qualification
- 'new apprenticeship' (1) (Ny Mesterlære) programmes, where the entire first-year basic course takes place at a company instead of partly at a VET college. Students with a practical approach to learning benefit from these programmes
- basic VET (FGU) for lower secondary graduates, with a practical approach to learning. The programme caters to the young unemployed, lasts 3 to 4 years, and includes at least 75% of work-based learning (WBL).

Adult learning

VET for adults aged 25 or older (EUV) has been established as a specific track to offer the low-skilled an attractive and goal-oriented path to becoming skilled workers.

Adults with at least 2 years of work experience can receive VET education without the basic programme and without an internship. Adult vocational training (*arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser*, AMU) provides participants with skills and competences relevant to the labour market and is primarily geared to specific sectors and jobs. The programmes help learners either to deepen

their existing knowledge in a particular field or to develop new knowledge in related fields. AMU programmes (around 500) are created, adapted or discontinued in response to labour-market needs. At the tertiary level, further VET and adult education programmes lead to EQF level 5 qualifications.

Distinctive features

The Danish VET system is characterised by a high level of stakeholder involvement. Social partners, vocational colleges, teachers and learners are all involved in developing VET based on consensus and shared responsibilities. Stakeholders play a key role in advising the education ministry on overall VET policy and in determining the structure and general framework for training programmes within their field, cooperating in national trade committees. Locally, stakeholders cooperate in developing curricula to respond to local labour-market needs.

Denmark has one of the highest rates of participation in adult education and continuing training in the EU. This reflects the national strategy to focus on knowledge-intensive specialist sectors and lifelong learning, as well as the large public sector and a tradition of strong ties between educational institutions and social partners.

An integrated lifelong learning strategy introduced in 2007, improved horizontal and vertical permeability and guidance services and provided better opportunities for the recognition of non-formal learning and qualifications through standardised procedures to validate prior learning.

Public financing is central to the VET system, with colleges receiving performance-based block grants. Apprenticeships and further training for employees are subsidised according to a solidarity principle, coordinated by the Employers' reimbursement fund (*Arbejdsgivernes Uddannelses Bidrag-AUB*). Within this system, all enterprises, regardless of their involvement in VET, contribute a fixed amount per employee to a central fund. Enterprises are then partially reimbursed for providing training placements and for employee participation in continuing training.

[1] This is the minor pathway and therefore not presented in the VET in Denmark's education and training system chart.

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

Education and training are considered a key area. As the demand for skilled labour continues to increase, IVET is expected to accommodate an increasingly heterogeneous learner population. Two reforms have had significant influences on VET development. The VET reform of 2014 established minimum entrance requirements for VET learners. [Requirements for VET teachers were strengthened in 2010](#), since when all VET teachers must have a teaching diploma (60 ECTS) at EQF level 6. Both initiatives are expected to increase VET quality. Social assistance reform (2014) makes it mandatory for unemployed people under 30 receiving social benefits to participate in education and training.

The 2014 VET reform has four main objectives for improving VET quality:

- more learners must enter VET directly from compulsory schooling, rising from 18% in 2015 to 30% by 2025;
- completion rates in VET must be improved, from 52% in 2012 to 67% in 2025;
- VET must challenge all learners, so that they reach their full potential;
- employer and learner satisfaction with VET must gradually be increased by 2020.

A lack of suitable training placements in enterprises is frequently cited as a primary reason for learner dropout. Under the 2020, Tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET, 80% of VET students must have an apprenticeship at the end of the basic course. In 2022, this figure was 65%.

Unemployment, and particularly long-term unemployment, among young people with little or no work experience poses challenges for adult education and continuing training. Substantial upskilling and reskilling are necessary to avoid a considerable part of the workforce being permanently excluded from the labour market. The government launched [a plan for upskilling unemployed adults](#). In the training period, it is possible to receive 110% of unemployment benefits.

CHAPTER 3.

External factors influencing VET

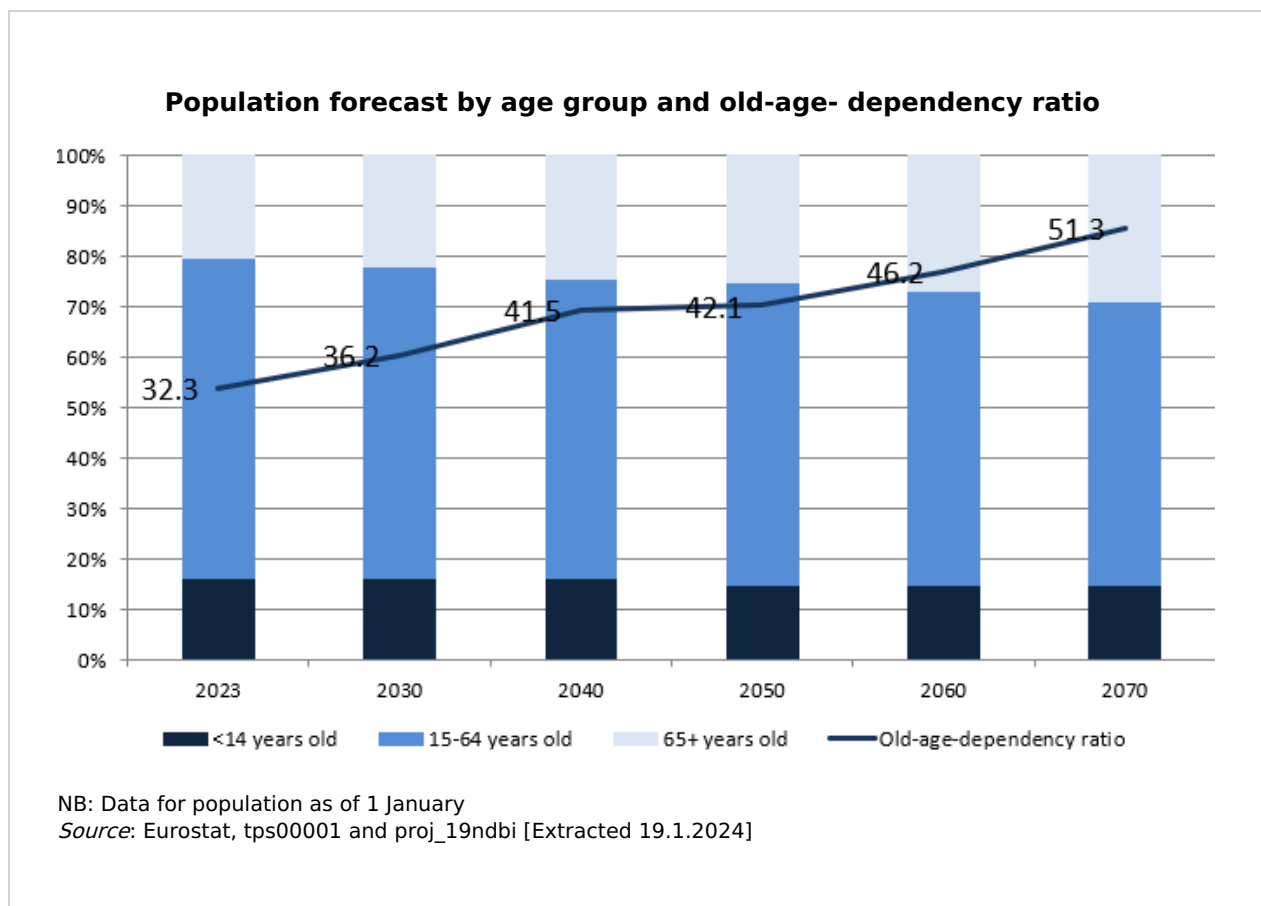
3.1 Demographics

Population in 2022: 5 873 420 (2).

Population increased since 2017 by 2.2% due to positive natural growth and a higher immigration than emigration rate (3). [The 2022 fertility rate of 1.55 is above the EU average.](#)

As in many EU countries, the Danish population is ageing.

The old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase from 32.3 in 2023 to 51.3 in 2070 (4).



An increasing proportion of the total population is made up of foreign immigrants and their descendants. In 2024, this group accounted for 15.8% of the Danish population.

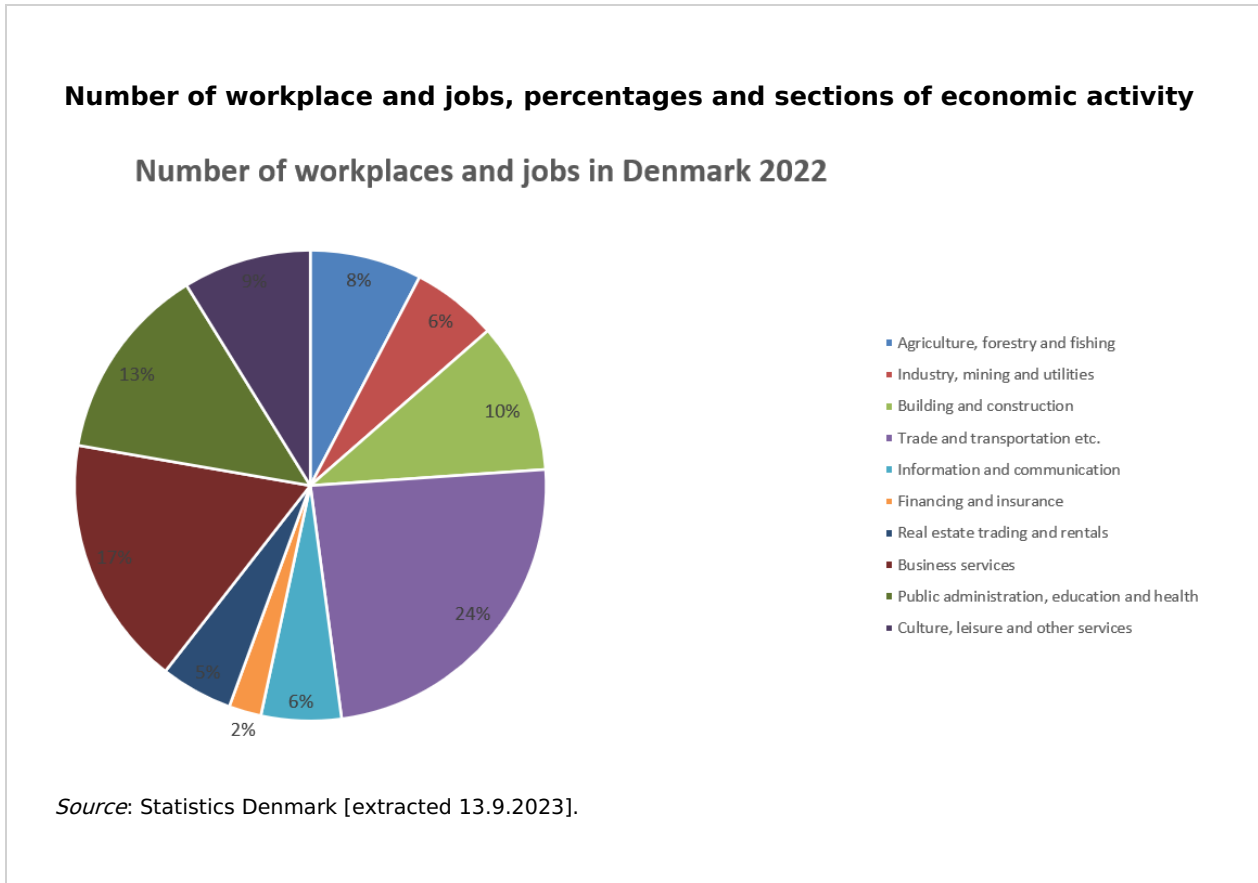
One policy focus is to provide education and training opportunities to those with a non-Danish ethnic background in order to ensure their integration into the labour market. At the beginning of 2016, the government launched a VET training programme for immigrants (5).

Consequently, there is a growing number of VET-related programmes for immigrants.

3.2 Economics

Most companies are micro- and small-sized.

The figure below depicts the latest available data about number of workforce by industry in Denmark, in 2022:



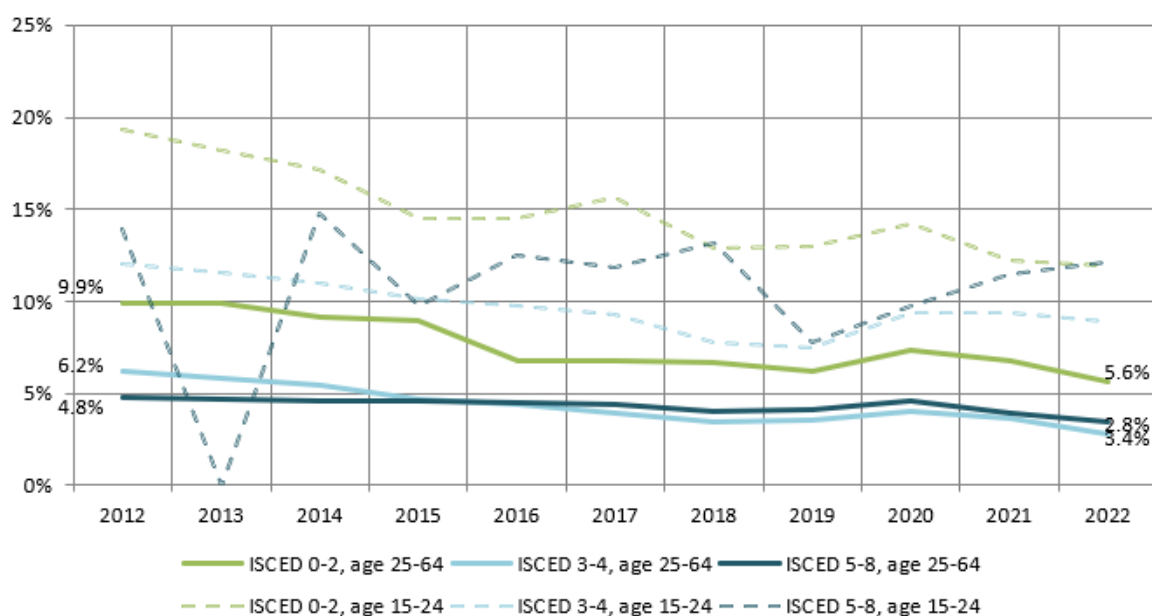
3.3 Labour market

The Danish labour market is highly regulated. Only low-skilled jobs are available without a diploma.

Total unemployment rate (percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old) in 2022: 3.5% (5.4% in EU-27); it decreased by 0.7 percentage points since 2018.

Overall, the unemployment rate for people at all levels of education is lower in Denmark than in the EU-27. The difference is most pronounced at the lowest levels of education (ISCED 0-2 and 3-4).

Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2012 - 2022



NB: age bracket here is 25-74 because une_rt_a does not offer to select 25-64

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education

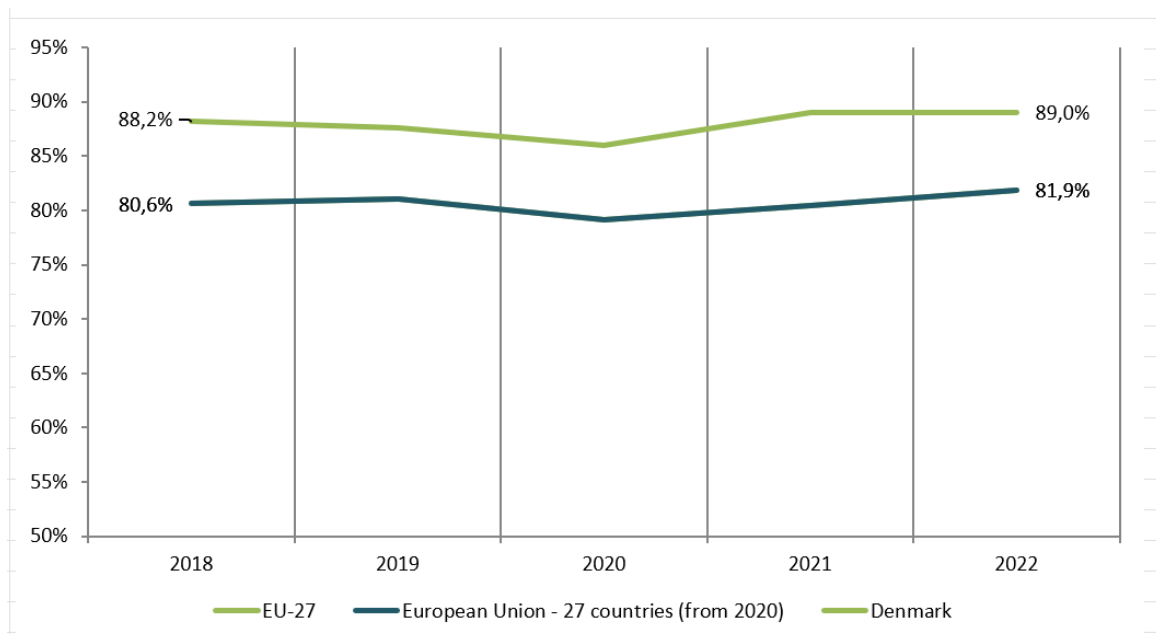
ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, Ifsa_urgaed [Extracted 19.1.2024].

The employment rate of 20- to 34-year-old VET graduates increased from 88.2 % in 2018 to 89.0% in 2022. This suggests an increase by 0.8 percentage points. At 89.0%, the employment rate of 20- to 34-year-old VET graduates, is above the EU-27 average of 81.9% for 2022.

Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Source: Eurostat, edat_ifse_24 [extracted 12.6.2023].

[2] NB: data for population as of 1 January; break in series. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 12.6.2023].

[3] NB: data for population as of 1 January; break in series. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 12.6.2023].

[4] The Old-age dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more and the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).

[5] <https://www.ug.dk/uddannelser/andreerhvervsrettedeuddannelser/andreuddannelserforvoksne/andresaerligeuddannelser/integrationsgrunduddannelsen-igu> and <https://www.uvm.dk/integrationsgrunduddannelsen-igu>

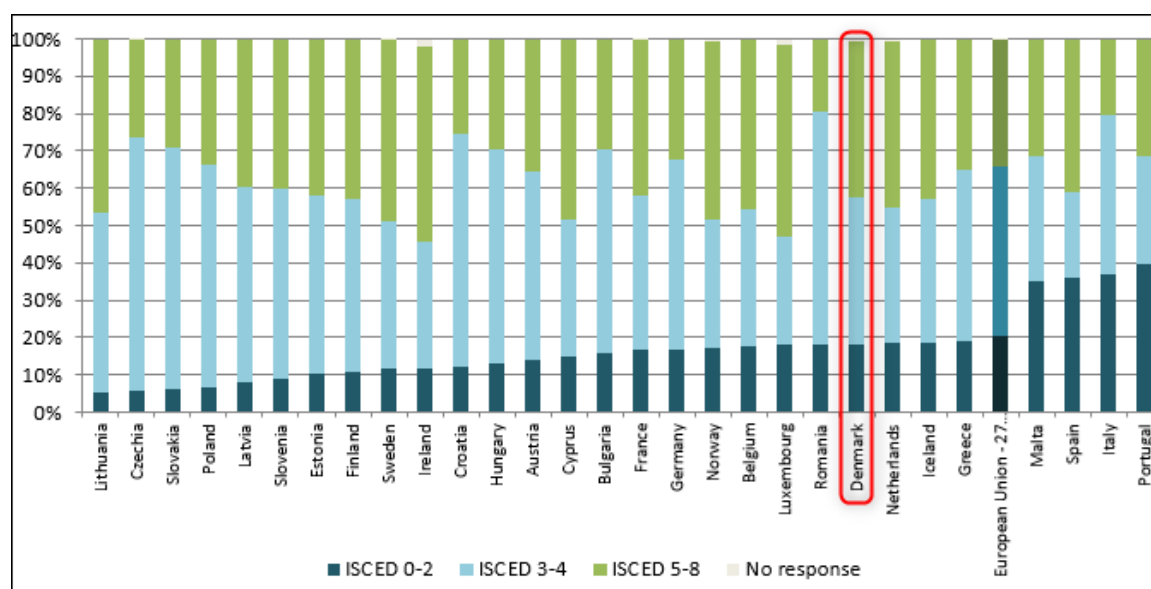
CHAPTER 4.

Education attainment

4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

The share of the Danish population aged 25 to 64 with higher education (ISCED 5-8) is 41.9%, which is above the EU-27 average of 34.2%. The share of Danish people holding medium-level qualifications (ISCED 3-4) is also high (39.5%).

Population (aged 25 to 64) by highest educational level attained in 2022



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011. Low reliability for 'No response' in Czechia and Latvia.

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education.

Source: Eurostat, Ifsa_pgaed [extracted 12.6.2023]

4.3 VET learners by level

Share of learners in VET by level in 2021

lower secondary

upper secondary

post-secondary

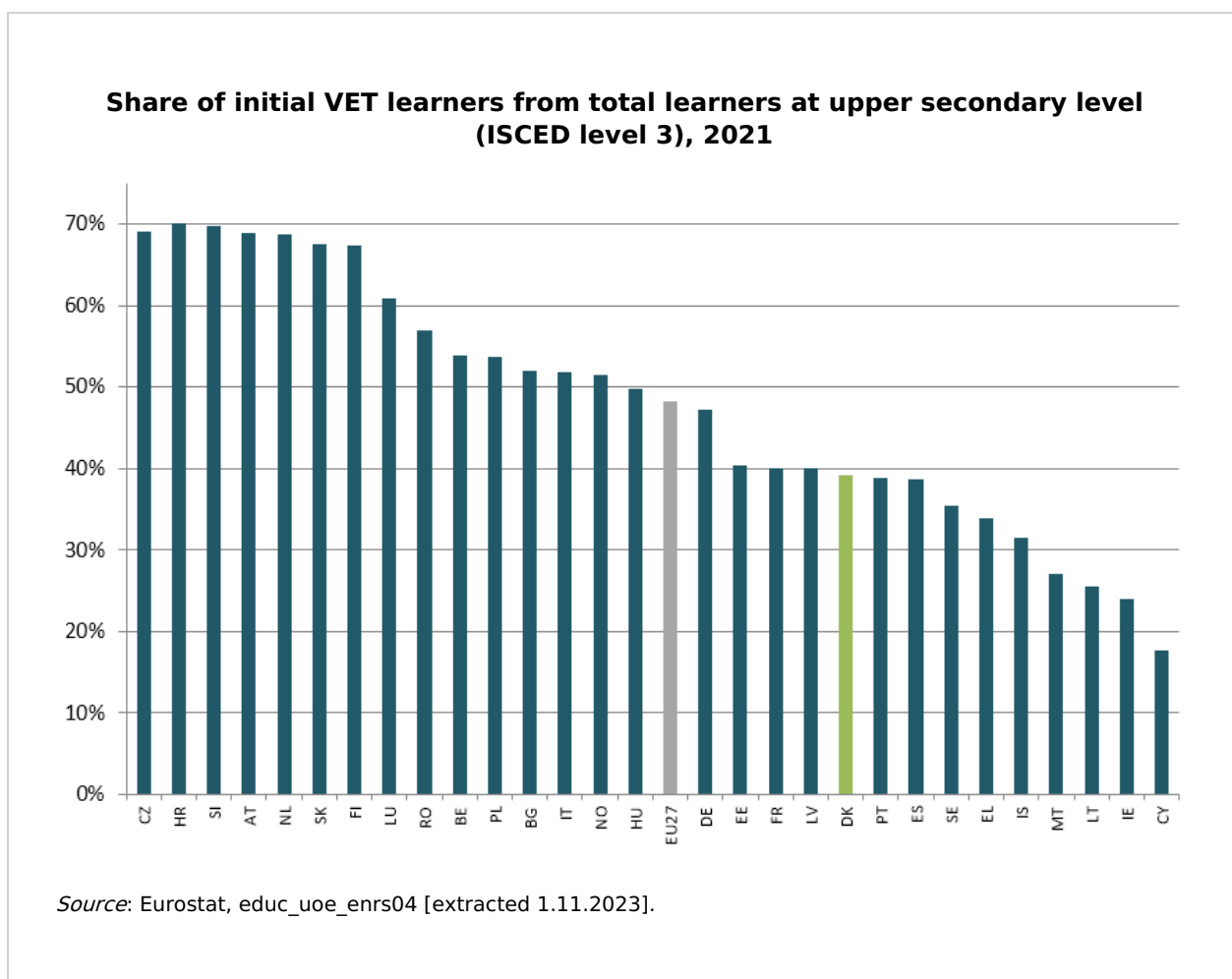
0%

39.1%

Not applicable

NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs01, educ_uoe_enrs04 and educ_uoe_enrs07 [extracted 19.1.2024].



With a 39.1% share of IVET learners in the total population of upper secondary learners in 2021 (latest available data), Denmark is 9.2 percentage points below the EU-27 average of 48.3%.

4.4 Female share

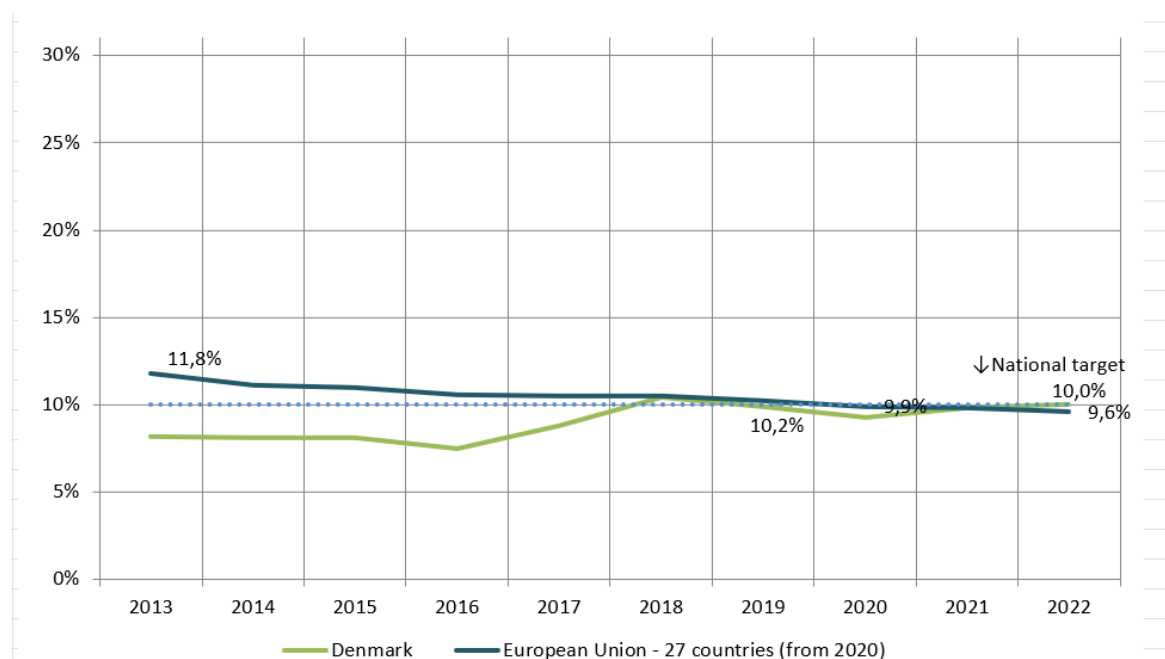
In general, there are more male than female learners in VET: 57 % and 43 % respectively in 2022.

However, the distribution is uneven in various branches. In commercial training and social and health-care training, for example, there are more female apprentices, while the opposite applies to technical training.

4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training has increased from 8.2% in 2013 to 10.0% in 2022. It met the national objective for 2022 of not more than 10% but was 0.4 percentage points above the EU-27 average of 9.6% for 2022.

Early leavers from education and training in 2013-22



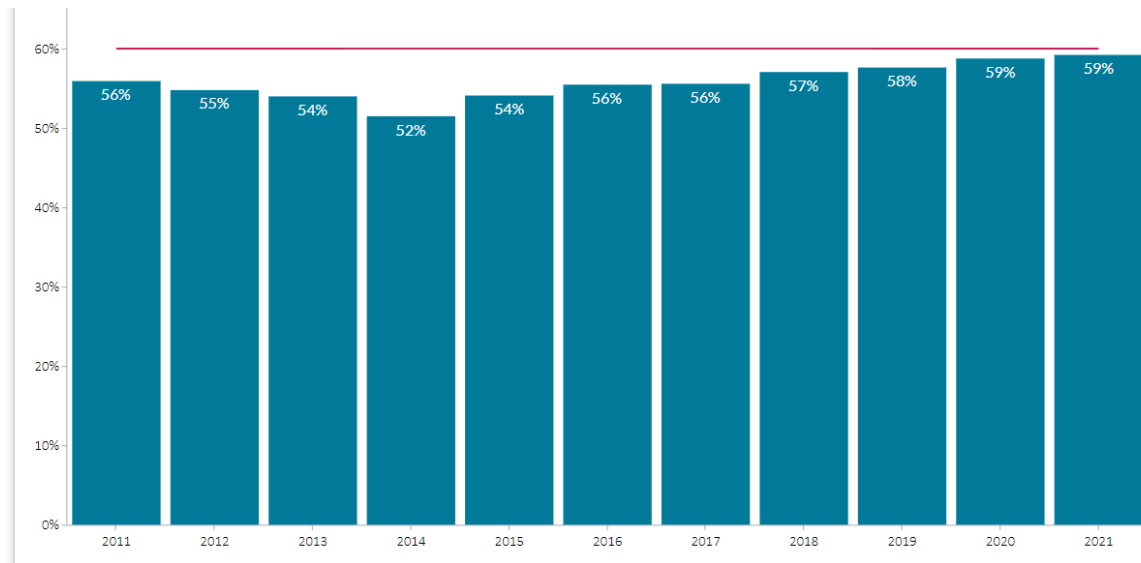
NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training; break in series.

Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_14 [extracted 12.6.2023] and European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-programmes-and-stability-convergence-programmes_en [extracted 14.11.2018].

For more information visit [Cedefop project page on tackling early leaving](#) and our interactive toolkits: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#).

In 2012, the completion rate in VET was only 52%; in 2021(latest data available) it was 59%. The Danish VET system was ratified by Parliament in 2014, one of its objectives being to improve completion rates to at least 67% by 2025.

Completion rate in Danish VET



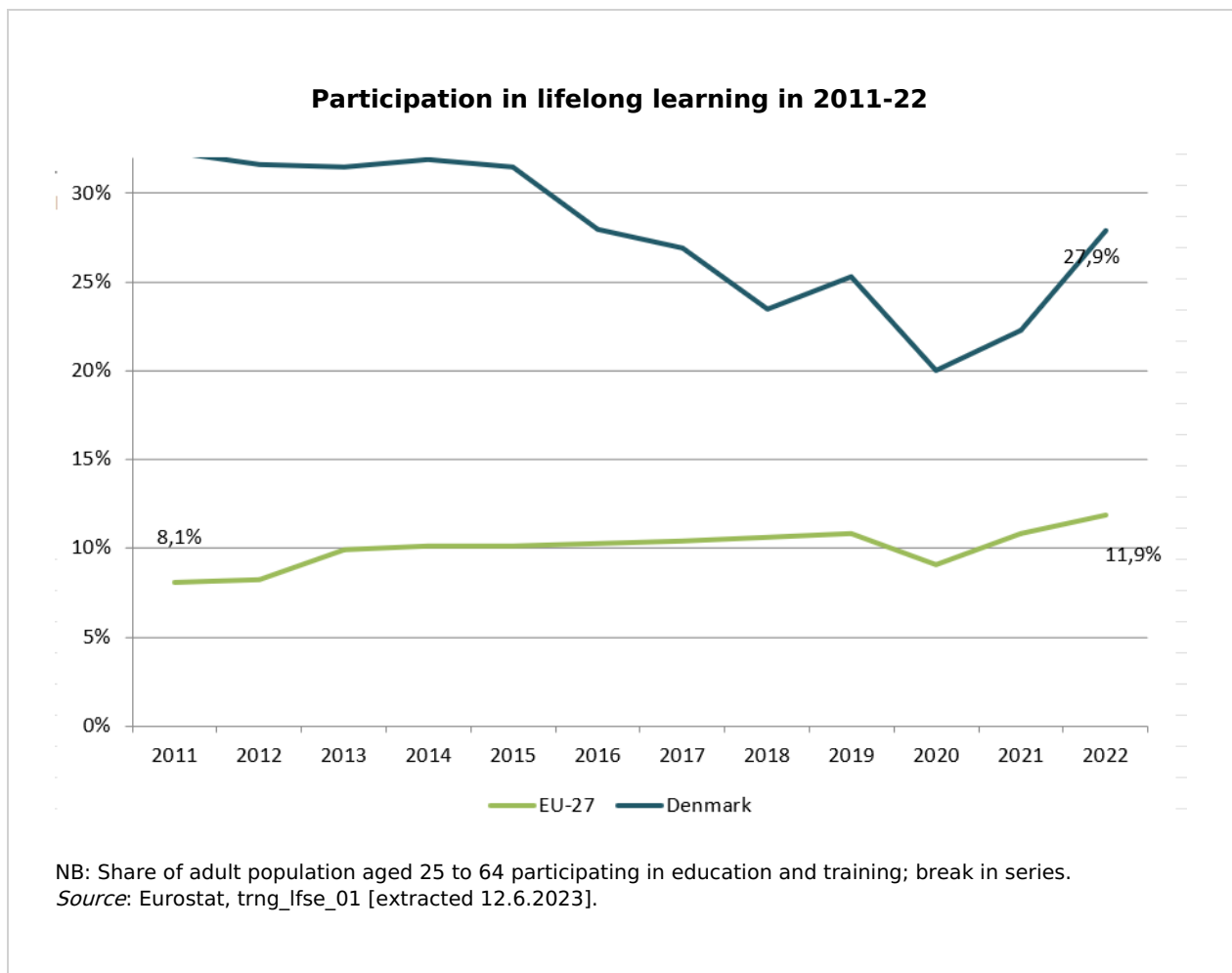
Source: [Ministry of Children and Education](#)

4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning offers training opportunities for adults, including early leavers from education.

Denmark has one of the highest participation in adult education and continuing training in the EU, regardless of levels of educational attainment. In 2022, the share of participation in education and training among the population aged 25-64 was 27.9%, 16 percentage points above the EU-27 average of 11.9% for the same period. These figures refer to all forms of education and training activity, both formal and non-formal.

The high participation rate reflects several specific characteristics, such as the national strategy to focus on knowledge-intensive specialist sectors and lifelong learning, a large public sector, and a tradition of strong ties between education institutions and social partners. Adult vocational training programmes (*Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser*-AMU) offering short vocational training programmes to skilled and unskilled workers, as well as to the unemployed, have a significant role to play in this regard.

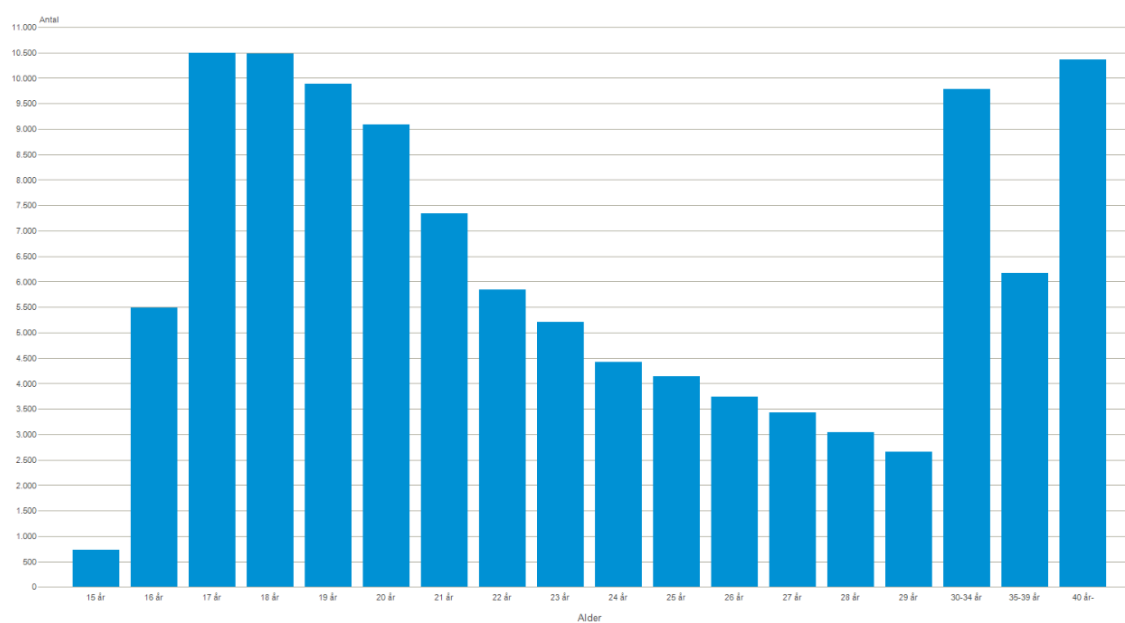


4.7 VET learners by age

Learners in mainstream education, October 2020

The main age group in VET is 17-20, but there is a significant group of VET learners aged 30-40.

Education activity at upper secondary vocational education (Status: Students per 1st October 2021)



Source: Statistics Denmark [extracted 15.9.2023].

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- primary and lower secondary education (basic schooling); (ISCED levels 1-2);
- upper secondary education; (ISCED level 3);
- post-secondary education (ISCED levels 4-5);
- higher education; (ISCED levels 6-8).

Children participate in mainstream education from the age of six and progress through the system during their youth into adulthood. Adult education and continuing training (CVT) mirror the qualifications provided within the mainstream system but is designed specifically for adults. CVT also provides opportunities to acquire supplementary qualifications. As such, the two parallel systems combined provide a framework for lifelong learning.

Basic schooling is compulsory from the ages of 6 to 16, that is, from pre-school class to ninth grade (lower secondary education). According to data regarding applications from primary education' graduates to enter upper secondary education in 2023, the main conclusions are:

- 19.4% of learners applied for VET. In 2019-22 this percentage was around 20.0%;
- 30.8% of learners applying for a vocational education chose combined vocational and general upper secondary education (EUX, an academic preparation programme). This is also on a par with 2022;
- most learners, 71.6%, are seeking upper secondary education. This corresponds to a small decrease of almost 1% compared to 2022;
- general programmes, which lead to the final upper secondary school leaving examination (STX), are the most popular, attracting 58,8% of learners applying for an upper secondary school path;
- 81.9% of learners applying for the VET programme EUD have been accepted based on their positive evaluation in 2022. This is a decrease of 0.3% compared to 2020;
- 88.3% of learners applying for an upper secondary school path have been accepted based on their positive evaluation.

Within the adult education and continuing training system, there are two programmes at EQF Level 2. Preparatory adult education (FVU) provides courses in basic literacy and mathematics, as well as courses for those with learning difficulties or with Danish as their second language. General adult education (AVU) is provided to adults who, for whatever reason, did not complete lower secondary education or need supplementary education in particular subjects. Qualifications at this level are equivalent to the 9th or 10th grade final examinations.

Upper secondary education consists of both general upper secondary education programmes and vocational upper secondary education and training programmes (*erhvervsuddannelse*, EUD).

Upper secondary education programmes usually last 3 years and prepare learners for higher education at the tertiary level. Five different qualifications result from five corresponding programmes (6):

- Higher general examination programme (STX programme) (*Studentereksamen*, STX) (EQF 4);

- Higher preparatory examination programme (7) (*Højere Forberedelseseksamen*, HF) (EQF 4);
- Higher commercial examination (*Højere Handelseksamen*, HHX) (EQF 4);
- Higher technical examination programme (HTX Programme) (*Højere Teknisk Eksamen*, HTX) (EQF 4);
- Vocational education programme qualifying for access to higher education (*EUX*) (EQF 4-5).

The adult education (age 25 and above) and continuing training system includes three types of programmes at the upper secondary level:

- Higher preparatory single subject course (*enkeltfag*, HF) (EQF 4);
- Vocational education and training for adults (*Erhvervsuddannelse for voksne*, EUV) (EQF 3-5), which is equivalent to EUD;
- adult vocational training programmes (*Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser*, AMU) (EQF 2-5).

In broad terms, higher education comprises:

- professionally oriented short- and medium-cycle programmes where the short-cycle programmes lead to a professional academic degree and are offered at academies of professional higher education, while the medium-cycle programmes lead to a professional bachelor degree and are offered by university colleges;
- research-based long-cycle programmes offered at universities where most learners continue to a master degree programme after completing a bachelor degree. The former can then provide access to doctoral programmes.

There are corresponding programmes within the adult education and continuing training system:

- short-cycle further (vocational) adult education (VVU);
- medium-cycle diploma programmes;
- long-cycle master programmes.

As part-time courses, these programmes allow participants to combine education with a working career, as well as improving integration of the individual's professional and life experiences.

The Danish VET system is divided into IVET and CVET.

The IVET programmes for learners aged up to 25 comprise:

- Basic vocational education and training programme (FGU) (EQF 2-3);
- Vocational education and training programme (EUD) (EQF 3-5);
- Vocational education programme qualifying for access to higher education (EUX) (EQF 4-5).

The CVET programmes for learners aged 25 or older comprises:

- Adult vocational education and training programme (EUV) (EQF 3-5);
- Labour market education and training programmes for adults (AMU) (EQF 2-5).

Danish education and training features a mainstream system providing qualifications at all levels, from compulsory schooling to doctoral degrees, and a parallel adult education and continuing vocational training (CVET) system. CVET is designed to meet the needs of adult learners, for example, through part-time courses. The two systems offer equivalent qualifications at various levels, enabling horizontal permeability.

VET programmes are organised according to the dual principle, alternating between periods of college-based and work-based learning (apprenticeship training) in enterprises. The college-based learning will typically comprise practice-based learning in workshops.

When learners complete a VET programme, they can enter the labour market as skilled workers or can apply for CVET in the form of academy professional programmes: KVV (*Korte Videregående Uddannelser*).

- [6] The two first programmes are general education programmes.
- [7] In the future the higher preparatory examination will be profiled as a pathway for students with non-academic profiles and can be completed without a formal examination.

CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

The Danish VET system can best be characterised as a unified VET system based on the dual principle.

Although VET programmes are offered in several variations in Denmark, building on different legal frameworks, there is no doubt that the main pathway through VET is the dual-based apprenticeship programme, founded and developed from the beginning of VET education and training in Denmark.

More than 95% of participants in Danish VET are involved in this kind of VET programme, leaving only a small percentage for 'alternative' VET pathways, such as the 'new master apprenticeship programme' (*ny mesterlære*), in which the school part of dual system is normally put in parentheses, or the few college-based VET programmes without work-based learning in a company.

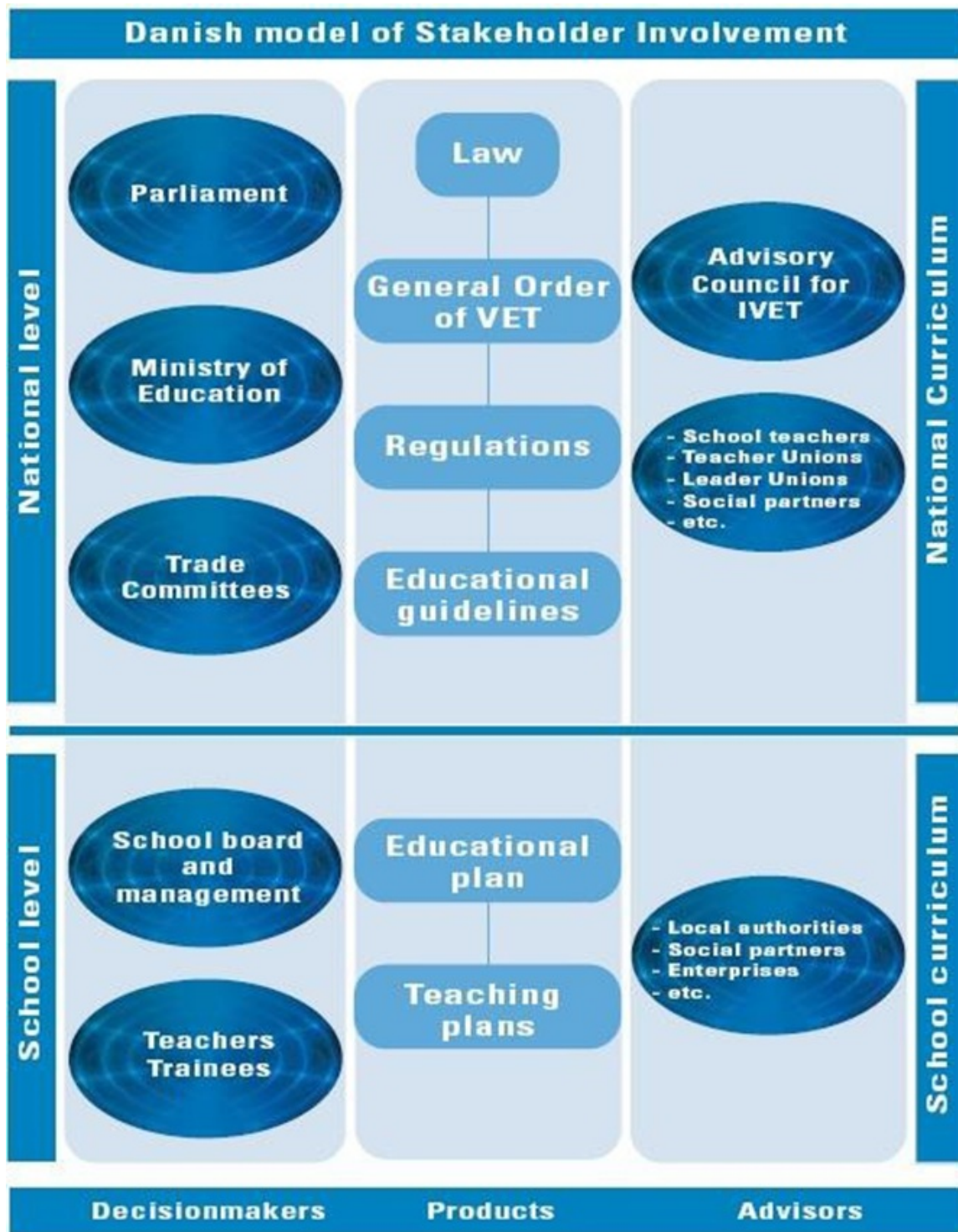
VET programmes organised according to the dual principle alternate between periods of college-based and work-based learning (apprenticeship training) in enterprises. A typical initial VET programme (EUD) lasts 3.5 years with a 2:1 split between workplace- and college- based training, although there is considerable variation among programmes. Individual study plans are compiled for all students. VET colleges and social partners share the responsibility for developing curricula to ensure responsiveness to local labour market needs. Qualifications at this level provide access to relevant fields in professional academic programmes (KVU)(EQF level 5) and professional bachelor programmes(EQF level 6) at the tertiary level).

Learn more about apprenticeships in the national context from the [European database on apprenticeship schemes by Cedefop](#).

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

Stakeholder involvement in Denmark



Source: Ministry of Children and Education

Parliament sets out the overall framework for VET, which is administered by the Ministry of Children and Education. The ministry has overall parliamentary, financial and legal responsibility for VET, laying down the overall objectives for programmes and providing the legislative framework within which stakeholders, social partners, colleges and enterprises are able to adapt curricula and methodologies to the needs of both learners and the labour market.

Social partners play an institutionalized role at all levels of VET, from the national advisory council on vocational upper secondary education and training (*Rådet for de grundlæggende*

Erhvervsrettede Uddannelser), which advises the Ministry of Children and Education on key topics and key issues concerning VET, to playing an advisory role at regional level through local training committees comprising representatives of the social partners who advise colleges on local adaptations of VET. Their most important role is to ensure that VET provision is in line with the needs of the labour market.

The national advisory council consists of around 30 representatives from the social partners. In its advisory capacity, the council monitors developments in society and highlights trends relevant to VET. The council makes recommendations to the Ministry regarding the establishment of new VET programmes and the adaptation, amalgamation or discontinuation of others.

National trade committees (*faglige udvalg*) are the backbone of the VET system. Approximately 50 trade committees are responsible for around 100 main programmes. The committees normally have between 10 and 14 members and are formed by labour-market organizations (with parity of membership between employer and employee organizations). They are financed by participating organizations.

Among their core responsibilities, national trade committees:

- perform a central role in the creation and renewal of VET programmes and courses by closely monitoring developments in their particular trade. They also have a dominant position in formulating learning objectives and final examination standards based around the key competences that are deemed to be required in the labour market
- conduct relevant analyses, development projects, etc., and maintain close contact with relevant stakeholders
- decide the regulatory framework for individual programmes and courses within boundaries laid down by the legislative framework. They decide which trade is to provide the core of the training, the duration of the programme, and the ratio between college-based teaching and practical work in an enterprise
- approve enterprises as qualified training establishments and rule on conflicts which may develop between apprentices and the enterprise providing practical training
- function as gatekeepers to the trade, as they are responsible for issuing journeyman's certificates in terms of content, assessment and the actual holding of examinations.

Local training committees are affiliated to each vocational college and ensure close contact with the local community, thus improving responsiveness to particular local labour-market needs. They consist of representatives of local employers and employees appointed by national trade committees, as well as representatives of staff, management and learners appointed by colleges. Training committees work closely alongside colleges in determining the specific curriculum of colleges, including which optional subjects are available. They assist and advise national trade committees in approving local enterprises as qualified training establishments and in mediating conflicts between apprentices and enterprises. Finally, training committees help to ensure that enough suitable local training placements are available.

[243 educational institutions in Denmark](#) offer basic vocationally oriented education programmes. A number of colleges offer their programmes through local branches at locations other than the main college. As self-governing institutions, vocational colleges are governed by a governing board with overall responsibility for the administrative and financial running of the college and educational activities in accordance with the framework administered by the education ministry. The board consists of representatives of teachers, learners, administrative staff and social partners. It takes decisions regarding which programmes are offered at the college and their capacity, imposes local regulations and guidelines, guarantees responsible administration of the college's financial resources, including approval of budgets and accounts, and hires and fires the operational management (director, principal, dean or similar). The operational management is responsible for implementing the overall objectives and strategies set out by the governing board.

CHAPTER 8.

VET financing mechanisms

A publicly financed system of basic, secondary and further education and training that recognises relevant non-formal and informal competences and practical work experience is a fundamental characteristic of the system.

Mainstream ('youth') VET is based on alternative models where training takes place in turn at college and in an enterprise. The state finances training at colleges, while enterprises finance on-the-job training; Apprentices receive an apprentice's salary while in the company, as laid down in the collective agreements.

In 2022, the state spent a total of DKK 3.5 billion (EUR 470 million) on VET basic courses and main programmes (see table below). A considerable proportion of these funds was distributed to colleges in accordance with the 'taximeter' principle, whereby funding is linked to some quantifiable measure of activity, for example, the number of full-time equivalent learners, with a set amount awarded per unit. Among other things, this system provides an incentive for colleges to increase retention within the system.

Besides the 'taximeter' rate, VET providers also receive an annual fixed grant for the maintenance of buildings, salaries, etc. The total state grant is provided as a block grant which institutions use at their own discretion within the boundaries laid down by the legislative framework and specific institutional objectives.

Expenditure on main youth education pathways (2022)

VET	FGU, EGU and production schools	Upper secondary education (General, vocational and others)
DKK 3.500million (EUR 470 million)	DKK 2 700 million (EUR 345 million)	DKK 12.900 million (EUR 1 130 million)
		Upper vocational education
		DKK 7 800 million (EUR 1 046 million)

Source: National budget 2022

When it comes to financing training in companies, all employers, both public and private, pay a sum into the 'employers' reimbursement fund' (*Arbejdsgivernes Uddannelsesbidrag-AUB*), regardless of whether or not they provide apprenticeship placements. This fund finances VET for both young people and adults. From 2023, all employers are obliged to pay an annual contribution of DKK 3 213 (EUR 431) per full-time employee. These funds are then allocated to workplaces that take in apprentices so that they do not bear the cost of training alone. These employers receive reimbursement for wages paid during apprentices' periods of college-based training.

VET for adults (AMU) is largely publicly financed. Providers receive 'taximeter' funding and must negotiate budgets and targets with the education ministry annually.

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1 VET teacher types

In VET, there are:

- general subject teachers;
- vocational subject teachers;
- in-company trainers;
- mentors.

General subject teachers are usually university graduates with a professional bachelor degree in teaching.

Vocational subject teachers usually have a background in VET education and substantial experience in the field; normally, at least 5 years is required.

The job of a VET teacher is considered demanding. Nevertheless, the motivation for applying for these jobs is of the highest level, when jobs in the private sector are hard to find.

Colleges and training centers have autonomy in staff recruitment. The education ministry is not involved in teacher recruitment procedures, and teachers are not civil servants entering the system through tests.

There are no requirements for teachers to have a pedagogical qualification prior to their employment.

Pedagogical training (*Diplomuddannelsen i Erhvervspædagogik*) is part-time in-service training based on interaction between theory and practice. This programme was introduced for all teachers employed in VET and adult education (AMU) recruited after 15 January 2010 and replaced the previous teacher training course (*Pædagogikum*). The objective has been to improve teaching skills to a level equivalent to teachers in compulsory education with a professional bachelor degree. The programme is the equivalent of 1 year of full-time study (60 ECTS), and the acquired qualification is placed at EQF Level 6. However, it is generally conducted as a part-time study to root training in practical teaching experience. New teachers must enroll in the programme within 1 year of gaining employment at a VET college or AMU center. The programme must be completed within a period of 6 years. The programme was developed by the Danish National Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training (*Nationalt Center for Erhvervspædagogik*, NCE), a centre of excellence collecting, producing and disseminating knowledge on VET based at University College Copenhagen (KP). The programme was developed in cooperation with an advisory group consisting of representatives of teachers' associations and college management organisations, as well as the Education ministry. There are three compulsory and five optional modules, as well as a final examination project. [The NCE and other providers at different university colleges offer the programme.](#)

In-company trainers play an important role in VET, given the dual training principle that is characteristic of all VET. There are different types of trainers with different responsibilities: planners, training managers and daily trainers. However, there are very few legal requirements to become a trainer.

Trainers in enterprises that are responsible for apprentices must be craftsmen. They must have completed a VET programme, for which they have received a 'journeyman's certificate', and

must have work experience.

9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

Once qualified to teach in VET, there is no general legislation on in-service training. Individual teachers are obliged to keep their subject-specific and pedagogical knowledge up to date. The college is required to draw up a plan to develop the competences of its teachers. On this basis, and in cooperation with each teacher, the college determines the individual's professional in-service training plan. Courses are offered locally by many providers in accordance with market conditions. A certificate is normally awarded to participants, but a recognized qualification is not generally awarded. The latest VET reform in 2015 requires skills updating for teachers and leaders in VET institutions at a level equivalent to 10 ECTS points. The updating continued until 2020, and DKK 400 million (EUR 53 million) has been granted for it. The initiative has ended.

There are also no in-service training requirements or control mechanisms for in-company trainers. Quality assurance, beyond that undertaken voluntarily by the enterprise, is restricted to informal contacts between the VET college and the enterprise. The adult education (AMU) systems provide a number of courses of 1 to 2 weeks duration to support the training of trainers. The courses are not mandatory and are mostly undertaken by the social-care and health-care professions.

For more information visit Cedefop project page on [Teachers' and Trainers' professional development](#) and our interactive toolkits for VET practitioners: [Cedefop VET toolkit for tackling early leaving](#) and [Cedefop VET toolkit for empowering NEETs](#). You may also read [Cedefop/ReferNet country reports on Teachers and Trainers in a Changing World](#) and [Cedefop comparative analysis](#).

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

10.1 Anticipating skill needs

Social partners play an institutionalised role at all levels of VET, from the national advisory council on vocational upper secondary education and training (Rådet for de grundlæggende Erhvervsrettede Uddannelser), which advises the education ministry on principal matters concerning VET, to playing an advisory role locally through local training committees comprising representatives of the social partners who advise colleges on local adaptations of VET. Their most important role is to ensure that VET provision is in line with the needs of the labour market.

Among their core responsibilities, national trade committees:

- perform a central role in the creation and renewal of VET courses by closely monitoring developments in their particular trade. They also have a dominant position in formulating learning objectives and final examination standards based around the key competences that are deemed to be required in the labour market;
- conduct relevant analyses, development projects, etc., and maintain close contact with relevant stakeholders;
- decide the regulatory framework for individual courses within the boundaries laid down by the legislative framework. They decide which trade is to provide the core of the training, the duration of the programme, and the ratio between college-based teaching and practical work in an enterprise;
- approve enterprises as qualified training establishments and rule on conflicts which may develop between apprentices and the enterprise providing practical training;
- function as gatekeepers to the trade, as they are responsible for issuing journeyman's certificates in terms of content, assessment and the actual holding of examinations.

Local training committees are affiliated to each vocational college and ensure close contact with the local community, thus improving responsiveness to particular local labour market needs. They consist of representatives of local employers and employees appointed by national trade committees, as well as representatives of staff, management and learners appointed by colleges. Training committees work closely alongside colleges in determining the specific curriculum of colleges, including which optional subjects are available. They assist and advise national trade committees in approving local enterprises as qualified training establishments and in mediating conflicts between apprentices and enterprises. Finally, training committees help to ensure that enough suitable local training placements are available.

See also [Cedefop's skills forecast](#) and [European Skills Index](#) .

10.2 Designing qualifications

The national advisory council consists of around 30 representatives from the social partners. In its advisory capacity, the council monitors developments in society and highlights trends relevant to VET. The council makes recommendations to the Ministry regarding the establishment of new VET programmes and the adaptation, amalgamation or discontinuation of others.

National trade committees (*faglige udvalg*) are the backbone of the VET system. Approximately 50 trade committees are responsible for around 100 main programmes. The committees

normally have between 10 and 14 members and are formed by labour market organisations (with parity of membership between employer and employee organisations). They are financed by participating organisations.

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- conduct relevant analyses, development projects, etc., and maintain close contact with relevant stakeholders
- decide the regulatory framework for individual courses within boundaries set by the legislative framework. They decide which trade is to provide the core of the training, the duration of the programme and the ratio between college-based teaching and practical work in an enterprise
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[More information on national qualifications frameworks and the qualifications types can be found in the NQF online tool.](#)

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

Various approaches to performing quality assurance of vocational colleges are implemented. Self-assessment remains the primary mechanism, but external monitoring is increasing in importance. Since the 1980s, a shift has taken place from detailed regulation of input to framework regulation of output. [The aim of output regulation is to increase the focus on results and quality so that institutional practices meet political objectives, including adaptation to the needs of regional and local business sectors for education and competence development.](#)

Monitoring is conducted at two levels:

- system level: the assessment addresses the effectiveness of the more than 100 different main programmes in terms of employment frequency among graduates. The education ministry then enters into a dialogue with national trade committees about any programmes which are failing to reach their targets in order to assess their relevance in terms of labour market needs and possible steps for improvement.
- institutional level: at this level, monitoring can be divided into content monitoring and financial monitoring. The first concerns the degree to which a vocational college is providing its programmes in accordance with the legislative framework. The second monitors the college's compliance with budgetary constraints as laid down by the education ministry.

Completion, dropout and examination pass rates also form part of the quality appraisal of a vocational college. Within companies, the social partners supplement ministerial monitoring through national trade committees and local training committees, appraising the quality of graduates, curricula, apprenticeships within enterprises, etc.

Quality assurance mechanisms are also part of the validation process when it comes to including new qualifications in the Danish qualifications framework. Only officially recognised, validated and quality-assured programmes are included in the qualifications framework. Informal and non-formal learning are only recognised to the extent that they are formalised through the validation of prior learning corresponding to one of the included qualifications.

In terms of VET, trade committees (at the upper secondary level) and further education and training committees (adult VET) assess programmes and make recommendations for their placement in the framework to be approved by the education ministry. For each educational field, guidelines have been produced to aid committees in making their assessments and are quality-assured through consultations with independent experts. Procedures and criteria for including VET qualifications in the framework are the subject of an evaluation report compiled by the Danish Evaluation Institute.

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

Competence assessment for young people

A young person participating in VET will have his or her competence assessed in the initial period of the education. The competence assessment should clarify what is required by the learner in relation to the education the learner wants and is based on previous education or employment. The goal is to ensure that the education programme that the college offers the learner, allows him or her to start at the right level and to avoid duplicating education. The college should allow the competence assessment to be included in the preparation of the learner's individual education plan, [so that the learner is credited with the relevant parts of the programme](#).

Competence assessment for adults

Adults can have their competences assessed in relation to adult vocational courses and adult vocational education. In respect of short courses, this is an option known as Individual Competence Assessment (*Individuel Kompetence Vurdering*, IKV). Individual citizens have a right to this assessment and can even obtain financial compensation from the job centre for the time spent in this process, which takes between half a day and 5 days, provided by the relevant educational institution.

Recognition of prior learning results in an individual plan for education and a competence document listing formal qualifications, [the individual's prior experiences and learning equivalents, or a course certificate depending on the relevance and validity of his or her former experiences](#). When applying for adult vocational education, it is compulsory to have one's prior learning and experiences assessed before enrolment, which means that every adult above 25 years of age who intends to embark on vocational education should participate in the recognition of prior learning process (so-called *realkompetencevurdering*, RKV, or RPL). This process takes between half a day and 5 days and leads the participant to one of three learning options:

- adult vocational education 1 (EUV 1): the learner has at least 2 years of relevant workplace experience. This means that the practice-based periods of the course and its initial part/ introductory basic programmes are left out (Basic Course 1; *Grundforløb 1*). In the case of mercantile vocational education, the primary part is included in the adult version.
- adult vocational education 2 (EUV 2): the learner has less than 2 years of relevant workplace experience. An education plan should be drawn up reflecting the participant's experiences, which will usually exclude the initial part and shorten the other parts.
- adult vocational education 3 (EUV 3): the learner has no relevant workplace experience. Adults should follow the same education plan as young people, but should not have the initial part (Basic Course 1; *Grundforløb 1*, GF 1).

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning, please visit [Cedefop's European database](#).

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

Salaries for apprentices

Danish VET learners are entitled to receive financial support during their education and training. If the VET learner signs a contract with a company, he or she will receive a salary during the education and training period. The salary is from DKK 9 500 to 12 500 per month (EUR 1 275 - 1 675) and increases each year.

If the VET learner does not have a contract with a company, he or she is entitled to receive financial support from the Danish learners' grants and loans scheme (*Statens Uddannelsesstøtte*, SU) when the learner is enrolled in the basic course (GF1 and GF2).

If the learner is living with his or her parents, the monthly amount consists of a basic rate plus a possible supplement depending of the income of the student's parents. The amount ranges from DKK 982 to 3 181 (EUR 132 - 427). If the learner is living away from his or her parents and is 20 years of age, the monthly amount is DKK 6 589 (EUR 884).

Loans and grants

A learner receiving financial support from the SU is also entitled to take out a loan with the SU. The monthly amount of the loan is normally DKK 5.500 (EUR 738). Loans must be repaid at 4% interest during the period of education and at the national discount rate of +1% after finishing that period.

Participants of VET for adults (AMU) are entitled to a fixed allowance under the State grant system for adult training (*godtgørelse*, VEU). In 2024, the amount available is DKK 4 700 (EUR 630) per week, corresponding to the maximum unemployment insurance benefit rate. As most participants are employed and receive a full salary during the training period, this allowance is mainly paid to employers as partial reimbursement of wages. As with apprenticeship training (EUD), expenditure for the allowances is covered by the employers' reimbursement fund (AUB), to which all enterprises contribute a fixed amount regardless of levels of participation in adult education and continuing training activities.

Participants may also receive a transport allowance and financial support for board and lodging covered by the employers' reimbursement fund (AUB) if programmes are offered at a considerable distance from the participant's home.

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

Employers' reimbursement fund (AUB)

All employers, both public and private, pay a sum into the 'employers' reimbursement fund' (*Arbejdsgivernes Uddannelsesbidrag-AUB*), regardless of whether or not they provide apprenticeship placements. This fund finances VET for both young people and adults (AMU).

Since 2018, all employers are obliged to pay an annual contribution of DKK 2 702 (EUR 362) per full-time employee. These funds are then allocated to workplaces that take apprentices so that they do not bear the cost of training alone. These employers receive reimbursement for wages paid during apprentices' periods of college-based training. A tripartite agreement of August 2016 has launched new incentives for Danish companies wishing to enter into more contracts with apprentices. The overall goal is to establish 10 000 new contracts by 2025. [The agreement was renewed in 2020.](#)

Primarily, companies will be able to offer a much clearer picture of themselves as education operators, giving them the option of assessing whether or not they are in line with political expectations.

Fines and incentives for companies

Companies that fail to sign the necessary number of contracts must pay a fine of DKK 27 000 (EUR 3 620) for each missing contract relative to the size of the company. On the other hand, companies that meet the standard number of contracts will receive a 7.4% higher refund from the employers' reimbursement fund (*Arbejdsgivernes Uddannelsesbidrag-AUB*,) to motivate them to sign the expected number of contracts. However, the consequences of the law in this area have also been affected by the special circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many companies have had difficulties in complying with the law.

In 2020 the [Tripartite agreement to ensure more apprenticeships in Danish VET](#) reserved DKK 5.4 million (EUR 726 thousand) for initiatives to establish more apprenticeships. In 2021, the government earmarked DKK 220 million (EUR 29 million) and DKK 80 million (EUR 10 million) yearly to increase the reimbursement of companies when apprentices are in school. The agreement is financed through the AUB fund.

In some Danish regions, public employers have laid down rules concerning the involvement of private companies in projects, stressing that the company cannot be engaged if the number of apprentices is below the standard.

Wage compensation scheme

Among the incentives promoting companies' interest in having their low-skilled workers participate in adult vocational education is the wage compensation scheme. Companies are partly compensated for the wages they pay to their employees who are participating in education at a rate, in 2023, of DKK 4 472 (EUR 601) a week, equivalent to the highest level of unemployment benefit.

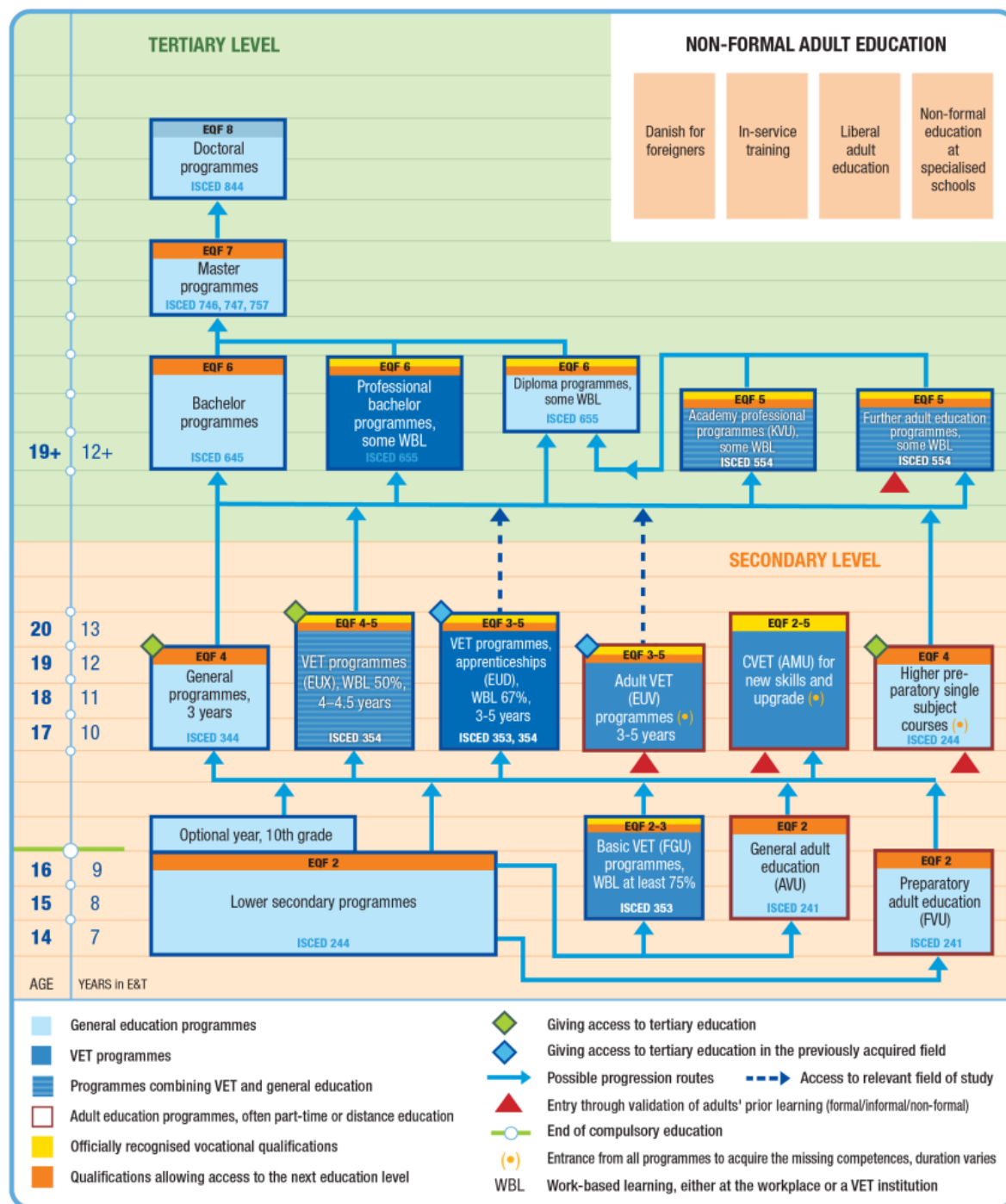
CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

Please see:

- [Guidance and outreach Denmark national report](#)
- [Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit](#)
- [Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices.](#)

Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop, & University College Copenhagen (UCC). (2023). Vocational education and training in Europe – Denmark: system description.

In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2024). Vocational education and training in Europe: VET in Europe database – detailed VET system descriptions [Database].

www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/denmark-u3

VET Programme Types

EQF 2-3
Basic VET (FGU) programmes, WBL at least 75% ISCED 353

Basic vocational training programmes leading to EQF Levels 2-3, ISCED 353 (Forberedende Grunduddannelse, FGU)

EQF level	2-3	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	Grade 9: 18% Grade 10: 27% Interrupted Compulsory school and IVET: 55%	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	15 - 25	Usual completion age	17 - 27
Length of a programme (years)	Up to 2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓ Age below 25

ECVET or other credits The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system.

In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	The types of learning form are: • PGU (production). Training is full-time. It is primarily practical in school-based tool shops (two-thirds) and little theoretical content (one third). • AGU (general subjects). Training is full-time. It is primarily school-based (two-thirds), and little practical content (one-third). • EGU (work-based learning). Training is full-time. It is primarily practical, with little theoretical content, and combines alternating school-based (one-third) and workplace-based training (two-thirds). Full-time learning
Main providers	Vocational colleges, agricultural colleges, social-care and health-care colleges, etc.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	>=75%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• School-based learning • Workshops at school • Workplace-based learning/training
Main target groups	Basic vocational training is aimed at unemployed young people aged below 25 who are unable to complete another form of education or training, which might equip them with qualifications to enter the labour market. The goal is to improve their vocational and personal skills and inspire them to enter the labour market or pursue further training possibilities.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	• Minimum age 15 • Maximum age 24 • No previous education
Assessment of learning outcomes	The training programme is set on an individual basis and may contain elements from the main programmes. Each training period should be concluded as an individual training element, which may be accredited through compulsory examinations based on portfolio and/or tool-shop work.
Diplomas/certificates provided	All students receive a certificate of competences after completing at least 12 weeks of training • On PGU, a certificate is issued when Level 3 (highest level) is completed; • On AGU, a certificate is issued when certain levels have been met. If met, this guarantees access to Higher preparatory single subject courses; • On EGU, a certificate is issued containing a description of the completed work-based training, general subjects, etc.
Examples of qualifications	Low-skilled pedagogical assistant, low-skilled carpenter, low-skilled chauffeur

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	• Labour market • IVET • Adult education (AVU) • Preparatory adult education (FVU)												
Destination of graduates	Education: in 2023 the percentage was 63.8%; Labour Market: in 2023 the percentage was 4.2%; No information/data:in 2023 the percentage was 21.1%; Public welfare: 9%; Unemployed: in 2023 their percentage was 9.5% Outside labour market in 2023: 1.3%.												
Awards through validation of prior learning	 Learning outcomes obtained in companies and different education institutions are assessed and validated and can be recognised as part of IVET.												
General education subjects	 General education subjects (for example, Danish or mathematics) are part of the educational plan.												
Key competences	 Key competences can be a part of the programme.												
Application of learning outcomes approach	 Both the school-based general subjects and the workshop-based parts of the programme are based on learning outcomes.												
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Students within Basic Vocational Training (FGU) <table><tr><th>2019 (3rd and 4th quarter)</th><th>2020</th><th>2021</th><th>2022</th></tr><tr><td>8 330</td><td>11 926</td><td>9 711</td><td>8 905</td></tr><tr><td>7.11%</td><td>9.55%</td><td>7.85%</td><td>7.48%</td></tr></table> Source: Ministry of Education, 2023	2019 (3rd and 4th quarter)	2020	2021	2022	8 330	11 926	9 711	8 905	7.11%	9.55%	7.85%	7.48%
2019 (3rd and 4th quarter)	2020	2021	2022										
8 330	11 926	9 711	8 905										
7.11%	9.55%	7.85%	7.48%										

EQF 4-5
VET programmes (EUX),
WBL 50%,
4-4.5 years
ISCED 354

Combined vocational and general upper secondary education leading to EQF Levels 4-5, ISCED 354 (Erhvervsuddannelse og gymnasial eksamen, EUX)

EQF level	4-5	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	9/10	Usual completion grade	12/13/14
Usual entry age	17	Usual completion age	20
Length of a programme (years)	4-4.5		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system.

In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

- school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer)
- work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice)
- self-learning.

Full-time learning

Main providers Vocational colleges in cooperation with companies

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	>=50%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• practical training in workshops at school • in-company practice/apprenticeships
Main target groups	The main target group is young people leaving primary school. In 2012, the EUX programme was introduced with the aim of bridging the gap between general upper secondary education and vocational upper secondary education and training. It also offers highly motivated young people the opportunity to gain both vocational qualifications providing direct access to the labour market and general qualifications providing similar opportunities to continue into higher education as students in the four general upper secondary programmes.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	There are no minimum or maximum entry requirements concerning age. EUX students must fulfil the requirements for IVET programmes, including a minimum of Grade 2 in Danish and mathematics.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete an EUX programme, the student must pass a journeyman's test concerning the vocational part of the programme and an examination in six upper secondary subjects (including Danish at Level A) concerning the non-vocational part of the programme. If a learner fails the journeyman test or an examination in one of the six subjects, resits are possible.
Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners achieve both general and vocational upper secondary qualifications.
Examples of qualifications	Carpenter, blacksmith, electrician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	EUX graduates gain both vocational qualifications providing direct access to the labour market and general qualifications providing similar opportunities to continue in to higher education as graduates of the four general upper secondary programmes.
Destination of graduates	In 2019 15.6% of EUX graduates progressed in education and 65.6% entered the labour market. In 2022, 3% of EUX graduates progressed in education, 82% entered the labour market and 3% entered the labour market and progressed in education at the same time.
Awards through validation of prior learning	 If the learner has obtained certain parts of IVET or upper secondary education, it is possible to acquire awards through validation.

General education subjects	✓
Key competences	✓ Key competences are part of the subjects in vocational colleges.
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Total number of VET learners in 2020: 112 854 In 2022 the total number of VET learners: 109 845 Total number of EUX learners in 2020: 10 862 The total number of EUX learners of EUX in 2022: 4 796 Share of learners in EUX compared with the total number of VET learners in 2020: 9.62%. In 2022 the share of EUX compared with the total numbers of VET learners was 4.36%. All numbers are at secondary level.

EQF 3-5

VET programmes,
apprenticeships (EUD),
WBL 67%,
3-5 years
ISCED levels 353, 354

Vocational upper secondary education and training programmes leading to EQF Levels 3-5, ISCED levels 353 and 354 (Erhvervsuddannelse, EUD)

EQF level	3-5	ISCED-P 2011 level	353-354
Usual entry grade	9/10	Usual completion grade	12/13/14
Usual entry age	22	Usual completion age	28/29
Length of a programme (years)	5 (up to)		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system.

In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

EUD, as the main upper secondary VET option, is organised according to a dual principle, alternating between a training placement, generally in an enterprise, and periods of college-based training.

EUD consists of:

- the introductory basic programmes, which are predominantly school-based and combine theoretical, classroom-based learning with, to varying degrees, more practical workshop-based learning. For example, the commercial programme concentrates more on classroom-based learning than many of the more technical programmes. Basic programmes combine common competence goals, where students are given a broad introduction to the competences to be acquired in the associated main programmes and pursue specific competence goals aimed at individual programmes.
- the main programme, consisting of several 'steps' (*trin*) and specialisations that divide the main programme into branches. While the exact distribution varies according to both the programme and the needs of the individual student, the main programmes generally comprise alternating periods of workplace-based training and college-based teaching in a ratio of 2:1.

College-based teaching in the main programmes can be divided into four types of subject:

- general subjects
- trade-specific area subjects
- specialised subjects
- optional subjects.

College-based teaching in the main programmes is organized through an integrated approach, and students frequently work on projects where they are expected to incorporate what they have learned in different subjects and combine both general and more specialised competences.

Full-time learning

Main providers	VET colleges
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Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	>=60% is work-based
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Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Apprenticeships with: • practical training at school • practical training in company
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Main target groups	• young people (16-20) (main target group) • young adults (20-25) • adults (25+) • immigrants
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**Entry requirements for learners
(qualification/education level, age)**

Admission to basic programmes

Admission is offered to anyone who has completed compulsory schooling at *Folkeskole* or equivalent and obtained the pass mark in Danish and mathematics in the leaving examination from the ninth or 10th grade respectively, unless they have an apprenticeship contract with a company.

Young people attending the first part of the basic programme just after compulsory school must be declared 'study-ready', based on an assessment of their academic, personal and social competences conducted by either the college or the local youth guidance centre). These assessments consider a broad range of factors such as grades, motivation and conflict management skills and are used in compiling individual education plans (Elevplan).

Admission to main programmes

All students completing a basic programme are entitled to complete one of the associated main programmes. These programmes generally commence with an on-the-job training placement. As such, the student must not only have completed the relevant basic programme, but also have an apprenticeship contract with an approved training company prior to being admitted to the main programme.

The students are duty-bound to seek out suitable placements. When no suitable placements are available in a desired programme, students are offered admission to another associated main programme where placements are available. Another possibility is for the student to enter a training agreement with the college itself, where practical training also takes place in a Placement Centre.

A tripartite agreement from 2020 aiming at establishing more apprenticeship contracts in companies contains an initiative giving vocational schools the main responsibility for finding internships in companies and thereby establishing more apprenticeships.

[For 20 programmes \(in 2024\)](#) , admission to the second of the two basic courses is limited. This is to ensure that the number of students is aligned with labour market needs. In these cases, all students are either admitted in accordance with a quota or are required to have a training agreement with an enterprise prior to commencing the second part of the relevant foundation course.

Assessment of learning outcomes	Basic programmes are completed with a project which forms the basis of an externally graded examination. This is done by an external examiner appointed by the school and validated by the education ministry. In the main programmes, there are various forms of assessment throughout the course, including both oral and written examinations, and both theoretical and practical project work. The exact form of assessment can differ from programme to programme. Programmes include both subject-specific examinations (for example, in English or mathematics) and broader assessments to evaluate students' abilities to combine the knowledge, skills and competences acquired from the programme as a whole. The final examination, which generally takes place during the final period of college-based learning, also varies from programme to programme. In some cases, it consists entirely of a college-based examination; in others it comprises a combination of a college-based examination and a journeyman's test (<i>svendep prøve</i>); in yet others it involves only the journeyman's test conducted by local training committees. However, most common is a combination of an assessment of project-based practical assignments and a theoretical examination, either oral, written or both. The relevant local trade committee nominates external examiners. Generally, two external examiners assess individual students in cooperation with the teacher. The training college, in consultation with the trade committees, develops the content of examinations. After passing the journeyman's certificate, the graduate acquires a qualification at skilled-worker level and is able to enter the labour market.
Diplomas/certificates provided	The basic course examination leads to a certificate documenting the subjects and levels they have achieved; this certificate forms the basis for entering the main programme. At the end of each training placement, the company issues a certificate to the college, the student and the trade committee listing the student's achievements. The successful passing of the final examination leads to a journeyman's certificate; the graduate acquires a qualification at skilled-worker level and is able to enter the labour market.
Examples of qualifications	Flight mechanic, event coordinator, fitness instructor, multimedia animator, veterinary nurse: 'small animals', veterinary nurse: 'horses', veterinary nurse: 'aide', etc.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduating from EUD main programmes gives access to tertiary education in the previously acquired field. Additional general subject qualifications are required at higher levels in order to gain access to higher education. These courses can be provided by Adult Education Centres (VUC).

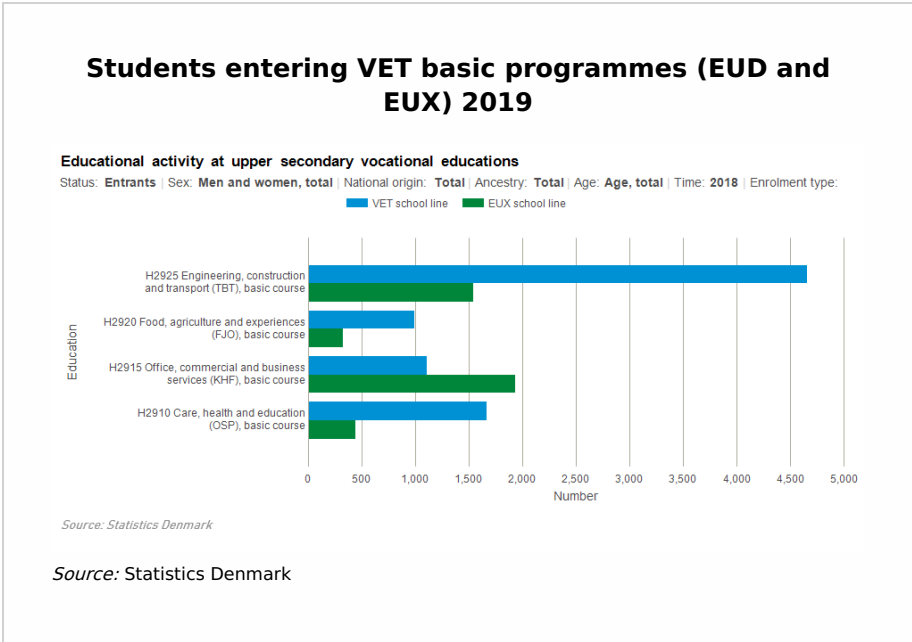
Destination of graduates	Total VET graduates (2020/21): 27 277 Share of VET graduates who progress in education and training or enter the labour market in 2021: education: 1 866 (6.69%); labour market: 21 080 (75.54%). In 2021 87% of the graduates entered the labour market Improving pathways from VET to higher education is currently a political priority.
Awards through validation of prior learning	 It is possible to acquire awards through validation of prior learning, and the education institution receiving the student is responsible for this.
General education subjects	 College-based teaching in the main programmes includes general education subjects, including English, mathematics, Danish, etc. However, in VET, the content of these subjects is adapted to the particular programme so that, for example, mathematics for carpenters will concentrate on areas relevant to working as a carpenter and will be quite different from mathematics for veterinary nurses. General subjects also include other broad subjects such as product development and basic materials science. College-based teaching also includes optional subjects that might help learners gain competences that provide access to further education, such as qualifications in general subjects at a higher level.
Key competences	 Key competences are included in the subjects in the college-based part of VET, but are not taught as specific subjects.
Application of learning outcomes approach	 All educational orders defining the framework of a VET programme are described in terms of learning outcomes.

Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners

After completing ninth (compulsory) or 10th grade in 2020, about 90% of all students chose some form of further education or training activity, either general upper secondary education (estimated at 70%), or EUD vocational upper secondary education and training (estimated at 20%).

As suggested by the discrepancy in these two sets of figures, students in VET are generally older. While the average age of young people commencing general upper secondary education is 16.6 years, the equivalent for those entering VET is 22. Young people also take longer to complete VET programmes: the average age for those completing a general upper secondary qualification in 2017 (latest data available) was 19.5, and in VET it was 28.9.

In 2022, 30.8% of young people applying for a VET programme chose the EUX programme.



[Share of learners in EUD programmes \(111 025\)](#) compared with the total number of VET learners at secondary level (119 930) in 2022: 74.25%.

EQF 3-5

Adult VET (EUV)

programmes

3-5 years

ISCED 353, 354

Basic vocational adult education programmes (equivalent to EUD) leading to EQF Levels 2-3, ISCED 353, 354 (Erhvervsuddannelse for voksne)

EQF level	3-5	ISCED-P 2011 level	353, 354
Usual entry grade	Not applicable	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	Average: 22 years	Usual completion age	Average: 28.9 years
Length of a programme (years)	1.5 - 5.5 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
			Aged 25 and above

ECVET or other credits The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system.

In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	It is a dual system consisting of: • school-based learning (contact studies, including virtual communication with the teacher/trainer) • work practice (practical training at school and in-company practice) • self-learning • apprenticeships.
Main providers	Vocational colleges in cooperation with companies
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	60%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• practical training at school/workshops • in-company practice
Main target groups	EUV programmes target low-skilled workers with at least 2 years of relevant work experience and allow the acquisition of qualifications equivalent to EUD, which incorporate validation of prior learning.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Adults aged 25 and above
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a VET programme, learners need to pass a journeyman's test (practical), organised by a professional committee. Some examinations in the school-based part of the programme are compulsory. If a learner fails a journeyman's test or an examination in a subject, resits are possible, normally up to three attempts.
Diplomas/certificates provided	The basic course examination leads to a certificate documenting the subjects and levels they have achieved; this certificate forms the basis for entering the main programme. At the end of each training placement, the company issues a certificate to the college, the student and the trade committee listing the student's achievements. The successful passing of the final examination leads to a journeyman's certificate; the graduate acquires a qualification at skilled-worker level and is able to enter the labour market.
Examples of qualifications	Carpenter, blacksmith, electrician
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Those who complete EUV can enter the labour market or continue their studies at professional academies.

Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓ The validation process is conducted by the vocational school and the relevant vocational teacher is responsible for the specific validation of prior learning. The process is a combination of the validation of formal learning and practical assessment. Prior to enrolment into adult vocational education, it is compulsory to have one's prior learning and experiences assessed. Every adult above 25 years of age who intends to embark on vocational education should participate in Recognition of Prior Learning (so-called <i>realkompetencevurdering</i>, RKV, or RPL). This process takes between half a day and 5 days and leads the participant to one of three models: • EUV 1: the learner has at least 2 years of relevant workplace experience. This means that the practice-based periods of the course and its initial part or introductory basic programmes are left out (Basic Course 1; <i>Grundforløb 1</i>). In the case of mercantile vocational education, the primary part is included in the adult version. • EUV 2: the learner has less than 2 years of relevant workplace experience. An education plan should be drawn up reflecting the participant's experiences, which will usually exclude the initial part and shorten the other parts. • EUV 3: the learner has no relevant workplace experience. Adults should follow the same education plan as young people, but should not have the initial part (Basic Course 1; <i>Grundforløb 1, GF 1</i>).
General education subjects	✓ Depending on the specific education programme, a number of subjects are included in the programme - for example Danish, mathematics.
Key competences	✓ Key competences are included in the subjects in the college-based part of VET, but are not taught as specific subjects.
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ All education orders, defining the framework of a VET programme, are described in terms of learning outcomes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

**Adult vocational training programmes leading to EQF Levels 2-5,
(Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser, AMU)**

EQF level	2-5	ISCED-P 2011 level	Range
Usual entry grade	Not applicable	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	Not applicable	Usual completion age	Not applicable
Length of a programme (years)	Half a day to 50 days; 1 week on average		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	Yes and no - some courses are free of charge, some have charges	Is it available for adults?	 Everybody living or working in Denmark can participate

ECVET or other credits The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system.

In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) Depending on what best corresponds to the needs of enterprises and participants, courses can take the form of traditional classroom teaching, training in open workshops, distance learning or training at the workplace and be spread over several consecutive days, over a longer period or conducted as evening classes. Programmes can be combined both within and across qualification areas and alternate between theory and practice.

Main providers Vocational colleges, AMU training centres and private providers

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	75%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	According to the needs of participants and enterprises, individual training maps are developed and followed, and a range of learning types can be included.
Main target groups	AMU programmes target both low-skilled and skilled workers, but they are open to all citizens who are either resident or employed in Denmark, irrespective of educational background. Some AMU courses are also targeted at the unemployed. The objectives are threefold: • to contribute to maintaining and improving the vocational skills and competences of participants in accordance with the needs of the labour market and to further the competence development of participants • to contribute to solving problems in labour-market restructuring and adaptation in accordance with the needs of the labour market in both the short and long terms • to give adults the possibility of upgrading competences for the labour market, as well as personal competences through opportunities to obtain formal competences in vocational education and training.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	People living or working in Denmark can participate
Assessment of learning outcomes	Examination procedures for AMU courses are usually practical, but, depending on the context, may also include some theoretical elements. All courses are finalised with an examination.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Upon completion, participants receive a certificate. In around 120 programmes, this certification is a formal requirement for fulfilling certain job functions (such as operating certain machinery). AMU certificates are also included in the Danish qualification framework for lifelong learning, at any point from Levels 2 to 5.
Examples of qualifications	Truck-driver, scaffolder, team-leader
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	AMU certificates do not provide direct access to further education and training, although they can be included in an assessment of prior learning resulting in credit transfer, for example, if entering a mainstream VET programme in the same field.
Destination of graduates	Information not available

**Awards through
validation of prior
learning**



The validation process is conducted by the AMU Centre and the relevant teacher is responsible for the specific validation of prior learning. The process is a combination of validation of formal learning and practical assessment.

Prior to enrolment into adult vocational education, it is compulsory to have one's prior learning and experiences assessed. Every adult above 25 years of age who intends to embark on vocational education should participate in Recognition of Prior Learning (so-called *realkompetencevurdering*, RKV, or RPL). This process takes between half a day and 5 days and leads the participant to one of three models:

- EUV 1: the learner has at least 2 years of relevant workplace experience. This means that the practice-based periods of the course and its initial part/introductory basic programmes are left out (Basic Course 1; *Grundforløb 1*). In the case of mercantile vocational education, the primary part is included in the adult version
- EUV 2: the learner has less than 2 years of relevant workplace experience. An education plan should be drawn up reflecting the participant's experiences, which will usually exclude the initial part and shorten the other parts
- EUV 3: the learner has no relevant workplace experience. Adults should follow the same education plan as young people, but should not have the initial part (Basic Course 1; *Grundforløb 1, GF 1*).

**General education
subjects**



For example: reading, writing and mathematics courses

Key competences



Key competences can be included

**Application of learning
outcomes approach**



All AMU courses are described in terms of learning outcomes.

**Share of learners in
this programme type
compared with the
total number of VET
learners**

In 2022 the share of AMU participants among all VET participants (secondary level) was 5.34%.

In 2022 there were approximately 396 627 participants in AMU courses, a significant drop since 2010, when there were almost 590 000 participants in AMU.

This could partly be explained by the high pace and bustle of industry during this period, and partly by a lack of knowledge of the possibilities among adults.

However, as many of these courses are of very short duration (as little as half a day), [the figures for full-time equivalent students are much lower at just 6 415 in 2022](#). This again represents a significant fall in comparison with 2010 figures. Most participants in the programmes either have VET as their highest level of education (51%) or compulsory schooling (25%).

EQF 5

Further adult education
programmes,
some WBL
ISCED 554

Further vocational adult education programmes leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554 (VVU, Videregående Voksenuddannelse)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	Not applicable	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	Information not available	Usual completion age	Information not available
Length of a programme (years)	2-3 years on average (part-time); requested completion within 6 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✗ with some exceptions	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	The education ministry has decided that ECVET points should not be used in the Danish vocational training system. In Denmark, it has been decided not to split up education programmes into modules to which ECVET or other credit points might be assigned. However, there are other countries in the EU that have introduced a credit points system. Therefore, there may be a need for a school receiving foreign pupils in mobility programmes to decide how many ECVET or other credit points the course corresponds to. In Denmark, the course of study is awarded ECVET points in relation to time. A full-time equivalent programme corresponds to 60 points.		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	VVU programmes are specifically tailored to the needs of adults, for example, by providing courses over a longer duration on a part-time basis, largely during evenings and weekends, to allow ongoing employment.		
Main providers	Business and technical academies		

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	25%
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• practical training at school • in-company practice
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and adults. People with work experience are the main group. Unemployed people can receive grants for participation (SVU).
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	In addition to an appropriate VET qualification or a general upper secondary qualification, 2 to 3 years of relevant work experience is required.
Assessment of learning outcomes	To complete a programme, learners need to pass a final examination. Each module in the flexible programme is finalised with an examination, and the learner has to pass a final examination as well.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Award of an academy profession degree (<i>erhvervsakademigrad, AK</i>)
Examples of qualifications	Retail, interpreter, international transport and logistics, and information technology
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Adult VVU qualifications, like the mainstream KVU, can provide access to a supplementary diploma degree programme, allowing graduates to build on an academy profession degree to bachelor-equivalent level within the same field, while VVU qualifications also provide access to relevant full-time professional bachelor programmes. As such, there is full horizontal permeability between the mainstream and adult education and continuing training systems.
Destination of graduates	Most participants (66%) finalise only a part of VVU and return to their jobs. Of this group, 50% continue into other forms of education (3-4 years after VVU).
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓ The programme is flexible, and the learner can choose general education subjects as part of the programme.
Key competences	✓
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ Each module in the programme is based on learning outcomes.

**Share of learners in
this programme type
compared with the
total number of VET
learners**

Information not available

EQF 5

Academy professional
programmes (KVU),
some WBL
ISCED 554

Short-cycle higher education programmes leading to EQF Level 5, ISCED 554 (Erhvervsakademiuddannelser, KVU)

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	Not applicable	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	21	Usual completion age	23
Length of a programme (years)	2 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	A programme can be 90, 120 or 150 ECTS credits.		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	School-based learning and practical training at school (and in-company practice)		
Main providers	8 business and technical academies (<i>erhvervsakademier</i>)		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	50%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• Workshops at schools • Practical training at schools		
Main target groups	The main target groups are young people and adults who have completed their initial education.		

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Admissions requirements for profession academic and professional bachelor programmes are either relevant vocational upper secondary education and training (EUD) or general upper secondary education combined with relevant labour market experience. There may be more specific requirements regarding certain attainment levels within particular general subjects for some programmes. Applicants with a VET background may have to take additional general education qualifications as a supplement.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Apart from theoretical subjects, programmes are usually completed by a project examination and always contain a degree of workplace training.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Award of a professional academic degree (<i>erhvervsakademigrad</i> , AK)
Examples of qualifications	Dental hygienist, installation electrician, multimedia designer, laboratory technician, marketing manager, etc.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	A professional academic degree can provide access to a supplementary diploma degree programme. The latter allows graduates to build on a professional academic degree to bachelor-equivalent level in the same field.
Destination of graduates	Most graduates (65%) enter the labour market after they finish their KVVU. Some progress to further education.
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓ a few general education subjects are part of this programme.
Key competences	✓
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ The programme is based on learning outcomes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	In 2023, 11 879 students were enrolled in KVVU. This figure indicates a significant increase over previous years of more than 50%. To strengthen cohesion at the tertiary level, since autumn 2011 all higher education from KVVU to PhD has been placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The total number of students enrolled in KVVU programmes was about 8,8% of the number of students who were enrolled in VET (secondary level) in 2021.

EQF 6

Professional bachelor

programmes,

some WBL

ISCED 655

Professional bachelor programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 655 (Professionsbachelor)

EQF level	6	ISCED-P 2011 level	665
Usual entry grade	Not applicable	Usual completion grade	Not applicable
Usual entry age	21	Usual completion age	25
Length of a programme (years)	3-4 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	30 ECTS credits per semester. A full programme is normally 210 credits.		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	School-based learning and practical training at school.		
Main providers	Seven university colleges		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	25%		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Workshops and practical training at schools as a part of general education subjects.		
Main target groups	Young people and adults who have completed their initial education.		

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Admissions requirements for professional bachelor programmes are either relevant vocational upper secondary education and training (EUD) or general upper secondary education combined with relevant labour market experience. There may be more specific requirements regarding certain attainment levels within particular general subjects for some programmes. Applicants with a VET background may have to take additional general education qualifications as a supplement.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Apart from theoretical subjects, programmes are usually completed by a project examination and always contain a degree of workplace training.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Professional bachelor degree
Examples of qualifications	Teacher, social educator, midwife, radiographer, occupational therapist, biomedical laboratory scientist, nurse, leisure manager, journalist, social worker, a wide range of engineering roles.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	A professional bachelor degree can provide access to certain university-based master programmes.
Destination of graduates	Most graduates (75%) enter the labour market after they finish their professional bachelor programmes.
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓ General education subjects are a major part of a professional bachelor education.
Key competences	✓
Application of learning outcomes approach	✓ The programme is based on learning outcomes.
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	In 2022, 29 082 students were enrolled in professional bachelor programmes. This figure indicates a significant increase over previous years of more than 50%. To strengthen cohesion at the tertiary level, since autumn 2011 all higher education from KVV to PhD has been placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The total number of students enrolled in professional bachelor programmes was about 62.58% of the number of students who were enrolled in VET (secondary level) in 2022.