Danish University Colleges

Spotlight on VET - DENMARK

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Publication date:
2014

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record with the publisher's layout.

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
### Denmark

**Education and training in figures**

#### Learners in upper secondary education enrolled in vocational and general programmes % of all students in upper secondary education, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>General</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>36.6</td>
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</tbody>
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#### Tertiary education by type % of 30-34 year-olds with tertiary education by type, 2013

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<tr>
<th>Vocational</th>
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<th>ISCED 5B</th>
<th>ISCED 5A-6</th>
<th>2020 National Target</th>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NL</td>
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<td>75.3</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>74.8</td>
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</table>

#### Lifelong learning % of population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>ISCED 5A-6</th>
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<td>NL</td>
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<tr>
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<td>30.4</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
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</table>

#### Early leavers from education and training % of early leavers from education and training, 2013

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<td>SE</td>
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<td>NL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>47.9</td>
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<td>47.7</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Further information


### Statistics

- **Learners in upper secondary education**
  - Vocational education: 48.0%
  - General education: 52.0%

- **Tertiary education**
  - Vocational education: 75.3%
  - Higher education: 30.5%

- **Lifelong learning**
  - Participation rate: 30.5%

- **Early leavers**
  - Vocational education: 48.0%
  - General education: 52.0%

This spotlight is based on input from ReferNet Denmark.
Vocational education and training (VET) plays a key role in Danish strategy for lifelong learning and meeting the challenges of globalisation and technological change. An inclusive and flexible initial VET system helps ensure that all young people have an opportunity to obtain relevant competences for smooth transition to the labour market. Adult education and continuing training respond to structural and technological changes in the labour market and provide the workforce with the tools for new and updated skills.

The Danish education and training system comprises a mainstream system providing qualifications at all levels, from compulsory schooling to doctoral degrees, and a parallel adult education and continuing training (CVT) system. The adult education and CVT system is designed to meet needs of adult learners, for example by offering part-time courses. The two systems offer equivalent qualifications at various levels, enabling horizontal permeability. VET is under the Ministry of Education’s jurisdiction, which maintains close dialogue with the social partners to respond to labour market needs. Initial VET is organised into 12 broad entry routes and includes technical, agricultural, commercial, social and health-care programmes. Organisations are arranged according to the dual principle, alternating between periods of college-based learning and work-based learning (apprenticeship training) in enterprises. A typical professional VET (EUD) programme (EUD and others) comprises elements from other adult education programmes. The programme caters for young unemployed, and lasts for three to four years, with work-based learning (WBL) lasting at least 75%.

Basic adult education (grunduddannelse for voksne, GUV) provides qualifications equivalent to VET. GUV is aimed at adults (minimum 25 years old) with at least two years relevant work experience, but without formal qualifications. Individual study plans, which recognise prior learning, can comprise elements from other adult education programmes. Adult vocational training (avlsgymnasialeuddannelser) (AMU) provides participants with skills and competences relevant to the labour market and is primarily directed towards specific sectors and jobs. Programmes may either deepen a participant’s knowledge in a particular sector or extend it to related fields. AMU can be part-time or full-time, last between one and five years, and are created, adapted or discontinued in response to labour market needs. At tertiary level, further VET and adult education programmes lead to EQF level 5 qualifications.

The Danish VET system is characterised by a high degree of public participation and involvement of social partners, vocational colleges, teachers and students. VET teachers have authority based on the principles of consensus and shared responsibility. At national level, stakeholders play a key role in advising the Ministry of Education on overall VET policy and determining the structure and general framework for training programmes within their field, by cooperating in national trade committees. At local level, stakeholders cooperate in developing local curricula to respond to local labour market needs. Denmark has the highest participation in adult education in the EU and the participation rate is 5% higher than the EU average. It is a challenge to maintain a focus on both weaker and stronger learners, increased quality in VET, teachers’ professional development and the new structure of provision resulting from the ongoing VET reform. VET programmes are attended by very few students, consist of single subject courses and elements from EUD programmes; basic vocational education and training (EUD), attended by lower secondary graduates with a practical approach to learning. The programme caters for young unemployed, and lasts for three to four years, with work-based learning (WBL) lasting at least 75%.

Public financing is central to the VET system. VET colleges receive performance-based block grants. Apprenticeships and further training of employees are subsidised according to a solidarity principle – coordinated in the AUB system (Audserviceforeningen, AUs og Bedrift, employers educational contributor) where all enterprises, regardless of their size or sector, pay a tax to the VET system, contribute a fixed amount per employee to a central fund. Entreprenørerens fond (entrepreneur’s fund) is then reimbursed for providing training placements and for employee participation in continuing training. Education and training are considered a key to success in the current labour market. The general unemployment rate has doubled since 2006. As a result, VET is expected to accommodate an apparently high number of unemployed young people. It is a huge challenge to keep a focus on both weaker and stronger learners, increased quality in VET, teachers’ professional development and the new structure of provision resulting from the ongoing VET reform. Lack of suitable training placements in enterprises is frequently cited as a primary reason for student dropout. Several policy initiatives seek to alleviate the problem, but the current global financial crisis has further widened the gap between supply and demand of training places. Implementation of 50 practical training centres (2013) and the planned 1 000 new placements in ‘Vækstplan 2014’ (growth plan, 2014) are expected to alleviate this problem.

In Denmark, the dual principle between education and training is based on the principles of consensus and shared responsibility. National and local stakeholders cooperate in local curricula to respond to local labour market needs. The Danish VET system is characterised by a high degree of public participation and involvement of social partners, vocational colleges, teachers and students. VET teachers have authority based on the principles of consensus and shared responsibility. At national level, stakeholders play a key role in advising the Ministry of Education on overall VET policy and determining the structure and general framework for training programmes within their field, by cooperating in national trade committees. At local level, stakeholders cooperate in developing local curricula to respond to local labour market needs.

The challenge for national authorities is to ensure that learning and training is related to labour market needs. However, there is a need for a more uniform approach to the education and training system. The ongoing VET reform (2014) is expected to alleviate this problem.
Vocational education and training (VET) plays a key role in Danish strategy for lifelong learning and meeting the challenges of globalisation and technological change. An inclusive and flexible initial VET system helps ensure that all young people have an opportunity to obtain relevant competences for smooth transition to the labour market. Adult education and continuing training respond to structural and technological changes in the labour market and provide the workforce with the knowledge and skills needed to meet new and updated skills. The Danish education and training system comprises a mainstream system providing qualifications at all levels, from compulsory schooling to doctoral degrees, and a parallel adult education and continuing training (CVT) system. The adult education and CVT system is designed to meet needs of adult learners, for example by offering part-time courses. The two systems offer equivalent qualifications at various levels, enabling horizontal permeability. VET is under the Ministry of Education's jurisdiction, which maintains close dialogue with the social partners to respond to labour market needs. Initial VET is organised into 12 broad entry routes and includes technical, agricultural, commercial, social and health care programmes. Programmes are organised according to the dual principle, alternating between periods of college-based learning and work-based learning (apprenticeship training) in enterprises. A typical VET programme (ELU) lasts three- to four years and consists of at least 75% work-based learning (WBL) lasting at least 75% of the programme's duration.

Basic adult education (grunduddannelse for voksne, GVU) provides qualifications equivalent to VET. GVU is aimed at adults (minimum 25 years old) with at least two years relevant work experience, but without formal qualifications. Individual study plans, which recognize prior learning, can be used. GVU study plans can comprise elements from other adult education programmes.

Vocational education and training (aptemnabaududdannelse) (AMU) provides participants with additional vocational training. AMU programmes, which offer further training in an existing or another field, may either be contracted with an enterprise at a company's own initiative or partly at the VET college, depending on the programme design and student intake. AMU may provide participants with knowledge and skills that are relevant to a local labour market need. Qualifications at AMU can be equivalent to full qualifications of an academy profession (KVU) programmes or professional bachelor programmes at tertiary level. Alternatively, a programme at AMU may provide equivalent qualifications to the EQF level 6 qualifications.

The Danish VET system is characterised by a high level of adult student participation, with considerable participation rates reflecting the principle of consensus and shared responsibility. At national level, stakeholders play a key role in advising the Ministry of Education on overall VET policy and determining the structure and general framework for training programmes within their field, by cooperating in national trade committees. At local level, stakeholders cooperate in developing local curricula to respond to local labour market needs. Denmark has the highest participation in adult education in the EU. The participation rates reflect the national strategy to focus on lifelong learning, the large public sector, and a tradition of strong ties between educational institutions and the social partners. An integrated lifelong learning strategy was introduced in 2007 and supported by implementation of a national qualifications framework. It improved horizontal and vertical permeability within the education and training system. It also improved guidance services and provided better opportunities for recognition of non-formal learning and qualifications through standardised procedures for validation of prior learning.

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The current global financial crisis has further heightened the gap between supply and demand of training places. Implementation of 50 practical training centres (2013) and the planned 1000 new placements in ‘Vækstplan 2014’ (growth plan, 2014) are expected to alleviate this problem. Public employment, and particularly long-term unemployment, among young people with little or no work experience poses challenges for adult education and continuing training. Substantial upskilling is needed and is necessary in order to avoid losing the considerable part of the workforce becoming permanently unskilled and unemployed from the labour market. The 2014 growth plan includes funding for the unemployed to become skilled workers through targeted adult VET programmes.
The Danish VET system is characterised by a high degree of devotion to lifelong learning. Employers, education partners, vocational colleges, teachers and students cooperate in developing curricula based on the principles of consensus and shared responsibility. At national level, stakeholders play a key role in advising the Ministry of Education on overall VET policy and determining the structure and general framework for training programmes within their field, by cooperating in national trade committees. At local level, stakeholders cooperate in developing local curricula to respond to local labour market needs.

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