

# Adult vocational training

*Short vocational training programmes mainly for low skilled and skilled workers on the labour market.*

## Government objectives

The adult vocational training programmes (in Danish “arbejds-markedsuddannelser” or “AMU”) serve a triple purpose:

- To contribute to maintaining and improving the vocational skills and competences of the participants in accordance with the needs on the labour market and to furthering competence development of the participants
- To contribute to solving labour market restructuring and adaptation problems in accordance with the needs on the labour market in a short and a long term perspective
- To give adults the possibility of upgrading of competences for the labour market as well as personal competences through possibilities to obtain formal competence in vocational education and training.

The programmes primarily provide skills and competences directed towards specific sectors and job functions. It is a flexible system which aims at meeting current changes and needs for new skills and competences on the labour market. Employees may acquire new and updated skills and competences to keep their job or acquiring a better job and higher salary at the workplace.

Employees may also improve their possibility of getting another job prior to becoming unemployed. The



adult vocational training programmes ensure that employers have staff with updated and relevant skills and competences.

## Target group

Adult vocational training programmes have been developed for low skilled and skilled workers. Everybody may participate in adult vocational training programmes as long as they are residents or hold a job in Denmark:

The programmes are mainly provided for low skilled and skilled workers having a job. Workers and

employers in private as well as public sector enterprises may participate in the programmes.

The unemployed and adults not part of the labour force may also participate in adult vocational training programmes, but the financing and management differ from other participants. The unemployed may have a combination of adult vocational training programmes of their own selection for a period of 6 weeks.

Immigrants and refugees may follow courses specifically developed

for this group or they may combine and supplement normal adult vocational training programmes with introductory short training courses and work placement or courses in Danish. However, many immigrants and refugees with adequate Danish language skills participate in normal adult training programmes.

Employees with higher education diplomas may join a course together with low skilled and skilled colleagues, i.e. to up-skill all members of a working group.

### Statistics 2009

Number of participants	1.049.000
Of which women	432.800
Number of individuals (participate in one or several programmes)	592.900
Number of full time equivalent participants	15.500
Number of schools, approximately	100
Number of centres for adult education and continuing training (VEU-centres)	13

### Structure and duration

To give an overview for providers, institutions, guidance staff etc. of all adult vocational training programmes and affiliated single subjects the programmes have been organized in approximately 150 joint competence descriptions (FKB) equivalent to 150 job areas. A competence description consists of:

- A description of the typical workplaces
- Relevant competences within the job area

- A list of adult training programmes or single subject courses leading to those competences.

A joint competence description groups the programmes relevant for up-skilling and qualifying in one specific job area. It is possible to choose one or a number of programmes fitting the individual needs for further competences. If relevant the same programme can be included on the list in several joint competence descriptions. All joint competence descriptions are developed by social partners and approved by the Ministry of Education.

There are approximately 2 900 different adult vocational training programmes and 200 single subject courses from the mainstream vocational training and education programme, all of which may be combined. They are mainly short vocational training programmes, the duration of which normally varies from half a day to 6 weeks, in average 3 days. It is possible to combine adult vocational training programmes in the same job area or to supplement a programme with more specialized programmes within a field.

The training is organized in classes or as open workshops where participants may follow different programmes at different levels in the same room with the same teacher. It is also possible to organize training at the workplace or as distance learning. Normally the training activities take place during working hours. The training activity may also take place outside working hours in the daytime or in the evening, on weekdays or at the weekend. Language of instruction is normally Danish, but may be other languages.

### Content – the training programme

The specific content of the programmes reflect development and demands from sectors with many low skilled and skilled employees. About 200 new programmes are de-

veloped every year. All programmes are developed by social partners and approved by the Ministry of Education.

The training programmes listed in a competence description are mainly vocational programmes, but also programmes in general subjects may be included, i.e. in vocational Danish, vocational mathematics or vocational foreign languages. The programmes may be specifically developed adult vocational training programmes or relevant single subjects selected from mainstream vocational education training programmes.

In general there are three main types of programmes directed at:

- Specific job/sector related competences, e.g. crafts, technical insight and knowledge of materials
- General competences, e.g. ICT, job relevant languages
- Personal competences, e.g. social communication, organization and management.

In addition there are special programmes for:

- Immigrants and refugees - adult vocational training programmes, which have been specifically developed to suit the needs of immigrants and refugees
- Recognition of prior learning according to the individual competence assessment programmes (IKV) - with the aim of giving credit for competences acquired in education, on the labour market or from spare time activities and supporting composition of an individual training plan including one or several adult vocational training programmes for the participant. The participant may have credit similar to a completed adult vocational training programme or part of it.

Adult vocational training programmes may be supplemented by preparatory courses for adults with

low qualifications and competences in reading, writing and mathematics (FVU).

### **Controlling and financing**

The social partners play a major role in the management, priority setting, development, organisation and quality assurance of adult vocational training programmes, and at local level through representatives in school boards and education committees.

At the national level there are set up an advisory National Council for Adult Education and Continuing Training (VEU-rådet) for the Minister of Education and 11 continuing training and education committees, each responsible for a specific sector of the labour market. At local level providers of adult vocational training programmes are in close dialogue with local trade committees and business life in the implementation of new programmes.

Each provider of adult vocational training programmes sets up one or several local education boards for adult vocational training programmes directed at specific local job areas, e. g. job areas corresponding to the joint competence description/-s that the school has permission to provide.

The adult vocational training programmes are publicly financed. The providers operate within a decentralized framework based on taximeter funding (taximeter grant per full-time equivalent participant, a fixed rate per programme) provided by the state (the Ministry of Education). Once a year the school has to present and negotiate activity and budget targets with the Ministry.

There are user fees on technical, commercial, ICT, language and social communication, management etc. adult vocational training programmes. On average the user fee for adult vocational training programmes is about 15 per cent of

the total expenditure. The expenditure for user fee is normally paid by the employers. Courses in the social and health service, individual competence assessment and participation by the unemployed who attend individually selected programmes for 6 weeks are free of user fees.

Low skilled and skilled participants are entitled to a fixed allowance financed by the state, the State Grant System for Adult Training (VEU-godtgørelse) corresponding the level of maximum unemployment benefit rate. Companies paying regular wages to employees participating in adult vocational training programmes are entitled to receiving the grant instead. Expenditures for the allowances are covered by the employer's en bloc (AER Arbejdsgivernes Elevrefusion).

There are about 100 schools approved by the Ministry of Education to providing adult vocational training programmes all over the country - the principle being to offer training programmes in all regions. Mainly public, but also a number of private schools provide adult vocational training programmes. The providers are adult vocational training centres, vocational technical colleges, commercial colleges, agricultural colleges, social and health service schools etc. Most of the schools provide both education programmes for adults and for young people. All providers of adult vocational training are associated with one of the 13 centres for adult education and continuing training (VEU-centres), each coordinating guidance activities, contact to enterprises and employees etc. for a specific geographical area.

Public employment service or other relevant authorities may buy courses from the providers, e.g. relevant courses for people not part of the labour force. Enterprises may as a supplement to adult vocational training programmes buy specifically developed programmes from

providers for their own use, i.e. programmes not adopted by the Ministry of Education.

### **Teachers**

Training is carried out by teachers with vocational or higher education diplomas and adult pedagogical education experience. The teachers have to be flexible, e.g. as new programmes are currently introduced, training may be organized at the workplace and teachers take part in counselling and guidance activities.

### **Guidance**

Guidance and counselling activities are mainly directed at the enterprises i.e. employers and employees. The activities taking place in workplaces (dialogue between school and enterprises, teachers visiting the workplaces etc.), in schools, with social partners, local authorities, job centres/employment service etc. In addition there is a national website with information on adult education and training at all levels including adult vocational training programmes. An updated list of programmes and providers (in Danish), see [www.efteruddannelse.dk](http://www.efteruddannelse.dk)

### **Certification - further education**

On completion of a programme the participant receives a certificate qualifying them for the national labour market. The teachers assess the participant and almost everyone get a certificate. For about 120 of the training programmes the participants pass an exam and receive a formal, qualifying certificate for the labour market recognized by the legal authorities, e.g. crane driver.

Certificates from adult vocational training programmes do not give direct access to further education in mainstream education or in other adult education and training programmes. Participants who want to continue in education and training programmes corresponding to mainstream vocational education and training or higher education programmes may be assessed on their prior learning including from adult vocational

training programmes and they may receive a certificate and a credit transfer.

They may have access to and credit transfer to mainstream vocational education and training programmes or basic adult education programme (GVU) giving the same formal qualification for labour market and for further studies. At the higher education level they may have access to continuing professional education programmes, i.e. mainstream short-cycle higher education programmes or further adult education programmes (VVU).

### Quality assurance

The providers are responsible for meeting the demands of their local labour market. Moreover, the providers have to analyse the quality of the training activities e.g. the satisfaction rate is measured systematically among all participants and a representative segment of companies, and the results are made available on the Internet by the Ministry. See [www.viskvalitet.dk](http://www.viskvalitet.dk).

## The Danish education and training system

