

Council for the learning environment and “Day of Democracy” in VET schools

Denmark

DESCRIPTION

- Danish educational institutions, including VET schools, are **legally required to have a [council for the learning environment](#) to discuss physical and mental aspects of the well-being of both staff and learners**. Each year, a **survey on learners’ well-being is conducted**. Through this survey, all learners have the possibility to raise concerns and dissatisfactions to be discussed in the council. Even if it not a legal requirement, **learners may elect two representatives for these councils** so that their voice can also be heard, and **school management must offer support and encouragement for this**. These representatives can be elected independently, and do not have to be members of the student council.

- A 2016 survey by the University of Copenhagen revealed that **participation in democratic elections among learners in VET programmes are 25% lower than that of their peers in general upper secondary education**. In response, the **Danish Youth Council initiated an annual “[Day of Democracy](#)” in vocational schools**.

It is a **full-day event** where VET learners get the opportunity to **meet other young people who are politically active and discuss issues of their own choice related both to education and broader, societal concerns**. Participation is decided by each school management and student councils.

The “Day of Democracy” has been held annually since 2017, and topics are chosen by the learners themselves in each school. For example, in the past years they chose topics such as **lack of placement opportunities** (apprenticeships) for young people in VET, **job creation for young people, faith in democratic processes, and crime prevention**.

This event is organised in collaboration with the Danish Trade Union Confederation and TEKNIQ (one of the largest employer organisations in Denmark) as well as organisations representing VET learners and youth sections of political parties represented in parliament.