

Denmark performs well in developing the skills of adults, ranking among the top 40% of countries in terms of the numeracy and literacy scores of adults as measured by the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC). Denmark also enjoys a comparatively very strong culture of adult education, with high rates of participation in formal and non-formal education and training.

Denmark is a top performer in aligning skills supply with demand, and in using skills intensively, supported by the strong adoption of high performance workplace practices.

Despite this success, there continue to be areas in which Denmark could improve. In spite of its relatively strong performance in developing skills inclusively, the education outcomes of some students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, especially those with an immigrant background, could be strengthened. Also, tertiary attainment rates, now only around the OECD average, could be further improved, as could be the inclusiveness of the tertiary education system.

Although Denmark ranks in the top 40% of OECD countries in terms of the alignment of skills supply and demand, shortages in certain occupations persist. The OECD Skills

for Jobs Database finds that workers are hard to find with skills in education and training as well as in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). On the other hand, there are surpluses of abilities linked to physical strength or endurance. The skills of young workers appear underutilised in Danish workplaces, which may limit their skills development and firm productivity.

Denmark has taken important steps to respond to many of these challenges. In 2014, the government implemented the Folkeskole reform aiming to improve teacher development while ensuring more varied school days for students. In order to supply relevant technology-intensive measures in higher education, the Digital Growth Strategy was introduced in 2018. Also, in 2017, the tripartite agreement on adult and continuing training (VEU) was concluded with the view of strengthening publicly offered adult and continuing training.

Still, Denmark could benefit from a renewal of its strategic vision for the future to ensure that all of its people have the skills to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and rapidly changing world. A whole-of-government approach and effective stakeholder engagement will be essential for achieving this aim.

Key recommendations for improving the performance of countries' skills system

Developing relevant skills over the life course: Making skills systems responsive

- Making each stage of learning a foundation for success in the next
- Enabling policies to support learning in adulthood
- Supporting teachers to become lifelong learners
- Financing adult learning
- Harnessing the power of technology as a tool for learning

Using skills effectively in work and society: Making the most of everyone's potential

- Make full use of everyone's skills
- Making the most of migrants' skills
- Activating skills to build more inclusive and cohesive societies
- Making intensive use of skills in work
- Aligning skills with the needs of the economy and society
- Aligning skills policies with industrial and innovation policies

Strengthening the governance of skills systems: Tackling increased complexity

- Promoting co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration across the whole of government
- Engaging stakeholders throughout the policy cycle
- Building integrated information systems
- Aligning and co-ordinating financing arrangements

Further reading

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Strategy 2019: Skills to shape a better future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [//doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264313835-en).

OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019: Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>.

OECD (2019), *OECD Economic Surveys: Denmark 2019*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/eco_surveys-dnk-2019-en.

OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening the Governance of Skills Systems*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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