

Annex 1 - Template and guidelines for National implementation plans

Please fill in the information in English.

1. Brief information on the national context and baseline

This section **briefly** presents the national context and serves as a baseline for the plan. The participating countries should describe:

- i. The strategic and legal frameworks that are in place and the national context of the VET system at the time of submission of the NIP that will guide the implementation of the planned measures for VET. The information may refer to relevant points of national long-term visions and strategies (e.g. for 2030 and beyond), main strategic documents related to the development of education, training and lifelong learning and, specifically, VET strategies and/or plans, the EU skills agenda, resilience and recovery plans ⁽¹⁾, employment policies, as well as to sectoral and regional strategies, if applicable. The presentation of the national context of the VET system will focus on the factors (e.g. strong involvement of the social partners) that national VET policy can build upon to address the European priorities and to achieve the objectives of the NIPs.
- ii. main policy initiatives and reforms that have already started and are ongoing at the time of preparing the NIPs. These might include initiatives and reforms that may be completed by May 2022 or will continue. Countries are invited to reflect and describe how these national initiatives will contribute to the implementation of the common priorities.
- ii. relevant (statistical) evidence, especially regarding the quantitative objectives set in the Recommendation (the Commission will provide more information on these in Spring 2022).

(1) Especially the components related to education and training and labour market and social protection. National recovery and resilience plans will be available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

Labour market context

Labour market demands

The report Trends and Forecasts 2020 from Statistics Sweden presents projections of supply and demand for a workforce with an education in various fields up to the year 2035. In the period 2018–2035, the number of persons employed is projected to increase by just over 400 000 people, which corresponds to an increase of 8 per cent. The level of education in Sweden has increased gradually in recent decades. This increase is estimated to continue throughout the forecast period, and the proportion of people with only a compulsory education is thus expected to decrease. Demand for a labour force with an Upper Secondary Vocational Education is also expected to increase substantially during the forecast period. The reason for this rise in demand is both a larger population and the increasing requirements for a formal education, as employers are increasingly assumed to want to employ people with a vocational education. At the same time, supply is expected to decrease in several fields of education. This means that there will be an increasing shortage of people with an Upper Secondary Vocational Education in several fields of education within both technology and health care.²

The labour shortage and the large demand for vocational educated staff is also expressed clearly by the employers. According to The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise survey of recruitment 2021/22 seven out of ten businesses responded that they had difficulties finding people with the qualifications they are looking for. Half of the respondents requested qualifications that corresponds to upper secondary vocational education and 34 per cent of respondents answered that they are looking for qualifications at Higher Vocational Education level. Compared to 2019, employers are in average trying to recruit more people. According to The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, successful recruitment has decreased and three out of ten attempts to recruit fails entirely.³

Employment rates

The Swedish labour market has a high participation rate among individuals on the labour market for both women (74 per cent) and men (79 per cent). There is however a significant gap in unemployment rates between foreign-born and native-born individuals. For example,

² Trends and Forecasts 2020, Statistics Sweden

³ Svenskt Näringslivs rekryteringsenkät 2021/2022

in February 2020, in the beginning of the pandemic, the unemployment rate among foreign-born individuals was 25.7 per cent compared to 4.1 per cent among native-born. Foreign-born constitutes a heterogeneous group where differences in employment depend on several factors such as age, earlier working life experience, time of entry in Sweden and educational background. The group with most difficulties on the labour market are foreign-born women with a short educational background.

Overall, individuals lacking an upper secondary education are unemployed to a greater extent than individuals with an upper secondary education or Higher Education.⁴ In 2021 there were 576 700 individuals in the labour force with lower than upper secondary education. The unemployment rate for this group was 31.6 per cent which equals approximately 182 000 individuals. This can be compared to the total unemployment rate which was 8.8 per cent.

Regarding younger individuals, aged 15–29 years old, there are approximately 150 000 persons, who are not in employment, education or training. According to the Swedish National Agency for Education, the share of pupils who has attended an upper secondary education and have received a degree after three years have increased from 71.6 per cent in 2014 to 79.6 per cent in the year 2021. The share of women with a completed upper secondary diploma is higher, 81.8 per cent, than for men, 77.5 per cent.⁵

Swedish education policy and the VET system

In the last decade there has been a shift in Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Sweden towards an increased focus on labour market demands and closer cooperation with the labour market in the organisation and delivery of education. Signs of this can be identified in each educational form as presented below. This shift corresponds to the goal of the VET recommendation and its statement “continuing vocational training programmes are designed to be adaptable to labour market”.⁶ This shift is something that newly implemented, and upcoming reforms, will contribute to strengthen even further. This section includes a description of the Swedish VET system as well as recent developments shaping the conditions for Swedish VET.

⁴ Labour Force Surveys 2021, Statistics Sweden

⁵ [Betyg- och studieresultat i gymnasieskolan år 2021 \(skolverket.se\)](https://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/nyheter-och-utveckling/2021-09-14/betyg-och-studierresultat-i-gymnasieskolan-ar-2021)

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32020H1202%2801%29>

Upper Secondary School

Approximately 322 000 students were enrolled at Upper Secondary School in 2021. 105 000 (42 500 women and 62 400 men) of those studied a VET programme.⁷ The electricity and energy programme had most students, followed by the building and construction programme. Hospitality and tourism was the programme with the smallest number of students.

In Sweden, upper secondary education for young people is organized in a comprehensive Upper Secondary School where students can choose between 12 VET programs and 6 Higher education preparatory programs. The VET programmes are offered in the form of school-based programmes or as apprenticeship (lärlingsutbildning) and lasts for three-year duration of studies. They focus on different occupational fields and are designed to meet the skills demand from the labour market. In school-based VET programmes, work-based learning (WBL) is compulsory and covers a minimum of 15 weeks out of the. In the apprenticeship education pathway, more than half of the learning takes place at a workplace. Upper Secondary apprenticeship requires tripartite individual education contracts between the student (or, if under the age of 18, the student's guardian), the employer and the school⁸. To stimulate the development of apprenticeships, employers and education providers are offered financial support in the form of state grants.

After completing upper secondary education and training either in a school-based programme or an apprentice track, learners receive an Upper Secondary Diploma (gymnasieexamen) giving them the possibility to access higher vocational studies or, with the inclusion of some elective courses for those studying towards VET-diplomas, general tertiary education⁹. There are also nine VET-programmes for students with learning disabilities. The duration of VET-programmes for students with learning disabilities is four years and WBL is compulsory for 22 weeks.

There are 13 national programme councils, corresponding to the vocational areas of the 12 VET-programmes and the fourth vocational year of the Higher Education preparatory Technology programme. Members of the councils are representatives from the sector and the social partners from the relevant occupational fields. One of the tasks of these councils is to advise and assist the Swedish National

⁷ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&verkform=Gymnasieskolan&omrade=Skolor%20och%20elever&lasar=2021/22&run=1> preliminär statistik, september 2021

⁸ https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/Vocational_Education_Training_Europe_Sweden_2018_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf

⁹ https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2019/Vocational_Education_Training_Europe_Sweden_2018_Cedefop_ReferNet.pdf

Agency for Education in relation to the adjustment, development and modernisation of the range and content of vocational training in Upper Secondary VET, in upper secondary VET for students with learning disabilities and for VET in Municipal Adult Education. This helps to ensure that the education and training aligns with the skills required in the field.

Today, municipalities and private education providers decide for themselves what programmes they want to offer. To a certain extent, labour market needs are taken into account, but the supply of education is mainly dimensioned according to student demand. As will be noted in section 3, measures have been introduced to better align the supply of education to the needs for skills provision in the future.

Municipal Adult Education

Municipal Adult Education at upper secondary level aims at providing adults with knowledge and skills at a level corresponding to that provided within Upper Secondary School. Nationally determined programmes do not exist in Municipal Adult Education, instead courses are offered based on the needs and circumstances of the adult learner.¹⁰ Approximately 414 000 learners (253 000 women and 160 000 men) study in Municipal Adult Education and Training at basic and upper secondary level and in Swedish for immigrants (SFI). These 414 000 learners make up 7 per cent of the Swedish population between ages 20 and 64. The number of individual learners in Municipal Adult Education has steadily increased over the past ten years. Regarding VET in Municipal Adult Education, the number of learners has also increased in the last years. In 2021, 118 000 individual learners took vocational courses and approximately 47 500 adults studied enough courses to be classified as studying a vocational orientation in Municipal Adult Education at upper secondary level. That number roughly represents 18 per cent of the total number of enrolled students in Municipal Adult Education at upper secondary level. Most students, just under 18 600, studied in the field of health and social care.¹¹

External factors in the world have also affected Adult Education and Training. During the early 2000s, approximately 30 000 refugees sought asylum each year in Sweden. With the upheavals in Syria and other parts of the world leading to the refugee crisis in 2015, the number of asylum seekers in Sweden soared to more than 160 000 that year. Though not all asylum seekers were granted residence permit, the Swedish labour market could not absorb the high number of newly arrived immigrants in such a short time without new

¹⁰ https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2016/2016_CR_SE.pdf

¹¹ [Elever och studieresultat i kommunal vuxenutbildning 2021 - Skolverket](#)

targeted policy developments addressing faster integration measures. A number of measures were implemented, for example a fast-track labour market training for newly arrived immigrants¹², a financial study support¹³ to stimulate the participation in education of low-qualified unemployed adults as well as measures to facilitate the combination of Swedish for immigrants and vocational courses¹⁴.

There have been several decisions affecting Municipal Adult Education to better align the learners' skills to the needs of the labour market. In 2020, the Government proposed legislative amendments to the Education Act, emphasising that Municipal Adult Education and Training should better align to the labour market needs for skills as well as better meet adults' needs for education at different stages of life.¹⁵

The Swedish National Agency for Education has been tasked to develop VET packages for adults.¹⁶ The packages consist of a combination of courses and should meet the requirement for employment. They may lead to partial qualifications but can also be accumulated or combined with other courses leading to a full upper secondary diploma. VET providers in Adult Education may offer these nationally developed packages or develop other packages to meet local and regional needs. In 2021, approximately 26 100 learners were enrolled in at least one course in one or more nationally developed VET-packages whilst approximately 17 200 learners were enrolled in at least one course in one or more regionally developed VET-packages.¹⁷

Municipalities can receive a specific state grant for providing so called Regional Adult VET. In order to arrange Regional Adult VET, at least three municipalities must cooperate in the planning and implementation of the education to ensure a broad offer of courses to participants and to meet the demands in the labour market in all the involved municipalities. In order for the supply of education to be broad and to meet demands all over the country, the educational offer needs to be planned in consultation with the regions and the Swedish Public Employment Service (PES), as well as with representatives of employers. Within Regional Adult Vocational Education

¹² Policy development: fast track labour market training for newly arrived immigrants PD ID 28544

¹³ Policy development: financial study support to stimulate low-qualified unemployed adults ID 28532

¹⁴ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/leda-och-organisera-skolan/nyanlanda-barn-och-elevs-utbildning/organisera-och-genomfora-kombinationsutbildningar-inom-komvux#h-Dethararenkombinationsutbildning>

¹⁵ The bill Komvux för stärkt kompetensförsörjning (prop. 2019/20:105), [Sweden: government bill on municipal adult education adopted in 2020 | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁶ Policy development: partial qualifications: vocational packages for adults ID 28542, [Sweden: partial IVET qualifications for adults | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁷ [Elevs och studieresultat i kommunal vuxenutbildning 2021 - Skolverket](#)

there should be one or several local programme councils for the purpose of consultation between representatives from the education sector and the labour market. The vocational councils shall contribute to develop cooperation between education and working life and contribute to high quality learning in working life. The vocational council should also assist municipalities in show casing the demands of the labour market, arranging positions for work-based learning and contribute in the follow up and evaluation of work-based learning.

Another important development is that the National Agency for Education and the Swedish PES have been tasked by the Government to analyse information exchange between the spheres of education and the labour market, with the objective to ease the transition for the unemployed to Municipal Adult Education¹⁸.

Higher Vocational Education

Higher Vocational Education (HVE) is a post-secondary form of advanced vocational training (EQF levels 5 and 6), aimed at meeting labour market needs and designed and delivered in close cooperation with employers and industry. The majority of the education providers are private training companies or local and regional authorities, but Higher Education institutions and government agencies can also apply to provide HVE training programmes. HVE is tailored to suit an changing labour market situation. The range of programmes changes over time, with new programmes starting and obsolete ones discontinued as the labour market changes. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is responsible for analysing the labour market demand for skills, annual selection of programmes that qualify to be offered as HVE, allocating government grants, quality assurance and development.

In 2021, there were approximately 86 000 students that attended HVE. There were 32 900 students who commenced their studies in 2021 and of these 53 per cent were women. The largest areas of education are finance, administration and sales, data/IT, health care and social work¹⁹. Work based learning is viewed as essential and more than 97 per cent of the programmes mixes WBL and school-based learning. HVE has grown and expanded even more since 2018. New programmes, shorter courses and more flexible pathways in which validation is playing a crucial role for rapid permeability, have also been added to increase the flexibility of higher VET.

¹⁸ Policy development: Easing transition from unemployment to adult education ID 38807

¹⁹ [The number of applicants to higher vocational education continues to increase \(scb.se\)](https://scb.se)

Folk High Schools

Sweden's 156 Folk High Schools are not guided by national curricula, but instead are free to shape their activities on their own. The length of the courses given by the Folk High Schools varies from a few days up to several years. The range of courses also varies across the Folk High Schools, but all schools offer a general course which allows students to complete their compulsory or upper secondary education. The general course has proven to be successful in helping especially youths with severe or several barriers to pursue an education, such as those with a migrant background or those with disabilities. Apart from their regular courses, the Folk High Schools provide commissioned courses in cooperation with e.g., the Swedish PES. An example is the study motivating programme (SMF), which is a three-month long course with the aim to motivate the participants to further studies. The target group is unemployed people without upper secondary qualifications or general entry requirements for Higher Education.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Validation is a tool for acknowledging prior learning and previously obtained skills of an individual to shorten the way through education and into the labour market. There are provisions for validation and recognition of prior learning in the regulatory framework for both Municipal Adult Education and HVE. Traditionally these possibilities have been underutilised, but measures are taken to increase the practical use of validation.

The Swedish National Qualifications Framework – SeQF

Lifelong learning (LLL) has a long tradition in Sweden and many LLL-opportunities are available within the formal education system, in Folk High Schools and Study Associations, in PES-procured programmes or organised by employers. For qualifications provided in formal education, the Government decides on level in the National Qualifications Framework, SeQF, but with a high degree of non-formal education provision, the SeQF was designed to be comprehensive when it was implemented in 2015. Qualifications from outside formal education, so called “non-formal qualifications”, can receive a decision of level through an application procedure to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education. The total number of non-formal qualifications that had received a decision of level in the SeQF were 36, as of May, 31, 2022. Several more applications are pending.

Student finance system

The Student Finance System in Sweden consists of grants and loans and are intended for students who are studying at *e.g.*, university college, university or HVE, as well as for students over the age of 20 studying at basic and upper secondary levels at Municipal Adult Education or a Folk High School. A student may choose to apply solely for the grant. The loan has a low interest rate, does not require any security, and students are able to repay it over a long period. In 2022, the interest rate was 0 per cent. From 2021, the age limit for being allowed student grants and loans has been raised from 56 to 60 years. Beyond student grants and loans, there are other grants targeting other groups, such as the Education Entry Grant which some unemployed people may be able to receive for a limited period of time in order to study at basic or upper secondary level within Municipal Adult Education or a Folk High School.

Curricula and regulations stress gender equality

Gender equality is stressed in curricula and regulations throughout the education system. For example, the Higher Vocation Education Act states that education should contribute to breaking traditions in gender-based education and career choices and education providers must promote gender equality and actively counteract all forms of abusive treatment. National agencies support VET providers in different ways. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education has developed support material for HVE-education providers²⁰ and the Swedish National Agency for Education offer support material to increase gender equality during work-based learning in Upper Secondary School and Adult Education²¹.

Green and digital transition

A follow-up report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been carried out.²² Education for sustainable development is a long-term commitment for Sweden and is included in regulations or curricula relating at all levels of the Swedish education system. In recent years the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education has put increased focus on sustainable development and especially green transition when it comes to prioritising programmes and courses that will receive funding.²³ According to the priorities decided by the agency, education providers together with working life must describe how the

²⁰ <https://assets.myh.se/docs/publikationer/informationsmaterial/jamstalld-utbildning-ett-stodmaterial-for-arbetet-med-jamstalldhet-inom-yrkeshogskolan.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/inspiration-och-stod-i-arbetet/stod-i-arbetet/jamstalldhet-i-apl>

²² [Sveriges genomförande av Agenda 2030 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491313/1688131)

²³ [MYH beviljar nya YH-kurser - Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan](https://www.myh.se/491313/1688131)

content of the education can contribute to environmental and climate sustainability. Graduates from Upper Secondary Vocational Education as well as HVE contribute to many sectors' work with the environmental and climate goals. Examples include production of sustainable food, various infrastructure investments and housing construction.²⁴

The Swedish National Agency for Education has an ongoing government mission to promote digitalisation in the school system and to make it easier for schools and head teachers to take advantage of the opportunities offered by digitalisation in teaching and administration. One comprehensive step was taken in 2016, when the agency presented a national information and communication technology (ICT) strategy²⁵ for education, including initial VET. A broad range of stakeholders were involved in developing the strategy and revising curricula, for example, national programme councils, other national agencies, universities, ICT experts and teachers and students. Social partners have been consulted to identify industry-specific digital skills that VET learners will need to develop to stay competitive. The strategy was the result of a task to the Agency regarding a national ICT-strategy for education that would be valid from 2017 to 2022. The Agency has also been tasked with updating the strategy for digitalization in the school system which will be valid from 2023 to 2027.²⁶

Labour market policy in relation to VET

The Swedish Government is expanding support for jobseekers through matching services and work preparation activities. Resources has also been allocated to labour market training. More people who need to improve their knowledge to get a job, will be given an opportunity to take part of labour market training that will match up their skills to the ones being demanded. Labour market training is simultaneously intended to counter the shortage of labour.²⁷

The Swedish Government has since 2020 given the Swedish PES a reinforced mission to direct more people to basic and upper secondary education and education within Municipal Adult Education or the corresponding within Folk High Schools. In the Government's

²⁴ <https://www.myh.se/nyhetsrum/nyheter/gd-har-ordet-yrkeshogskolan-och-miljo-och-klimatmassig-hallbarhet>

²⁵ Link to the presented national information and communication technology strategy: [Ladda ned publikation - Skolverket](#)

²⁶ Appropriation directions for the budget year 2022 regarding the National Agency for Education

²⁷ Budget bill for 2022

appropriation directions for the Swedish PES a target is set to substantially increase the number of people going into the above mentioned education among those individuals lacking upper secondary education or are in need of transition to better respond to changing labour market needs. The Government also has increased the possibilities for unemployed people with need for basic or upper secondary education to study with maintained unemployment benefits.²⁸

As part of the Government's initiatives to encourage more unemployed people to make the transition to education and training in 2018, the Government introduced an education and training obligation. Under this obligation, all newly arrived immigrants who benefit from the Swedish PES's Introduction Programme, and who are considered to be in need of education or training to get a job, can be referred to apply for, and undergo, education and training. Within the Introduction Programme, newly arrived immigrants should mainly take part in Municipal Adult Education in Swedish for immigrants (SFI) or equivalent education at Folk High Schools, social orientation and education in Municipal Adult Education at basic or upper secondary level, Municipal Education for Adults with Learning Disabilities or equivalent education in Folk High Schools.

The Government has expressed that it is urgent that municipalities and the Swedish PES cooperate to make sure that the supply of education for adults, including the supply of labour market training, should respond better to labour market's needs. Cooperation is needed to avoid ineffective overlaps and to make sure that labour market training functions as a complement to and interact with formal education. The supply of labour market training should not restrict education and training needed within Municipal Adult Education.

Regional development

Skills supply is one of four areas in Sweden's national strategy for sustainable regional development in the whole country 2021–2030 (skr. 2020/21:133). Regional cooperation within the education area can, *i.a.*, contribute to a varied and flexible supply of education at upper secondary or post-secondary level that corresponds to the labour market demand in each region. It is important, especially for smaller municipalities in rural areas where it can be a challenge to provide a sufficiently varied and flexible supply of Vocational Education at upper secondary level. According to the ordinance (2016:937) on state grants to regional adult vocational education the supply should

²⁸ Appropriation directions for the budget year 2022 regarding the Swedish Public Employment Service

be planned in consultation with the regions in order to cater for the need of education in the labour market as a whole. Education programmes and courses within HVE should be suitably located to meet labour market demands. HVE is central to the skills supply across the country and the cooperation between the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education and the regions regarding planning and dimensioning of education is important. Policy measures to better align the supply of education to the regional needs for competence provision in upper secondary VET will be covered in section 3.

Ongoing major reforms and initiatives

Regional Adult Vocational Education

Extensive government funding to the municipalities' provision of adult education continues. It is necessary to be able to meet the needs of the labour market and to strengthen the integration of foreign born adults. Not the least funding for combined education, VET in combination with Swedish for immigrants or Swedish as a second language, has made it possible for more foreign born adults to learn a coherent language and receive a vocational education which leads to work. The Government therefore proposes continued funding for regional adult VET within Municipal Adult Education.

The Knowledge boost

In 2014 the Swedish Government initiated the Knowledge boost with the ambition to invest in education to face new labour market demands. The Knowledge boost has been enforced by investments in education within the Swedish recovery and resilience plan with more study places in regional adult VET and HVE. The Swedish recovery and resilience plan also includes a reform with higher compensation for vocational education and training in combination with Swedish for immigrants and Swedish as a second language.

Transition package for flexibility, adaptability and security in the labour market including a new student finance scheme

In 2020 the social partners in Sweden reached a new agreement in which the intention was to take an integrated approach concerning factors that together make flexibility, adaptability, and security in the labour market possible. The social partners jointly requested that the Government should propose how the agreement should be implemented with regards to employment protection legislation and

associated unemployment insurance, and in line with the social partners' proposals on a new public support structure for re- and upskilling, with new forms of publicly financed student aid.

In line with the agreement, in close consultation with the social partners, a reform package was prepared which included several measures that in combination creates flexibility, adaptability and security on the labour market. In terms of education and training, a new student finance scheme for transition and reskilling has been introduced to strengthen employees' position in the labour market. The scheme will make it significantly easier for people in mid-life and with work experience to undertake further education or training using student finance in the form of grants and loans which, for the vast majority, will be equivalent to at least 80 per cent of their wages.

The new student finance scheme may increase the need of new study places in all forms of education for adults. The Ministry of Education and Research is also currently carrying out consultations with the social partners, education providers and other relevant actors on what other possible measures needed to secure a successful implementation of the new scheme.

Innovation partnership programme on skills supply and lifelong learning

With the ambition to identify innovative solutions to major challenges facing society and to contribute to Sweden's competitiveness, the Government initiated four innovation partnership programmes for the period 2019 – 2022. The programmes bring together small and large companies, universities and Higher Education Institutions, civil society and public sector actors to jointly set priorities for what needs to be done to meet the challenges within the four themes. One of these programmes focuses on skills supply and lifelong learning and this programme has made it a joint responsibility to stimulate skills development and lifelong learning through mutually reinforcing actions, both private and public, aiming for a common package and a common objective. The starting point is the demands of working life and sectors, the need for new skills and better conditions for employees to transition or to continue their professional progression. The need to strengthen and develop VET has been one priority. The Swedish National Agency for Education and the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education have collaborated as active participants in the programme.²⁹ One of the results from the programme is a long term collaboration between government agencies around skill supply. The agencies included in the assignment are the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, the Swedish National Agency for Education, Swedish Higher Education

²⁹ [Agenda för SVP Kompetensförsörjning och livslångt lärande | Vinnova](#)

Authority, Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, the Swedish ESF Council and Swedish PES.

Quantitative targets set in the 2020 Council Recommendation on VET

Eurostat published the 2021 results of the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) on 28 April 2022. This data source serves as the basis for two of the EU-level targets on VET: the employment rate of recent VET graduates and their participation in work-based learning (WBL). Data on the employment rate of recent VET graduates in 2021 reflects the strong impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the overall employment situation of young people in the EU: all countries recorded a drop in their employment rate of young people in this period. The average employment rate in the EU of VET graduates in 2021, age group 20-34, who had graduated 1 to 3 years earlier from a vocational programme in upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education, improved compared to 2020 and reached 76.4 per cent. In Sweden the comparable average employment rate of VET graduates in 2021 amounted to 90 per cent, an increase of 4.7 percentage points compared with 2020³⁰.

Due to a delay in the transmission and validation process of national data on WBL, this will only be available by mid-June 2022. Data on the mobility of VET learners will not be complete this year due to technicalities resulting from the swap of the administration tool of the Erasmus+ programme.

2. Challenges and general objectives of the plan

³⁰ Eurostat's European Union Labour Force Survey 2022

The participating countries are invited to identify and describe the main challenges they face (e.g. in the socioeconomic, employment, VET and skills areas) and how they are going to be addressed through the implementation of the planned measures.

The general objectives of the NIPs should be presented in the order of priority and supported with evidence. Countries should make a clear link between the challenges to be addressed and the set objectives and explain how their achievement will help addressing these challenges. The description of each objective should refer to the VET Recommendation priorities and the Osnabrück Declaration objectives (see Annex 2).

The participating countries are invited to explain how they plan to achieve the quantitative objectives set by the Recommendation and other national targets (e.g. those of Skills agenda), as applicable, by 2025 in the medium-term and by 2030 in the long-term and provide the respective evidence.

The participating countries should provide:

- i. a brief overview of the main challenges, reform objectives and main measures ⁽³¹⁾ that comprise the NIP and links between them, explain the coherence of all parts of the NIP as well as its consistency with other national initiatives ⁽³²⁾, where applicable;
- ii. a reference to the main sources of funding for the implementation of the NIP, namely which funds, including EU funds, will be used;
- iii. timeline and current phase of development of the implementation of the NIP with respect to the timeline of the Osnabrück Declaration and the Recommendation.

Main challenges and goals

Surveys show a competence shortage in several occupational sectors, both in business and in welfare, where employers cannot find the skills in demand. It creates challenges both in maintaining and developing quality in welfare and for the competitiveness of business.

⁽³¹⁾ A detailed description of those measures will be done in Section 3.

⁽³²⁾ E.g. national recovery and resilience plans, national reform programmes.

The shortage of skilled labour is evident from both upper secondary level and post-secondary level. There is also a skills mismatch with difficulties for some groups to find jobs, in spite of the high demand for skills in many sectors.³³

An obvious challenge is to break the segregation and implement measures that will include more people in working and community life. There are large differences between socio-economic groups, both in terms of educational results and employment. An education at upper secondary level, or higher, is decisive for gaining access to the labour market. The number of early school leavers is a growing challenge as is increasing the throughput in education and providing opportunities for more people to achieve an upper secondary degree.³⁴ Challenges with large gaps between different socio-economic groups are also highlighted by the European Commission's framework of the European semester.

In spite of a comparatively ambitious climate policy, there is a need for vigorous measures for Sweden to phase out fossil fuels to live up to the Paris Agreement in time. The Government has pointed out a need for more green investments and a clear political direction to enable more private investments that will contribute to reduced emissions, increased export and new job opportunities. There is also a need for educational and CPD opportunities, for both general and specific skills, to implement the green transition.³⁵

The labour market is also affected by a number of other factors, such as changing demographics leading to labour shortages, unexpected events, such as the pandemic, and rapid technological shifts. Rapid shifts lead to difficulties to identify which skills needs future jobs will require, but also to an increased focus on adjustment abilities and lifelong learning measures.³⁶

VET plays an important role in meeting future challenges and responds to several different needs. These include a need for more young and adult individuals to attend VET in order to meet the needs in the labour market, for a functioning welfare system and a competitive economy. A high quality VET-system is important for people's ability to earn a living and for their personal development.³⁷ VET is also an

³³ Möt välfärdens kompetensutmaning, recruitment report for 2020, Swedens Municipalities and Regions, Växande rekryteringshinder ett allt större problem 2022, the Recruitmentquestionnaire 2021/22, Swedish Enterprise, Trends and forecasts for 2020, Statistics Sweden

³⁴ See for example. the inquiries More youth should reach the goals of an upper secondary education (dir. 2021:23, dir. 2022:4)

³⁵ Budget bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg. omr. 20), and Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the Labour Market (prop. 2021/22:176)

³⁶ The bill Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the Labour Market (prop. 2021/22:176), see for example p. 79–81

³⁷ The bill Dimensioning of upper secondary education for better skills supply (prop. 2021/22:159) and the bill Increased opportunities for general eligibility for vocational programmes (prop. 2021/22:94)

important route for many newly arrived immigrants into the Swedish labour market and thus contributes to integration and the reduction of segregation.³⁸ VET is both a key in making people employable and for providing the right skills for the welfare system and business life. Sweden needs more VET-trained people in general, but vocational training also plays a vital role in meeting the needs of up- and reskilling. In addition, VET has an important role in ensuring a smooth transition to a digital, green and sustainable society.

There is an ongoing transformative work to strengthen vocational education to meet the challenges mentioned. The transformative work can be summarized in four target areas. An overall and crucial tool for achieving positive results in all four areas is the close collaboration with the social partners. There are currently various fora for cooperation, and it is important to build on these and the cooperation that works well. In the development of this implementation plan, social partners and student representatives have been consulted to give an input on challenges that need to be addressed and areas that need to be prioritised. They have also had a chance to describe how they contribute to strengthen Swedish VET. The dialogue will continue as there are areas that need to be addressed which require cooperation with the partners at local, regional and national level. The four target areas below, are further described in section three.

- **Strengthened quality and attractiveness: for more learners to attend VET**
- **Strengthened alignment of VET to the needs of the labour market**
- **Additional pathways in the educational system: for increased establishment in working life**
- **Increased accessibility and flexibility for VET: to better meet present and future skill demands in the labour market**

3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages ⁽³⁹⁾

One table to be developed for each measure that forms the core of the plan

Title

³⁸ [Sveriges återhämtningsplan - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491319)

³⁹ A package (of measures) is a coherent set of measures that address a particular challenge, one or several priorities and principles of the VET recommendation and/or objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration.

Strengthened quality and attractiveness: for more learners to attend VET
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
More professionally trained people are needed in the coming years to ensure skills provision in the welfare sector, in business life and for more people to be established in the labour market. ⁴⁰ Strengthened quality and increased attractiveness is seen as key for many people to choose VET as their study path. ⁴¹ VET can be more attractive if the pathway does not limit eligibility to tertiary education, and if learners can make well informed decisions about a VET study path through access to job forecasts. The quality can be enhanced by more qualified VET-teachers, qualitative WBL-placements, systematic audits and inspections that contribute to establishing a quality culture at provider level. Cooperation between VET provision and the world of work is decisive to ensure quality in VET and that the students develop the skills needed in the labour market. Since cooperation between VET providers and the world of work may make career opportunities for VET-graduates visible, it can also contribute to the increased attractiveness of VET.
Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan
The objective is to increase the share of learners that study a VET pathway.
Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline
The following reforms and initiatives are of particular importance to increase the attractiveness and quality of VET. <u>General eligibility for further studies</u> In order to increase the attractiveness of Vocational Education at upper secondary level and get more young people to choose a VET pathway, the Swedish Parliament decided in April 2022 to adopt the bill <i>Increased opportunities for general eligibility for vocational</i>

⁴⁰ Budget bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg. omr. 16)

⁴¹ Trends and forecasts 2020, Statistics Sweden

*programmes*⁴². Since the reform of 2011, many students in a VET-programme has had the possibility to make an active choice and to elect courses providing general eligibility for further studies at tertiary level. However, students who have considered to study a VET-programme nevertheless have chosen to enter a Higher Education preparatory programme. One reason has been the uncertainty regarding eligibility for Higher Education after completion of a VET-programme. With the new bill, the national vocational programmes for students entering a VET-programme from the autumn of 2023, must contain required courses for students to achieve general eligibility for studies at tertiary level. This means that all VET-programmes will contain the necessary courses in Swedish, or Swedish as a second language, and English needed for eligibility. In order to make this possible, without reducing the vocational content, the scope of the VET-programmes will be expanded regarding both content and teaching time, but with the possibility for the individual to opt out from the additional courses needed for eligibility for Higher Education, if the learner so wishes. The legislative changes are expected to contribute to an increased number of students who enrol in vocational education in Upper Secondary School, and thus contribute to the skills supply and ease the entry for many young people into the labour market.

Study and career guidance

The National Agency for Education was tasked in 2020 to develop digital tools for study and career guidance to strengthen guidance in the school system and contribute to the possibility for more students to make informed choices. The National Agency for Education should, for the task, build on and develop existing digital tools for study and career guidance and finalise the task by February 2024.⁴³

VET teachers

The National Agency for Education has been tasked with carrying out efforts for further preparation of the professional CPD-programme that will be launched in 2025 in accordance with the proposals of a national inquiry report on teacher skills.⁴⁴ The efforts must, among other things, include a mentor training for a qualitative introduction period, a recruitment training for prospective head teachers and competence development for head teachers in practical organisation and work environment. The efforts must be in line

⁴² Prop. 2021/22:94

⁴³ Appropriation directions for 2020 regarding the National Agency for Education

⁴⁴ SOU 2018:17 and the appropriation directions for 2021 regarding the National Agency for Education

with the proposals in the report *With teaching skills at the center - a framework for the professional development of teachers and principals*⁴⁵ that preceded the bill. An amended bill is proposed to be forwarded to the Parliament in 2023.

Quality reviews and audits

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate supervises the education system and conducts reviews and audits of upper secondary education, which includes VET. Municipal Adult Education is part of upper secondary education, but supervision was previously exercised at organiser (local) level. Municipal Adult Education is largely carried out by contracted providers. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has identified structural deficiencies in management and distribution of responsibilities of Municipal Adult Education, and many of these deficiencies are linked to the organiser not taking sufficient responsibility for carrying out systematic quality assurance. This is particularly the case for outsourced education carried out by subcontracted providers. The quality needs to be improved and the Government has therefore, from 2022, tasked the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to systematically review Municipal Adult Education regardless of if it is provided by an external subcontracted provider or by the municipality itself.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has also been tasked to map the extent to which municipalities allocate and distribute teaching time in Municipal Adult Education, both with regard to teaching taking place in a classroom setting, and to education in which different flexible forms of teaching occur. The Inspectorate should cooperate and have a dialogue with the National Agency for Education when carrying out the assignment. A question of particular relevance to the assignment is whether students have too few teaching hours in relation to what can be considered reasonable for them to achieve the goals of the education.

Collaboration with working life

In order to offer vocational education of high quality that is attractive to the students, collaboration with working life is decisive. Continuous cooperation between education and working life currently takes place in a number of ways, *e.g.* through local and national programme councils for upper secondary vocational education, and through cooperation regarding provision of WBL-placements. In HVE this happens naturally since the education is developed in collaboration with employers and representatives of working life must be part of the HVE-programmes' management groups.

⁴⁵ SOU 2018:17

The state and the social partners, the Swedish Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and The Swedish Trade Union Confederation, collaborate specifically through WorldSkills Sweden to increase the interest in vocational education. In addition, trade associations, professional boards, schools and companies participate in the work of WorldSkills Sweden. The organisation contributes through campaigns and information, to increase quality and attractiveness of VET, to attract more professionals to become VET-teachers, and provides support for various sector organisations. WorldSkills Sweden also organises the Swedish vocation championship (Yrkes-SM), and Swedish participation in international competitions, like World Skills Europe and World Skills International.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

- A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges.
- B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET.
- C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.
- D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills.
- E. VET promotes equality of opportunities.
- F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.

Osnabrück Declaration

- 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET.
- 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.
- 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET.
- 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)

- initial VET (IVET)
- continuing VET (CVET)

Scope (national, regional, local)

- national
- regional

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries/target groups
<input type="checkbox"/> (List to be provided)
Responsible ministries/bodies
The Ministry of Education and Research
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
List all sources of funding and estimated amounts, if available.

3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages ⁽⁴⁶⁾
One table to be developed for each measure that forms the core of the plan
Title
Strengthened alignment of VET to the needs of the labour market
Rationale/background, challenges addressed
There is a great demand for vocationally trained people from both upper secondary and post-secondary levels and demand is expected to increase further over the next few years. At the same time, many young people find it difficult to become establish on the labour

⁴⁶ A package (of measures) is a coherent set of measures that address a particular challenge, one or several priorities and principles of the VET recommendation and/or objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration.

market and there is a high unemployment rate among certain groups. Rapid changes in the labour market also means that the already employed need opportunities for CPD to reskill and upskill. In order to solve labour market mismatch and improve skills provision for the welfare sector and for private companies, there is a need to supply training places that are adjusted to the needs of the labour market. Skills intelligence to provide competences for the whole country requires access to relevant statistics, facts and analyses, *e.g.* mappings of the present situation and forecasts, as well as analyses of young peoples' and adults' demand for, and establishment after, various educational programmes. A close collaboration with working life is also needed so that the content of education meets the skill requirements of the labour market.⁴⁷

Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan

The objective is to strengthen the alignment of vocational education and training to the needs of the labour market.

Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline

The following reforms and initiatives are of particular importance to strengthen the alignment of VET to the needs of the labour market.

IVET for adults

A government bill on Municipal Adult Education was adopted in 2020 to strengthen skills provision, accelerate the integration of immigrants and facilitate re- and upskilling of adults⁴⁸. The Government concluded that Municipal Adult Education plays a key role in providing relevant competence at regional and national levels. Municipal Adult VET in cooperation between several municipalities, so called Regional Adult VET, has expanded strongly in recent years and in 2022, in the wake of the pandemic, reached its greatest extent ever. The investments in Regional Adult VET is an important part of the Government's work to decrease unemployment following the pandemic. The Government therefore has continued to invest in Regional Adult VET through the budget for 2022, with an allocation of

⁴⁷ See for example the bill Dimensioning of upper secondary education for better skills supply (prop. 2021/22:159), the bill Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the Labour Market (prop. 2021/22:176) and the Budget bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg.omr. 16 avsnitt 5.5).

⁴⁸ Prop. 2019/20:105

1 540 million SEK (~ 146,25 million EUR on May, 27, 2022).⁴⁹ Comprehensive government support is still necessary for municipalities to offer VET that can meet the needs of the labour market.

Higher Vocational Education

HVE plays an important role when it comes to meeting the continued large skill shortages throughout Sweden, enabling reskilling and promoting matching to the labour market needs. The Government has added additional funding for higher VET to ensure that the number of education places will continue to be at a high level.⁵⁰

Funding for retraining and lifelong learning

A new funding for retraining and lifelong learning that facilitates reskilling and upskilling for adults has been presented to the Swedish Parliament and will, if accepted, come into effect in 2023.⁵¹ A springboard for the proposed reform is the financial support provided to an individual, for education that is intended to strengthen the individual's position on the labour market in sectors where there is a need for competence provision. New funding may increase the demand for education and training, and it is therefore important that universities, Municipal Adult Education providers and higher VET providers adapt their supply of programmes and courses, and that validation of prior learning is offered.

The Knowledge boost

In 2014 the Swedish Government initiated the Knowledge boost with the ambition to invest in education to face new labour market demands. Within the Knowledge boost the Government has, during the period of 2014-2022, added funding that is estimated to be the equivalent of more than 160 000 additional study places in Municipal Adult Education, in Folk High Schools and Study Associations, in Higher Education and HVE.⁵² The Knowledge Boost is intended to give people the chance to educate themselves so that they can secure a job, retrain for a new occupation, become eligible for admission to Higher Education, acquire advanced education to improve their career opportunities, and to enlighten and empower themselves to more fully participate in society or simply for personal development.

⁴⁹ Budget Bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg.omr. 16), p.126-127

⁵⁰ Budget Bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg.omr.16)

⁵¹ prop. 2021/22:176

⁵² Budget bill for 2022

The Knowledge boost has been enforced by investments in education within the Swedish recovery and resilience plan with more study places in Regional Adult VET and HVE. The Swedish recovery and resilience plan also includes a reform with higher compensation for vocational training in combination with Swedish for immigrants and Swedish as a second language.⁵³

New regulation for validation

The Government intends to propose an obligation in the Education Act (2010:800) stating that home municipalities must ensure that those who want to have their skills mapped before entering Municipal Adult Education or to sit for such an examination, are offered an initial mapping of their skills.⁵⁴ The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education has been tasked to follow, support and coordinate national and regional developments of validation in education and working life.⁵⁵

Dimensioning the supply of upper secondary education for a better competence provision

In order to strengthen the supply of skills for the welfare sector and industries, and to facilitate the establishment of young people and adults on the labour market, the Government presented the bill *Dimensioning of upper secondary education for better skills supply*⁵⁶ in March, 2022. The proposals state, *i.a.*, that the needs of the labour market must be taken into account when public and independent education organisers decide which programmes, and number of study places, are to be offered. The proposals also state that municipalities have to cooperate and agree with at least two other municipalities what programmes in Upper Secondary School and Municipal Adult Education the three municipalities will supply to their citizens.

As part of the dimensioning reform, the National Agency for Education has been tasked to produce examples of regional skills intelligence with statistics, analyses and forecasts of future skill needs, as well as demand for education. The agency must also report

⁵³ [Sweden's recovery plan within the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility - Government.se](#), see also [Sveriges återhämtningsplan - Regeringen.se](#)

⁵⁴ Budget Bill for 2022

⁵⁵ Appropriation directions for 2022 regarding the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education

⁵⁶ Prop 2021/22:159

the needs and forecasts of other relevant state agencies and organisations.⁵⁷ The outcome of the skills intelligence can contribute to a better alignment in planning the education offers which balances the demand from students and the needs from the labour market. If the proposals are accepted, the changes will be included in the Education Act in June 2023, and come into effect for learners that start their upper secondary VET in 2025.

Clarified assignment to the regions regarding competence provision

Through the bill *Dimensioning of upper secondary education for better skills supply*⁵⁸, the Government has also proposed a clearer mission to the regions to work with competence provision within the framework of regional growth. The proposal means that the Act⁵⁹ regulating responsibility for regional development is amended to state that a region must establish goals and priorities for the work on skills provision and provide assessments of the regional needs for competence in public and private sectors in the short term and long term run. If accepted, the amendment will go into effect in August 2022.

New qualification tests

The National Agency for Education has carried out a pilot with qualification tests.⁶⁰ The pilot has attracted attention from the industries and the agency sees opportunities to continue the work to develop the tests at upper secondary level.

EU policy priorities addressed	
Council Recommendation on VET	Osnabrück Declaration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation.

⁵⁷ Appropriation directions for 2021 regarding the National Agency for Education

⁵⁸ Prop 2021/22:159

⁵⁹ Lag (2010:630) om regionalt utvecklingsansvar

⁶⁰ [Sweden: new qualification tests launched | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](#)

<input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> regional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries/target groups	
<input type="checkbox"/> (List to be provided)	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
The Ministry of Education and Research	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
List all sources of funding and estimated amounts, if available.	

3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages ⁽⁶¹⁾

One table to be developed for each measure that forms the core of the plan

Title

Additional pathways in the educational system: for increased establishment in working life

Rationale/background, challenges addressed

Labour force surveys (2020) show that unemployment is almost three times as common among those without an upper secondary education, compared to those that hold such a degree. To improve the chances to establish oneself on the labour market, more students need to reach the goals for an upper secondary diploma. The linkage to working life, starting in compulsory school, needs to be stronger and clarified. Several different solutions need to be considered to increase the throughput of upper secondary education. Vocational packages designed for young people that can provide education to build on, and vocational orientations in the higher education preparatory programmes, could be examples to explore further. There is also a need to explore how vocational education for adults, in particular Municipal Adult Education, can be improved and how working life can be more involved in the regional cooperation of municipalities.

By partaking in VET, many newly arrived immigrants increase their chances of meeting labour market demands and getting a job, which can increase their integration. Therefore, it is important to be able combine VET with education in Swedish language training. In order to strengthen integration, there have been investments in combined education, meaning that VET is combined with Swedish for immigrants (SFI) or Swedish as a second language. Combined education has made it possible for more foreign born individuals to receive a coherent language and vocational education that can lead to employment.

⁶¹ A package (of measures) is a coherent set of measures that address a particular challenge, one or several priorities and principles of the VET recommendation and/or objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration.

<p>Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan</p>
<p>The objective is to provide additional pathways in the educational system to provide alternatives and increase opportunities and the establishment on the labour market.</p>
<p>Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline</p>
<p>The following reforms and initiatives are of particular importance to create additional pathways in the education system and increase establishment in working life.</p> <p><u>The National inquiry <i>More youth should reach the goals of an upper secondary education</i></u> In 2021, the Government commissioned a national inquiry⁶² to propose measures for more youth to reach the goals of their upper secondary education, either in Upper Secondary School or in Municipal Adult Education. The inquiry will present its proposals in June 2022. An inquiry that should use these proposals as a springboard to investigate more and alternative pathways to employment, is planned to be presented in June, 2022.</p> <p><u>Piloting vocational orientations in higher education preparatory programmes</u> In the memorandum of 2021⁶³, <i>Piloting vocational orientations in higher education preparatory programmes</i>, it is proposed that the Government is authorised to decide on deviations from some regulations to enable piloting vocational orientations in the otherwise higher education preparatory programmes in Upper Secondary School. The aim is to explore new ways to provide students who wishes to work directly after graduating from upper secondary education with the skills and knowledge employers demand. It is also proposed, in the memorandum, that a retail pilot should be offered in the business administration programme. The memorandum has been on a referral round and the proposals are currently being evaluated.</p>

⁶² Dir. 2021:23

⁶³ U2021/01877

Continued investment in combined training

In regional adult VET provided by municipalities as part of Municipal Adult Education, large sums are set aside for places in combined education in which VET is combined with Swedish for Immigrants, or Swedish as a second language. Combined education can shorten the road to employment as language and VET are studied simultaneously. The strengthening of the combined education aims to improve foreign born individuals possibilities for a good establishment in the work life. The National Agency for Education was tasked with supporting the municipalities and to follow up on the investment, including to conduct an analysis on employment after completed education.

Compulsory and coherent education for newly arrived immigrants

The Swedish Parliament adopted the bill *Compulsory and coherent education for newly arrived immigrants*⁶⁴ in February, 2022. From August 1, 2022, municipalities will be obliged to offer newly arrived immigrants with limited previous education in the so called 'establishment programme', a coherent educational programme in Municipal Adult Education. Newly arrived immigrants that are not expected to be employed during their time in the establishment programme will have a duty to participate in Swedish for immigrants, civic orientation and basic or upper secondary education in Municipal Adult Education, or in Municipal Adult Education for Students with Learning Disabilities, or equivalent in Folk High School. The purpose of the programme is to give participants the knowledge needed to be able to further studies or to establish themselves on the labour market. The education must include an average of at least 23 teaching hours weekly and follow a plan that is decided by the municipality in which the individual resides. The education plan should include information about the purpose, content and organisation.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET

Osnabrück Declaration

⁶⁴ Prop. 2021/22:51

<input type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.
VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)	
Scope (national, regional, local)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> regional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	
Beneficiaries/target groups	
<input type="checkbox"/> (List to be provided)	
Responsible ministries/bodies	
The Ministry of Education and Research	
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)	
List all sources of funding and estimated amounts, if available.	

<p>3. Detailed description of main measures and/or their packages ⁽⁶⁵⁾</p> <p>One table to be developed for each measure that forms the core of the plan</p>
<p>Title</p>
<p>Increased accessibility and flexibility for VET: to better meet present and future skill demands of the labour market</p>
<p>Rationale/background, challenges addressed</p> <p>In order to meet a changing labour market and respond to the skills needs that come from the green and digital transition, and at the same time create good conditions for a sustainable working life, good conditions are required to enable individuals to study, reskill and upskill during their working life. To be able to do so, access to education that matches the needs of the labour market and financial conditions to undertake education, is necessary. There is also a need for a flexible range of education opportunities throughout the country, as well as the possibility to study part time and from a distance. Access to guidance, validation opportunities and supplementary education is also needed.⁶⁶</p>
<p>Specific objectives of the measure/package and their relation to the general objectives of the plan</p>
<p>The objectives are to offer vocational education and training that better meets present and future skill demands of the labour market.</p>
<p>Description of main actions and activities comprising the measure/package, including implementation milestones and indicative timeline</p>
<p>In order to increase accessibility and flexibility so that vocational training can meet both the skills needs of today and tomorrow, the following reforms and initiatives are of particular importance.</p> <p><u>New funding for re- and upskilling</u></p>

⁶⁵ A package (of measures) is a coherent set of measures that address a particular challenge, one or several priorities and principles of the VET recommendation and/or objectives of the Osnabrück Declaration.

⁶⁶ See for example the bill Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the Labour Market (prop. 2021/22:176), the Budget Bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg.omr. 16) and the bill Validation for skills supply and lifelong learning (prop. 2021/22:123)

In March 2022, the Government presented the bill *Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the Labour Market*⁶⁷ which also contained proposals for a reformed labour legislation, a new support system for re- and upskilling, and new funding for basic retraining and skills support. A majority of the legislative changes will come into effect on June 30, 2022, for applications in October and studies commencing during the spring of 2023. All in all, several measures have come together which can create flexibility, adaptability and security for workers in the Swedish labour market.

One of the measures in the reform package is new funding for re- and upskilling that will enable workers to participate in lifelong training and strengthen their position on the labour market. The funding will make it easier for the experienced professionals in mid-life to undergo further education. The support will mean that the vast majority can study with at least 80 per cent of the salary for up to one year. Funding can be provided for a total of 44 weeks of full-time studies. Self-employed individuals are also entitled to take part of the funding.⁶⁸

The social partners can top up the funding for individuals that are part of the collective agreements which means that employees potentially, can participate in re- and upskilling activities with full compensation for lost wages.

To ensure that the funding reaches the target group – the already employed in need of further education – a requirement for being eligible is to have been employed for at least eight years. A further requirement to ensure that the person has a foothold in the labour market, is that the individual for eligibility must have worked for at least 12 months during the last 24 months.

The funding is targeted for education that will strengthen the individual's position on the labour market. This is mainly controlled through the involvement of restructuring organisations, which are jointly operated by the social partners and based on collective agreements. The restructuring organisations are experts in the Swedish labour market and have a long experience in facilitating transition processes for individuals that have been laid off. If a student is connected to a restructuring organisation, the Swedish Board of Student Finance must give that organisation the opportunity to express whether and how the education will enhance the student's

⁶⁷ Prop 2021/22:176.

⁶⁸ [Sweden: funding for retraining and lifelong learning | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](https://cedefop.europa.eu/en/press/news/2022/03/sweden-funding-retraining-lifelong-learning)

position on the labour market. The Government plans to establish a new organisation that will issue opinion about labour market prospects for individuals that are not covered by collective agreements.

The funding for re- and upskilling is based on the existing funding system for study support. It is expected to be widely used and according to preliminary calculations, approximately 40 000 students are expected to be supported when it is fully implemented.

New regulation for qualifications

In a bill presented in February 2022⁶⁹, the Government proposed to introduce an obligation in the Education Act (2010:800) stating that home municipalities must ensure that those who want to have their skills mapped before entering an education or sitting for an examination within Municipal Adult Education, are offered an initial mapping of their skills.⁷⁰ The aim is for validation in Municipal Adult Education to better meet the needs of the labour market and individuals as well as to establish a common and uniform understanding in the entire sphere of education and labour market. Increased validation opportunities to a more efficient skills provision, a quicker establishment on the labour market and increased possibilities for up- and reskilling during working life.

The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education has been tasked to follow, support and coordinate national and regional developments of validation in education and working life.⁷¹

Pilot for adult Municipal Vocational Education Flex

Since the autumn of 2021 there is a pilot for validation. The aim is to stimulate the development of mapping and validation within Municipal Vocational Adult Education to increase the number of validations performed and thus better the possibilities for learners to take complementing education. The goal of the action is for adults in need of reskilling to find a new job or occupation where the skills

⁶⁹ Prop. 2021/22:123

⁷⁰ Budget Bill for 2022

⁷¹ Appropriation directions for 2022 regarding the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education

from their previous work can be used. Through the pilot, the municipalities are able to develop an infrastructure for validation in preparation for the Governments proposals on the right to mapping and validation.⁷²

HVE-flex piloting project

The three year long, so called HVE-flex pilot project, started in 2020 and aims to be a faster and more flexible route to a higher vocational education qualification for those with considerable professional experience in a given vocational field. The HVE-flex pilot funds additional study places in an established HVE programme and follows the same education plan. The individual's prior learning is recognised, through validation, and only conducts supplementary studies needed to achieve the full qualification. On average, participating learners were exempted from 50% of HVE programme learning outcomes through validation⁷³.

Courses and shorter HVE programmes

A possibility to offer courses and packages of courses in the form of short HVE programmes were made possible in 2020. These short flexible programmes are foremost targeting already employed individuals that wishes to go deeper, get broader or renew their skills in a field. The courses are flexible regarding study pace and form and in many cases offered as distance learning. So far decisions have led to an offer of slightly more than 20 000 study places.⁷⁴

A national inquiry about higher vocational education

There has been a major expansion of higher vocational education in recent years. To ensure an efficient function also for the future, a national inquiry, *Higher VET of the Future – Stable, Efficient and Sustainable*, has been instigated⁷⁵. The inquiry should *i.a.* propose how higher VET can contribute to skills needed for the green transition and how progression in the higher VET system can be achieved through programmes and courses starting from a higher level than presently. The inquiry is to report its proposals to the Government in June 2023.

⁷² Prop. 2021/22:123

⁷³ [Sweden: HVE-flex: fast track to higher VET qualifications through validation | CEDEFOP \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷⁴ [Återrapportering: Regeringsuppdrag om korta yrkeshögskoleutbildningar \(kurser och kurspaket\) - Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan \(myh.se\)](#)

⁷⁵ Dir. 2021:88

Boosting skills for the climate

Sweden's ambition is to be at the forefront of the green transition and the creation of new greener jobs throughout the country. In order for more people to take part of the emerging job opportunities, the Government has, through a proposal, set aside funding of 100 million SEK for 2022 and 100 million SEK for 2023⁷⁶ (corresponding to approximately 9,5 million EUR and another 9,5million EUR on May 27, 2022), to boost skills needed for the climate. The initiative aims at targeted investments in skills development and CPD training to ensure that the right competences are available in the labour market.

Mission to develop a cohesive data infrastructure for competence provision and lifelong learning

In order to meet the need for lifelong learning adapted to change in the labour market, the possibilities of digitalisation must be explored in new innovative ways for more effective matching, guidance and validation. A precondition for developing digital services in this area is that the data can be shared between the actors in education and the labour market. The data that is managed by state agencies also need to be adapted to several new purposes. Sharing of data, however, needs to take place in a way that secure and protects the privacy of individuals and otherwise takes into account given legal conditions. The Government therefore has commissioned a number of central state agencies to develop conditions for making data and digital information on education and the labour market available, and to establish forms for managing a cohesive data infrastructure for skills provision and lifelong learning. A final report on the mission will be reported in January, 2024.⁷⁷

Learning Centres

Learning Centres are a municipal activity in which adult students can receive support in their learning from teachers and other staff. The Government has made changes to the regulation making it clear that the learning centres can be organised for students in all forms and levels of education, *e.g.* Municipal Adult Education, Swedish tuition immigrants, Higher Vocational Education and tertiary academic education. The municipalities have a mandate to determine how their learning centre should be organised which leads to different solutions geographically, but often study cubicles, technical equipment, tutoring, study guidance and libraries are available. It has been shown that learning centres have increased both accessibility of education and the throughput. Learning centres also can

⁷⁶ Budget bill for 2022 (prop. 2021/22:1 utg.omr. 20)

⁷⁷ [Uppdrag att utveckla en sammanhållen datainfrastruktur för kompetensförsörjning och livslångt lärande - Regeringen.se](#)

function as a recruitment base for education by allowing students at different levels to interact and inspire each other. Vocational education can become relevant at learning centres in several ways, as higher VET can be outsourced to a learning centre, a university can place a course there, and VET learners can receive support in their studies at a learning centre, directly or through distance learning. A learning centre can also provide support for studies in Swedish for immigrants studying in vocational education.

Access to vocational training for those who need to reskill for the labour market

Funding for re- and upskilling may mean that VET for adults need to be adapted to better meet the needs of individuals that need to retrain for skills in a new professional career⁷⁸. A change was recently made to the selection regulation for vocational training in Municipal Adult Education. Those individuals at risk of becoming unemployed must be prioritised in the selection of who will be accepted for the various courses⁷⁹.

EU policy priorities addressed

Council Recommendation on VET	Osnabrück Declaration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. VET is agile in adapting to labour market challenges. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at the core of VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. VET is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand. <input type="checkbox"/> D. VET is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. VET promotes equality of opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> F. VET is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of CVET and digitalisation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Sustainability – a green link in VET. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. European Education and Training Area and international VET.

⁷⁸ Prop. 2021/22:176

⁷⁹ Prop. 2019/20:105

VET subsystem (IVET, CVET, or both)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial VET (IVET) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> continuing VET (CVET)
Scope (national, regional, local)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> regional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local
Beneficiaries/target groups
<input type="checkbox"/> (List to be provided)
Responsible ministries/bodies
The Ministry of Education and Research
Source of funding (National, EU funds, sectoral)
List all sources of funding and estimated amounts, if available.

4. Governance of the implementation of the plan
This section describes how the NIP will be implemented.

The participating countries should:

- (i) provide a summary of the stakeholder involvement, optionally supported by a diagram, explaining their roles and responsibilities contributing to the successful implementation of the plan, more specifically but not exclusively:
 - authorities – national, regional and/or local – involved;
 - social partners;
 - VET providers, representatives of VET learners;
 - partnerships involving relevant stakeholders, including at regional and sectoral level or international partners, engaged or created for the purpose.
- (ii) indicate how you will organise monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the NIPs in cooperation with Cedefop's ReferNet and your country's DGVT representatives and in line with the national context and the above described governance arrangements.

i) Central actors

The Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for the Swedish implementation plan. The plan has been developed in a process that includes a dialogue with the social partners, relevant state agencies and relevant ministries that work in areas that can be linked to skills provision and vocational training. During the process of drafting the plan, Swedish Confederation of Enterprise and Swedish Trade Union Confederation, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and the Swedish Student Union were invited to a meeting with the ministry for a dialogue on overall challenges, objectives and need for input. Within the Government Offices, the dialogue has mainly been conducted with the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Climate and Enterprise with the aim of including labour market and regional policy efforts.

Both municipalities and independent actors can be organisers and providers of Swedish upper secondary education, including VET. In Municipal Adult Education, it is always the municipality that is the organiser, but the provision can be subcontracted to independent providers. When the Swedish Parliament adopted the government bill *Dimensioning of upper secondary education for better skills*

*supply*⁸⁰ the regions' task was clarified within the framework of the Act⁸¹ regulating responsibility for regional development to assess the regional skills need in the short and long run. Both the local and regional level thus play a decisive role in organising and developing vocational education.

In HVE, the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is responsible for granting education places. In its decision, the agency must take into account the degree to which an education, in qualitative and quantitative terms, meets working life's need for qualified labor or contributes to developing or maintaining skills within a narrow vocational area that is of importance to the individual and society. The agency must also take into account the degree to which an education is financed by working life and, based on the regional or national needs of working life, where the HVE-programme should be located.

The innovation partnership programme *Skills supply and lifelong learning* has worked since July 2019 and been an important arena for dialogue and development to strengthen the skills supply and lifelong learning. The programme has expressed a need for continued partnerships and forums for dialogue. An agenda⁸² for the innovation programme was presented in February 2022 by Vinnova and contains four identified overarching conditions that need to be improved in order to assure an efficient system for skills supply and lifelong learning.

ii) Evaluation and reporting

Follow-up of the implementation plan will primarily be reported to Cedefop through ReferNet's regular reporting to Cedefop of the development of vocational training in Sweden. The work with the follow-up will take place in collaboration with DGVT to ensure the cross-sectoral perspective and that the connection to the work at the political level is maintained. With regard to the national follow-up, the intention is that the implementation plan should be a starting point for continued dialogue with the social partners of the labour market and that progress towards the objectives is continuously discussed.

The Swedish implementation plan contains interventions that are being investigated, are planned or have begun. It is the Swedish Parliament that decides on reforms that require funding or legislation, and the Government, in turn, is responsible for implementing

⁸⁰ Prop 2021/22:159

⁸¹ Lag (2010:630) om regionalt utvecklingsansvar

⁸² [Agenda för SVP Kompetensförsörjning och livslångt lärande | Vinnova](#)

the decisions. The Government commissions to a large extent state agencies to implement the decisions. The tasks reported in this implementation plan will therefore primarily be followed up within the existing framework, in which state agencies report back to the Government on the implementation. The National Agency for Education is tasked with managing and supporting Swedish schools, which includes Municipal Adult Education. In the case of higher VET, it is the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (MYH) that follows up the results. Both education agencies submit an annual report every year that describes the overall activities during the past year, but also continuously reports on the assignments they have been given by the Government. These reports are the basis for the Government's continued work.

The results of work carried out by the PES, Sweden's Innovation Agency Vinnova, the Agency for Digital Government, and the Swedish ESF-council will correspondingly be closely followed with regard to initiatives that are included in the Swedish implementation plan.

5. Expected effects of the plan

The participating countries are invited to assess and explain the expected effects of the implementation of the NIPs in the short-, medium and long-term. Benefits and improvements in relevant socio-economic areas, skills and education and training and on various target groups should be considered.

The participating countries should also indicate potential obstacles/risk factors that can hinder the implementation of the NIP and explain how they foresee to overcome those.

The expected effect of the combined measures is that Swedish vocational education is to be strengthened. Investments in increased quality and attractiveness aim for more people to choose to enrol in vocational education. The hope is that there will be an improved match between supply and demand so that working life can more easily find the skills needed when the connection to the needs of the labour market becomes clearer. By creating more pathways through the education system, establishment on the labour market can increase which can improve integration and decrease segregation. The hope is that more students will complete their upper secondary vocational education and that the differences in educational results between different socio-economic groups will decrease as well as the differences in employment between those born in Sweden and those born abroad, especially when it comes to women. Another

expectation is that accessibility and flexibility should increase so that vocational education can meet both today's and future's skills needs, both as opportunities for up- and reskilling during an individual's working life and through access to relevant education. There is also a hope for a well-functioning collaboration between vocational education and the social partners of the labour market in order to reach the objectives.

Many of the reforms presented in the implementation plan have been decided, but since the Swedish system is decentralised, the responsibility for implementation lies, in most cases, at the local level. Many of the political decisions are therefore about creating the right conditions at local and regional level.

Annex 2 – National level reforms and actions defined in the VET Recommendation and the Osnabrück Declaration

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
<p>A. Vocational education and training is agile in adapting to labour market changes</p>	<p>A.1 VET programmes that offer a balanced mix of vocational including technical skills well aligned to all economic cycles, evolving jobs and working methods and key competences, including solid basic skills, digital, transversal, green and other life skills which provide strong foundations for resilience, lifelong learning, lifelong employability, social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development;</p> <p>A.2 VET curricula, programme offers and qualifications which are regularly updated, building on skills intelligence (i.e. graduate tracking systems, skills anticipation mechanisms, including at sectoral and regional levels);</p> <p>A.3 an appropriate degree of autonomy of VET providers, flexibility, support and funding to adapt their training offer to changing skills needs, green and digital transitions and economic cycles;</p> <p>A.4 VET programmes at all levels which comprise work-based learning components that are further expanded also in continuing vocational education and training, and complemented by appropriate support and measures to stabilise the offer of apprenticeships and to address specific challenges of small companies to create work-based learning opportunities in different sectors of the economy.</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p>	<p>1.1. Explore the possibility of setting up a network of voluntary experts and executives, retired or on sabbatical, to support their peers in the fields of VET and apprenticeships as part of the EAfA</p> <p>1.3 Reinforce work-based learning and apprenticeships by implementing the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and making use of the on-demand support services, and policy learning initiatives. Strengthen the use of quality and inclusive apprenticeships as a tool to support school/training-to-work transitions of vulnerable groups and to improve citizens' qualification levels.</p> <p>1.5. Develop national and regional skills intelligence systems including skills anticipation and graduate tracking; enable social partners, decision-makers, stakeholders and providers to adapt and update VET programmes, curricula and guidelines in a timely and effective manner</p> <p>4.4. Promote intercultural knowledge, skills and competences as part of qualification and curricula requirements in VET qualifications in line with the Key Competence Framework</p>
<p>B. Flexibility and progression opportunities are at</p>	<p>B.1 learner centred VET programmes that offer access to face-to-face and digital or blended learning, flexible and modular pathways based on the recognition of</p>	<p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture</p>	<p>2.1. Develop national skills strategies for quality and inclusive lifelong learning with all relevant national, regional, sectoral stakeholders and social partners. Besides education and</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
the core of vocational education and training	<p>the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning and open up career and learning progression; continuing vocational training programmes designed to be adaptable to labour market, sectoral or individual up- or reskilling needs; and</p> <p>B.2 VET programmes which are based on modules or units of learning outcomes and validation mechanisms allowing the transfer, recognition and accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to gaining a qualification, a partial qualification, as relevant in the national context.</p>	– relevance of C-VET and digitalisation	training provision, the national skills strategies may include guidance, incentives for improved skills provision by employers, increased participation by employees, validation of prior learning and targeted public approaches for reaching out to inactive and unemployed individuals, NEETs or individuals at risk of unemployment
C. Vocational education and training is a driver for innovation and growth and prepares for the digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand	<p>C.1 integration of VET into economic, industrial and innovation strategies, including those linked to recovery, green and digital transitions; expansion of the training offer fostering the acquisition of entrepreneurial, digital and green skills;</p> <p>C.2 establishment of Centres of Vocational Excellence, which act as catalysts for local business investment, supporting recovery, green and digital transitions, European and regional innovation and smart specialisation strategies, development of vocational education and training, including at higher qualification levels (EQF levels 5-8), in line with national context and provide innovative services such as clusters and business incubators for start-ups and technology innovation for SMEs, as well as innovative reskilling solutions for workers at risk of redundancy; and</p> <p>C.3 access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, digitalisation strategies in line with national context</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>3. Sustainability – a green link in VET</p>	<p>1.4. Support Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and improve permeability between vocational and academic pathways, including work-based learning and enhanced cooperation between VET, HE and research centres, thus establishing quality and effective VET and apprenticeship programmes at EQF level 5 and above</p> <p>3.1. Create incentives for greening VET programmes, including education and training in green technologies and innovation, in energy efficiency, circular economy, environmental awareness, sustainable use of learning and training material, digitalisation to reduce climate effects</p> <p>3.2. Define labour-market-relevant skills for the green transition that are to be incorporated in curricula and VET provision, including basic skills across all sectors and occupations and sector-specific skills in cooperation with the social partners</p> <p>3.3. Define and support opportunities to enable teaching and training staff, managing teams in VET providers and trainers</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	and environmental and social sustainability in VET programmes and organisational management, thus contributing to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.		and mentors in companies to act as multipliers and mediators, in view of increasing digitalisation and sustainability within the provision and management of training programmes
D. Vocational education and training is an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training/skills	<p>D.1. permeability between both initial and continuing vocational education and training, general education and higher education;</p> <p>D.2 development of VET at EQF levels 5 to 8;</p> <p>D.3 delivery based on a mix of open, digital and participative learning environments, including learning conducive workplaces supported by state-of-the-art and accessible infrastructure, equipment and technology, and accompanied by versatile pedagogies and tools (e.g. ICT based simulators, virtual and augmented reality);</p> <p>D.4 initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers to foster technical and digital skills and effective innovative training methods, including teaching in virtual environment, in line with state of the art vocational and digital pedagogy, work with digital learning tools, and in diverse and multicultural environments;</p> <p>D.5 internationalisation strategies supporting a strategic approach to international cooperation in VET;</p> <p>D.6 Opportunities for learning mobility of vocational learners and staff, including virtual mobility, long-duration mobility and mobility to Partner Countries</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p> <p>4. European Education and Training Area and international VET</p>	<p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies and develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p> <p>2.5. Support VET teachers, trainers, guidance counsellors, adult educators and mentors by equipping them with the adequate skills and tools for and through digital technologies; in particular through systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuous professional development in both school and work-based settings, as well as distance education and training, enabling them to progress in their careers</p> <p>4.1. Support and facilitate the mobility of VET and adult learners, including apprentices, for example by developing support structures and providing information on opportunities in host countries</p> <p>4.2. Increase the rate of mobility of VET learners as well as teachers and trainers, while strengthening measures to ensure</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	<p>are in place, facilitated by the use and recognition of units of learning outcomes and of relevant European tools (Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement); and</p> <p>D.7 high quality lifelong learning and career guidance services, making full use of Europass and other digital services.</p>		<p>the quality and recognition of learning outcomes, as well as adequate support structures. Foster longer periods of mobility for VET learners abroad and ensure that apprentice work placements are in line with the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships , taking into account national regulations and collective agreements, including health and safety provisions</p> <p>4.3. Develop VET internationalisation strategies, mobilising partnerships and including commitments for concrete and targeted actions, with all relevant stakeholders in accordance with national or regional regulations</p> <p>4.5 Cooperate with other EU countries in preparing national teams for international competitions such as WorldSkills and EuroSkills</p>
<p>E. Vocational education and training promotes equality of opportunities</p>	<p>E.1 inclusive and accessible programmes for vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, low-qualified/skilled persons, minorities, people with migrant background and people with fewer opportunities because of their geographical location and/or their social-economically disadvantaged situation; targeted measures and flexible training formats prevent early leaving from education and training and support the school-to-work transition;</p> <p>E.2. programmes accessible through digital learning platforms, supported by tools, devices and internet connection, in particular for vulnerable groups and people in rural or remote areas; and</p> <p>E.3 targeted measures promoting gender balance in traditionally “male” or “female” professions and</p>	<p>1. Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET</p> <p>2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation</p>	<p>1.2. Support the development of digital infrastructure for learning and teaching purposes in VET including artificial intelligence and AR/VR technologies and develop suitable institutional teaching and training arrangements underpinned by adequate infrastructure, especially in remote and rural areas thus ensuring social inclusion</p> <p>2.2. Develop targeted information measures on the benefits of CVET and ensure user-friendly access to information on IVET and CVET offers at national and regional levels addressing gender and other stereotypes for an equal, fair and diverse society</p>

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	address gender related and other types of stereotypes together.		
F. Vocational education and training is underpinned by a culture of quality assurance	<p>F.1 further development of national quality assurance systems, for both initial and continuing VET, in all learning environments (such as school-based provision and work-based learning, including apprenticeship schemes) and all learning types (digital, face-to-face or blended), delivered by both public and private providers, underpinned by a set of indicative descriptors and common reference indicators for quality assurance in vocational education and training applied both at system and provider level as defined in Annex II of the Council Recommendation on VET.</p> <p>F.2 Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET to: take concrete initiatives to implement and further develop the EQAVET Framework, inform and mobilise a wide range of stakeholders, including Centres of Vocational Excellence, to contribute to implementing the EQAVET framework, support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance to allow the measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement, including with respect to digital readiness of VET systems and institutions, participate actively in the European network for quality assurance in vocational education and training, provide an updated description of the national quality assurance arrangements based on the EQAVET Framework, engage in EU level peer reviews of quality assurance to enhance the transparency and consistency of quality assurance</p>		

VET Recommendation priorities	Detailed VET recommendation priorities	Osnabrück Declaration objectives	Specific national level actions by 2025
	arrangements, and to reinforce trust between the Member States;		
Making best use of the European transparency tools		2. Establishing a new lifelong learning culture – relevance of C-VET and digitalisation	2.3. Work with respective stakeholders to develop digital learning solutions supporting access to CVET opportunities and the awarding of CVET credentials and certificates, thereby opening the possibility to obtain full qualifications without neglecting on-the-job CVET and the positive effects of learning conducive work environments 2.4. Support linking national VET platforms or databases to the Europass in accordance with the Europass decision and the EQF Recommendation where appropriate
Sustainable partnerships at national, regional and sectoral level, involving all relevant stakeholders			
Best use of European Union funds and instruments such as the Next Generation EU (Recovery and Resilience Facility, REACT-EU), European Social Fund+, SURE, the European Regional Development Fund, InvestEU, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Interreg, Digital Europe, the Just Transition Mechanism and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the Modernisation Fund			