

National strategy for validation of prior learning – Sweden

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The Swedish labour market context

A knowledge-based economy

Only 5% of the jobs require no specific skills

Shortage of skilled labour hampers growth

Both vocational skills and higher education diplomas

A dual labour market

Widening unemployment gap between Swedish born and foreign born

Large inflow of humanitarian immigrants

Many have skills and competences that are highly needed

Validation of prior learning (VPL) a tool to address the mismatch

- **Facilitate entry and re-entry into the labour market**
- **Identify needs of supplementary training/ more effective bridging courses**
- **Lifelong learning – resume formal education and training (both for access and credits)**
- **Recruitment and competence development for employees**

Challenges...

- **Many actors and decentralised structures**
- **Methods for validation of prior learning need to be further developed**
 - both in formal education and for working life qualifications
- **Quality (credibility, legitimacy) varies and need to be increased**
- **Too few validations are performed**
 - both in formal education and at PES

VPL a political priority

1. Early assessment and validation for newly arrived immigrants

- "Fast-tracks" in more than 20 occupations – VPL a component
- Reduced handling times for recognition of formal qualifications

2. Higher quality, development of

- VPL a permanent labour market programme
- Courses on VPL for study and career counsellors
- Standard for sector models for validation
- Methods and permanent structures for VPL in higher education

3. More extensive use of VPL and bridging courses

- Extra funding to PES
- More openings on VET in adult education
- Strong expansion of bridging courses in higher education
- Pilot scheme: Validation for immigrants lacking full documentation of previous studies

4. Coordinated development of validation

- National Delegation for Validation 2015 – 2019

The National Delegation for Validation

- Appointed by the Government in Nov 2015
- Tasks: To follow-up, support and urge on a coordinated development of validation
 - In formal education and for the labour market
 - On both national and regional level
- Consists of 15 representatives for national authorities and social partners
- First interim report spring 2017: A national strategy for validation

A national strategy (SOU 2017:18)

- To fulfill the EU recommendation on validation
- Identifies priority areas for development
- Will be followed by concrete measures over the coming years
- A starting point for the continued work of the Delegation

The strategy's objective

Significantly more individuals should have their prior learning validated. Validation should be available

- across the country
- at all levels of the educational system
- for a broader range of qualifications in working life.

Validation as a pathway to a qualification should have the same high level of legitimacy as formal education.

Who should benefit?

A tool for people who:

- are in transition, unemployed with low formal qualifications
- possess skills obtained abroad
- wish to advance in education and training

General measures that are open to everyone

Validation is often one link in a chain where other measures are also required

Five overarching priorities

- Transferability between qualifications
- Responsibility at national and regional level
- High quality
- Resources and organisation
- Information and guidance



The work ahead

The strategy also sets out the direction for what needs to be done within the different sectors

Examples in higher education:

- Review of the regulatory framework
- Possibility to provide advance notice of the award of credits before starting the studies
- Admission to oversubscribed programmes after VPL

Continued work of the Delegation

- Follow up the implementation of the strategy
 - annual reports
- Validation in higher education
 - interrim report in spring 2018
- Trade sector validation and coordinated information and guidance
 - working groups within the delegation
- Regional cooperation and coordination
 - in dialogue with regions
 - focus on vocational education on secondary level and trade sector validation

Thank you for your attention!

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