

National strategy for validation

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 SWEDEN

Timeline



ID number 28541

Background

A coherent system for validation is needed, since validation is carried out by a variety of providers, both in education and working life, which results in a system that is somewhat difficult to navigate. In addition, validation is defined differently in different sectors. Thus, there are differing views on the purpose of validation and even on the definition of the term itself. This situation creates uncertainty about the value of validation and, as a consequence, validation is not carried out to the desired extent.

However, a labour force with the right skills is of vital importance for innovation and growth. In a labour market characterised by rapid change, validation is the key to smooth transitions and skills development for people in the workforce. It is also a tool for jobseekers who can utilise validation to enhance the visibility of their skills. The aim of validation is to identify, assess and recognise knowledge and skills that people have acquired in contexts outside of the formal education system, thus benefiting individuals and employers as well as education providers. People must be able to adjust their skills to the needs of the labour market throughout their entire working life. A range of relevant education and training programmes must, therefore, be available to meet this need. To be effective for individuals as well as for society, education needs to be tailored to everyone's individual needs. The possibility to have existing skills and knowledge assessed and recognised is, therefore, important. Adequate regulations, organisation and funding are important institutional conditions to make a coherent and permanent system possible.

Objectives

The overall objective of the national strategy for validation is to ensure that significantly more individuals are able to have their knowledge and skills validated throughout the country at all levels of the education system and to have a broader range of qualifications in working life. Further, as a pathway to a qualification, validation should have the same high level of legitimacy as formal education.

Description

In 2015, a National Delegation for Validation was appointed by the Swedish Government to

follow up, support and promote coordinated development work in the area of validation at the regional and national level and to propose a national strategy for validation. The Delegation proposed a strategy in March 2017, expressing its view of the significance and function of validation, and of the development areas that need to be prioritised. A formal consultation on validation was launched by the government in preparation for a bill.

2015 Design

2016 Design

2017 Design

2018 Design

2019 Design

In December 2019, the final report, *Validation – for skills supply and lifelong learning* (SOU 2019:69) of the National Delegation for Validation, was presented to the government. The report proposes measures for a coherent, permanent national system for validation.

The National Delegation for Validation’s proposals include, in short:

- (a) a modified definition of validation to be entered into the Education Act. The suggested definition is ‘a structured process for in-depth identification, assessment and recognition of knowledge and skills that a person has, regardless of how they were acquired’;
- (b) a new ordinance outlining general provisions on validation. The ordinance is to contain the Education Act’s definition of validation as well as additional provisions that describe how validation is to be carried out;
- (c) a national, coherent strategy for skills supply and lifelong learning in which validation is an important component;
- (d) that the responsible minister convenes a council that will be granted overall responsibility for validation;
- (e) an amendment to the Education Act stipulating an obligation for municipalities to offer an initial evaluation before an individual begins their studies or undergoes examinations in the adult education system;
- (f) learners need to be offered validation so their studies can be designed in line with their own needs and goals. However, current regulations in the Education Act only state that validation may be carried out.

2020 Design

In January 2020, the final report, *Validation: for skills supply and lifelong learning* (SOU 2019:69), of the National Delegation for Validation, was handed over to the Minister for Education and Research.

A State grant was introduced, which is accessible to social partners who promote measures that aim to develop qualifications and models of validation. The National Agency for Higher VET is responsible for the administration of this grant.

2021 Design

In 2021, a proposition is scheduled to be decided 2022 by the parliament.

2022 Approved/Agreed

In July 2022, the parliament approved the proposed measures to establish a national validation system. It came into force on 1 January 2023 and the National Agency of Education is responsible for its implementation.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners
Unemployed and jobseekers

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Using EU transparency tools (EQF, Europass, ESCO, ECTS, ECVET principles)

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

Osnabrück Declaration

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Summary in English: Validation - for skills supply and lifelong learning](#)

[Referral round of SOU 2019:69: Validation for skills provision and lifelong learning](#)

[Ordinance on State grants for the development of industry validation](#)

[Ordinance on Validation](#)

Related policy developments

2022 Completed

Integration of newly arrived immigrants in VET and labour

market

In 2015, the government started consultations with social partners, the Public Employment Service (PES) and other government agencies to create fast tracks for newly arrived migrants and to reduce the time from arrival to entry in occupations that face skills shortages.

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2023 Approved/Agreed

Right to an initial mapping and assessment within municipal adult education

As of 1st January 2023, the regulations regarding initial mapping and validation within municipal adult education were introduced in the Education Act. The legislative proposals in the bill entail the following in brief:

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2015 Approved/Agreed

Fast track labour market integration for newly arrived migrants

In 2015, the government started consultations with social partners, the Public Employment Service (PES) and other government agencies to create fast tracks for newly arrived migrants and to reduce the time from arrival to entry in occupations that face skills shortages.

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

CVET

2022 Discontinued

Knowledge boost initiative: action plan for adult education

The Action plan for adult education (*Kunskapslyftet*, the knowledge boost) was introduced in 2015. It is aimed at supporting the Swedish government's goal of lowering unemployment rates. Relevant legislation/regulation and funding arrangements have been changed/adopted.

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). National strategy for validation: Sweden. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28541>