

Opening up municipal adult education



Timeline



ID number 28533

Background

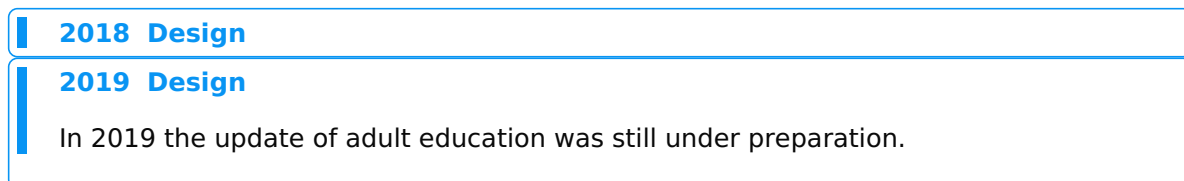
In 2017, Sweden, at 34.6%, had the highest participation rate of adults (18+) in education and training the last 4 weeks before the survey was conducted (Eurostat, TRNG_LFS_01). However, municipal adult education still has a deficit in responding fast enough to skills needed on the labour market and a deficit in offering training for disadvantaged groups.

Objectives

Opening up municipal adult education as a second chance education and as an opportunity for career changes; inclusion of adults with intellectual disabilities into municipal adult education.

Description

The government, through the ministry of education and research, set up an enquiry: A second chance and another chance – an updated municipal education in 2017 to propose changes needed in the legislation on prioritising groups admitted to municipal adult education. In August 2018, the enquiry presented its proposals to the government for making adult municipal education more responsive to changes in the labour market and to the needs of individuals. It aimed at opening up municipal adult education as a second chance education and as an opportunity for career changes, targeting also older workers and migrants. It also proposed to include adults with intellectual disabilities in municipal adult education, offering them a variety of VET opportunities in the form of apprenticeship and school-based training.



2020 Approved/Agreed

On 12 March 2020, the government proposed (*Komvux för stärkt kompetensförsörjning*) legislative changes to parliament in line with the proposals from the enquiry: A second chance (*En andra och en annan chans*). Parliament approved the legislative changes before the summer recess.

Municipal adult education for adults with learning disabilities became integrated in municipal adult education for adults from 1 July 2020. Rights and opportunities for an education for adults with learning disabilities have strengthened as a consequence.

Moreover, in 2020 a government bill on Municipal Adult Education was adopted, which strengthens skills provision, accelerates the integration of immigrants and facilitates re- and upskilling of adults. The Government concluded that Municipal Adult Education plays a key role in providing relevant competence at regional and national levels.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, the Swedish National Agency for Education has published a variety of material to support municipalities to implement the new laws.

2022 Implementation

Regional adult VET, which is based on cooperation of several municipalities in adult VET, has expanded in recent years and reached its greatest extent in 2022. Regional adult VET is an important part to decrease unemployment and therefore the Government has continued to invest in it and provided for 2022 a budget of 1 540 million SEK (around EUR 146.25 million).

2023 Implementation

In 2023, the Swedish National Agency for Education continues to support municipalities to implement the new laws.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, Sweden is still in a recession and unemployment is the highest in ten years excluding the pandemic. In the budget bill for 2025, the government has decided several initiatives to combat unemployment. For instance, 11 000 additional annual study places will be added to regional vocational adult education.

2025 Implementation

In 2025, unemployment remains high, and the matching process in the Swedish labour market needs to be strengthened. In the 2026 budget proposal, the government intends to allocate SEK 524 million (around EUR 47.97 million), which will be used, among other things, for more vocational education at upper secondary level and within higher vocational education, as well as labour market training. This is to counteract unemployment and increase opportunities for people to take part in training that meets labour market's skills demands.

Bodies responsible

- National Agency for Education
- Ministry of Education and Research

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Learners with migrant background, including refugees
Learners with disabilities
Adult learners
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)
Unemployed and jobseekers
Low-skilled/qualified persons

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs
Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[A second and a different opportunity](#)

[Komvux too fortified competence supply](#)

[The Swedish National Agency for Education information to municipalities](#)

[Budget bill 2026](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Partial qualifications: vocational packages for adults

In October 2016, the government commissioned the National Agency for Education to recommend vocational packages for adults. These packages are clusters of courses agreed with industry as entry points into the labour market.

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2017 **Approved/Agreed**

Financial study support for low-qualified unemployed adults

In May 2017, the parliament approved the introduction of a new financial support to stimulate low-qualified unemployed adults (aged 25 to 56) to begin, or resume, their studies.

 SWEDEN

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET 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). Opening up municipal adult education: 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/28533>