

# Integration of immigrants in VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 FINLAND

## Timeline

2016 Approved/Agreed	2017 Implementation	2018 Approved/Agreed
2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation	2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation	2024 Implementation
2025 Implementation		

**ID number 28209**

## Description

In May 2016, the Finnish government launched an action plan for the better integration of immigrants in all types and levels of education, including vocational training. The plan, which is targeted at supporting immigrants, foresees an increase in the preparatory training for initial vocational qualifications (IVET) and competence-based qualifications (CVET). The general language proficiency requirement should no longer be an admission criterion for VET, but the education provider still needs to ensure the learner has sufficient language skills to acquire the competences during their studies. Different study fields have different requirements. According to the plan, language studies and support for language learning integrated in vocational studies should be increased.

Learners can either enter the labour market straight after the successful completion of their vocational training or complete the other parts of the qualification as competence-based qualifications. Competences and qualifications which they might have acquired earlier are identified and recognised whenever possible. Immigrants will be directed towards sectors in high labour demand.

<b>2016 Approved/Agreed</b>
<b>2017 Implementation</b>
<b>2018 Approved/Agreed</b>
<b>2019 Implementation</b>
<p>In 2019, EDUFI granted about EUR 2 million of State subsidies to liberal adult education institutions to improve the language and learning-to-learn skills of young immigrants.</p>
<b>2020 Implementation</b>
<p>In 2020, EDUFI prepared and sent for consultation a draft of a single set of preparatory education programmes leading to an upper secondary qualification (TUVA) to replace LUVA and VALMA in 2022. One of the target groups of this programme were</p>

immigrants who were not able to access directly general or vocational upper secondary education.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has prepared a draft report of the development needs for promoting the integration of migrants. The report has been sent out for comments, following which the report is to be sent to the government. According to the draft report, the development measures about VET were connected to financing, studies supporting learning skills and teachers' further training.

Between 2019 and 2020, the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) implemented an evaluation examining the effects of reforms aimed at accelerating the educational pathways of immigrants in literacy training at liberal adult education institutions, in basic education for adults and in VET (VET). According to the evaluation results, liberal adult education institutions have succeeded in taking on their new educational task. In basic education for adults, the reformed structure has harmonised and clarified teaching at national level. In VET, it was possible for applicants with weaker language skills to receive a study place as a result of the more flexible language skills requirements. According to the evaluation results, the government transfer systems for liberal adult education and basic education for adults functioned well, while the system of funding for VET didn't support the realisation of immigrants' educational pathways.

### **2021 Implementation**

Preparatory education programmes leading to an upper secondary qualification (TUVA) combined supplementary education in basic education (the so-called 10th grade), preparatory education for general upper secondary education (LUVA) and vocational education (VALMA) into a new, unified joint education unit. In 2021, preparations were made to ensure that these programmes, leading to an upper secondary qualification, are provided in the future.

International experts and workers arriving in the country were supported through the national talent boost programme, coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Finnish National Agency for Education has prepared a draft setting out the basic guidelines for the integration education of adult immigrants. The principles of the integration education curriculum, which were being renewed, strengthen the synergy of its language and communication skills and social and working life skills, student guidance and the consideration of students' individual starting points and goals. In addition, emphasis was placed on language awareness, the utilisation of multilingualism in teaching and extensive competence as part of the education content.

### **2022 Implementation**

In March 2022, a study on implementation and development needs of instruction of Finnish or Swedish as a second language, including in VET, was published. The study was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture. TUVA (preparatory education for programmes leading to an upper secondary degree) started in August 2022. One of the target groups of TUVA were persons with an immigrant background or who spoke a language other than Finnish or Swedish. From the beginning of TUVA in August, there was a notable increase in their share: at the end of 2022, around 44% (5,148 students) of all students in TUVA were non-Finnish citizens.

In November, the Ministry awarded eight education providers 13 new authorisations to provide VET to complete a qualification in English as of January 2023. At the end of 2022, the Ministry allocated discretionary additional funding for organising VET and TUVA for Ukrainian refugees. This additional funding was granted for education providers that in their application presented resource needs in the education of Ukrainian refugees for the year of 2022.

### **2023 Implementation**

In 2023, legislation was developed, collaboration took place, and education initiatives

were launched to improve VET and integrate immigrants into it in Finland.

The funding provided by the Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment supported the integration of Ukrainians into the Finnish labour market by offering training and competence services that meet their needs.

Various measures were implemented in Finland to support Ukrainians who had fled the war. Ukrainian refugees were given the opportunity to apply for VET without restrictions. Various efforts aimed not only to facilitate the education transition of Ukrainian refugees but also to enhance their employability in Finland.

### 2024 Implementation

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment published an action plan for the years 2024-27 to assist those who have fled from Ukraine. As part of the action plan, the employment of Ukrainians was promoted by increasing work-based learning, recognition of qualifications, supplementary training, completion of certification training, as well as Ukrainian-language career coaching and online job search training.

The project VIERKO (Development of foreign language teaching in vocational education), including the training of workplace instructors at Keuda, a Finnish VET provider, focused on several key areas to better support immigrant students, particularly those from Ukraine.

The VIERKO project concluded at the end of 2024.

### 2025 Implementation

In 2025, the Ministry of Education and Culture decided to continue the VIERKO project with strategic funding under the name VIERKO 2. VIERKO 2 promotes objectives outlined in the Government Programme, including increasing the availability of VET content in English, improving the availability and quality of education in both national languages, Finnish and Swedish, and ensuring sufficient opportunities to study the national languages. The project also aims to improve the employment opportunities of students with a foreign-language background by developing support measures, guidance, and language-aware solutions. A total of 71 VET providers across Finland onboarded the project.

Based on the findings of the evaluation and observations related to the expansion of compulsory education, the Ministry of Education and Culture established a working group in January 2025, to further develop TUVA (preparatory education for programmes leading to an upper secondary qualification) and propose amendments to the Act on Compulsory Education (1214/2020). The group's task is to prepare proposals to clarify the selection criteria for education, taking into account language proficiency requirements and the status of students subject to compulsory education.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Culture
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
- Ministry of Finance
- Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC)
- Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Low-skilled/qualified persons

Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

### **Entities providing VET**

VET providers (all kinds)

## **Thematic categories**

### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Acquiring key competences

### **Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications**

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

### **Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation**

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## **European priorities in VET**

### **VET Recommendation**

VET promoting equality of opportunities

## **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

[Request for an opinion on the government's report on the need to reform integration \(draft\) \(in Finnish\)](#)

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[VIERKO project \(in Finnish\)](#)

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[EDUFI: What is TUVA \(in Finnish and Swedish\)](#)

## **Related policy developments**

**2022 Completed**

### **Programme for quality and equality in VET**

The programme to develop quality and equality in VET is mainly implemented through comprehensive development projects funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Agency for Education. The projects are mainly wide-ranging network projects with one coordinator.

 FINLAND

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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