

# Improving access to vocational education and training for students from disadvantaged groups and with special educational needs

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 LITHUANIA

## Timeline

2024 **Approved/Agreed**

**ID number 47656**

## Background

The successful development of young people's skills for work and life is a key factor in enhancing their employability and reduces the problem of skills mismatch in the labour market. Lithuania has a high demand for skilled workers, but the education system's ability to provide them is assessed ambiguously.

According to data from the Employment Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, in the first quarter of the year 2021, more than one-third of registered unemployed individuals lacked professional training, while more than half of the available job vacancies required qualified workers.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with special educational needs (SEN) face additional difficulties in accessing VET. Based on Government Strategic Analysis Center (STRATA) data, the number of students in VET with learning difficulties or SEN is growing, rising from 3.9% in 2018 to 5.1% in 2019 and 6.1% in 2020. .

Key factors limiting the participation of disadvantaged students in VET are the shortage of support specialists, insufficient learning support, and the lack of specialised learning and training tools. Addressing these challenges is essential to reducing dropout rates and ensuring smoother transitions through education. Without targeted measures, the participation of students from disadvantaged groups in education and lifelong learning is likely to decline, leading to even greater social and economic exclusion.

## Objectives

This initiative aims to provide students with special education needs and those from disadvantaged groups with the necessary training, equipment, and support services to improve their integration in VET, help them complete their education, and obtain qualifications for entering the labour market.

The initiative's main objective is to increase the share of learners from disadvantaged groups and those with special education needs who receive support.

## Description

The initiative foresees the development and use of special diagnostic tools, along with the training of specialists to integrate them into daily practice. It also includes the provision of educational institutions with necessary equipment and tools and the establishment of specialised multisensory resting rooms.

The initiative's primary focus is to provide direct support to students in need, by equipping them with tools to assess their abilities and facilitating their adaptation to the educational environment. This approach aims to create the necessary conditions for them to acquire qualifications. As a result, students from disadvantaged groups will be better integrated into education and the school community, improving their employment prospects and increasing the likelihood of them completing their education and successfully transitioning into the labour market.

This initiative also includes activities in non-formal education and training, such as special events, holiday camps, career days, and other targeted non-formal learning opportunities for students.

Additionally, the initiative focuses on training teachers and education support specialists in VET institutions, improving their competencies through supervision, methodological support, seminars on key topics, and the development of recommendations on adapting the learning process and eliminating barriers for students from disadvantaged groups or those with special educational needs.

### 2024 Approved/Agreed

In October 2024, the responsible bodies and the Central Project Management Agency (CPMA) signed a project agreement related to the initiative and the project, Vocational Education - Accessible to All (10-020-P-0001), has been launched.

The planned budget for the project is EUR 5 163 952.35.

## Bodies responsible

- Central Project Management Agency (CPVA)
- European Social Fund Agency (ESFA)
- Qualifications and VET Development Centre (KPMPC)
- Lithuanian Center for Inclusion in Education (LIŠC)
- Lithuanian Non-formal Education Agency (LINEŠA)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

Learners with migrant background, including refugees

Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers

Learners with disabilities

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

## Thematic categories

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses  
Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning;  
adaptable/flexible training formats  
Developing and updating learning resources and materials

### **Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences**

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

## **European priorities in VET**

### **VET Recommendation**

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

VET promoting equality of opportunities

## **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

[Information of Ministry of Education, science and Sport about the support for improving access to VET for students with special needs and from disadvantaged groups \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

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[Information about the call for support for improving access to vocational training for students from disadvantaged groups and with special educational needs \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

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[Information about the CPMA Project Vocational Education - Accessible to All \(10-020-P-0001\) \(only in Lithuanian\)](#)

### **“ ... ” Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/47656>

