



Sweden

VET in Europe - Country report

2011

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Sweden. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context – framework for the knowledge society
2. Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
3. VET to support recovery from the crisis
4. Historical background, Legislative and Institutional framework
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and its reference year is 2010. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Sweden

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Table of contents	1
Table of contents	4
Theme 1 – General context - framework for the knowledge society	6
1.1 – Political and socio-economical context	6
1.2 – Population and demographics.....	6
1.3 – Economy and labour market indicators	8
1.4 – Educational attainment of population	11
1.5 – Definitions	13
Theme 2 – Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization, and mobility	16
2.1 – VET policy developments and priorities in supporting LLL.....	16
2.2 – Implementation of European tools and principles	17
2.3 – Internationalisation and transnational mobility in VET.....	18
2.3.1 – Policy framework for internationalization and transnational mobility in VET.....	18
2.3.2 – Transnational mobility programmes and schemes in VET	20
2.3.3 – Arrangements to secure work placements for transnational mobility in VET	20
Theme 3 – VET in times of crisis.....	24
3.1 – Overview	24
3.2 – Effects of the crisis on VET and corresponding measures	24
3.2.1 – Trends in learners’ behaviour	24
3.2.2 – Trends in enterprises’ behaviour.....	24
3.2.3 – Measures taken to address the negative effects or as a result of the crisis (by public authorities at national, regional, local and by social partners).....	24
Theme 4 – Background, legislative and institutional framework	26
4.1 – Historical background.....	26
4.2 – Legislative Framework For IVET	26
4.3 – Institutional framework for IVET and organigram.....	27
4.4 – Legislative Framework For CVET	29
4.5 – Institutional Framework For CVET And Organigram	30
Theme 5 – Initial vocational education and training	32
5.1 – Background to the initial vocational education and training system and diagram of the education and training system	32
5.2 – IVET at lower secondary level	35
5.3 – IVET at upper secondary education (mainly school-based)	35
5.4 – Alternance training (incl. apprenticeship)	38
5.5 – Programmes and alternative pathways for young people	38
5.6 – Vocational education and training at post-secondary (non tertiary) level (mainly school-based)	39
5.7 – Vocational education and training at tertiary level.....	40
5.8 – Language learning in IVET	40
Theme 6 – Continuing Vocational Education and Training	42
6.1 – General background.....	42
6.2 – Formal Learning in CVET.....	42
6.3 – Non-formal learning in CVET.....	44
6.4 – Language learning in CVET.....	47
6.5 – Training programs to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market.....	48
Theme 7 – Training VET teachers and trainers.....	49
7.1 – Priorities in training VET teachers and trainers.....	49
7.2 – Teachers and trainers in IVET.....	50
7.2.1 – Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET.....	50
7.2.2 – Pre-service and in-service training of IVET teachers and trainers	52
7.3 – Types of teachers and trainers in CVET	53

7.3.1 – Teachers, trainers and Training facilitators in CVET	53
7.3.2 – Pre-service and in-service training of CVET teachers and trainers	54
Theme 8 – Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)	55
8.1– Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skills needs	55
8.2 – Practices to match VET provision (skills) with skills needs (jobs)	56
Theme 9 – Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment.....	58
9.1 – Strategy and provision	58
9.2 – Target groups and modes of delivery	59
9.3 – Guidance and counselling personnel	60
Theme 10 - Financing - investment in human resources	61
10.1 – VET financing policy	61
10.2 – Funding for Initial Vocational Education and Training.....	61
10.3 – Funding for Continuing Vocational Education and Training and adult learning.....	62
10.3.1 – Public funding schemes and mechanisms to finance CVET	62
10.3.2 – Public-private cost-sharing	62
10.3.3 – Collective (employer, employee) investment to finance CVET	62
10.3.4 – Reaching the groups at risk through funding schemes and mechanisms	63
10.4 – Funding for training for unemployed	63
Theme 11 – Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations	64
11.1 – Authors	64
11.2 – Sources, references and websites.....	64
11.3 – List of acronyms and abbreviations	66

THEME 1 – GENERAL CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

1.1 – POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONTEXT

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy. Since the constitutional reform of 1974, the monarchy has had purely ceremonial functions as Head of State while the formal power of decision rests with the Government.

The Parliament (*Riksdagen*) is the country's highest decision-making body and has had a single chamber with 349 members chosen by direct election every four years since 1971. Seats are distributed proportionally between those parties that receive at least 4 % of the national vote or at least 12 % in any electoral district. The Social Democratic Party has been in power in Sweden for much of the post-war period except for 1976-82 and 1991-94 when the country was ruled by a 'non-socialist' (centre-right) government. After the September 2006 election, four non-Socialist parties formed an "Alliance" government with an agenda for change. The "Alliance" government also won the election in 2010 but this time failed to obtain a clear majority in the Parliament.

Following a national referendum, Sweden joined the European Union (EU) in January 1995. A referendum on entering the European Monetary Union (EMU) was held in 2003 but a majority of Swedes rejected the proposal. Therefore, Sweden remains outside the monetary union and has retained the Swedish Crown (*Krona*) as the official currency, but continues to cooperate closely with the EU on a range of economic issues.

Sweden is divided into 290 municipalities (*kommuner*), and 21 county councils (*landsting*), including the municipality of Gotland, which does not have its own county council. A distinctive feature of Swedish governance is the high level of devolution of administration of many issues to municipalities (e.g., the administration of pre-, compulsory- and upper secondary school as well as adult education). Municipalities also receive the majority of income tax revenue in Sweden.

Unemployment in Sweden was relatively low at just over four per cent in 2007. This was a major election issue in 2006 with the "Alliance" government promising to introduce a range of measures to create more jobs and move more people from various forms of social insurance (e.g. unemployment- and sickness insurance, early retirement, etc.) to the labour market. Moreover, in recent years it has become increasingly clear that high unemployment rates among certain groups (e.g. youth and recent immigrants) presents new challenges for the education and training system.

There is broad agreement in the country that there is a need for a better match between education and training outputs and labour market needs. It has also become increasingly clear that there has been too little emphasis on VET. To this end, the new government has decided to reform the current integrated upper secondary schooling into two distinct tracks, one academic and one vocational, where the vocational track is carried out as schoolbased education or as or apprenticeship training.

1.2 – POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Sweden is the fourth largest country in Western Europe with an area of approximately 450 000 square kilometres (km²) which stretches over 1500 kilometres from north to south. In 2010 the population was just over 9,34 million. The country is sparsely populated in the North with only three inhabitants per km². Over 90 per cent of the population lives in the southern half of the country, many of whom in or near the three major urban centres: Stockholm (2 million inhabitants), *Gothenburg* (900 000) and *Malmö* (650 000). The Language Act (*Språklag*) designates Swedish as the 'main' language in Sweden but there are also five minority languages: Finnish, all Sami dialects, Torne Valley Finnish (Meänkieli), Romani and Yiddish.

TABLE 1: TOTAL POPULATION (ON 1ST OF JANUARY), 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010				
GEO\TIME	2003	2006	2009	2010
EU-27	486647831	493226936	499723520(p)	501105661(p)
SE	8940788	9047752	9256347	9340682

Description: The inhabitants of a given area on 1 January of the year in question (or, in some cases, on 31 December of the previous year). The population is based on data from the most recent census adjusted by the components of population change produced since the last census, or based on population registers. Source of data: Eurostat

The demographic challenge facing Sweden, Europe and many other regions is becoming one of the most worrisome, and expensive, challenges of our time. Demographic projections show that the number of older people will grow faster than younger ones. This will put enormous pressure on governments, and will have implications for vocational education and training as relatively fewer people enter the labour force while an increasing number leave. This may lead to skills shortages which will make it especially important to develop VET options that can respond to labour markets needs.

TABLE 2: PROJECTED OLD-AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO, 2010-2060							
GEO\TIME	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
SE	27.81	31.5	33.69	37.43	40.78	41.91	46.71

Description: Population aged 65+ divided by population aged 15-64 (projections)
Source of data: Eurostat

Sweden is projected to have one of the lower old-age dependency ratios in Europe (about five percentage points lower than the EU-27 average by 2040) in the coming decades. This is largely the result of two factors: a relatively high birth rate, in the European context; and a relatively high rate of gross and net immigration, which adds younger than average people to the population base in Sweden. However, even Sweden faces serious challenges financing the welfare state and ensuring adequate skilled workers in the coming decades. The role of VET will be critical in ensuring that Sweden, and Europe, remain competitive in the context of an ageing society. In concrete terms, this means ensuring that the relatively smaller working age population is effectively trained to contribute to increased productivity and economic development.

TABLE 3: MIGRATION RATES			
	1996	2007	2009
IMMIGRATION	39 895	99 485	102 280
NET IMMIGRATION	6 011	54 067	63 040

Source: Statistics Sweden, 2010

One way of addressing an ageing population is through immigration. Today, approximately 18 % of Sweden's inhabitants are of foreign extraction, in the sense that they were either born outside the country or both parents were born abroad. Slightly more than 100 000 people immigrated to Sweden in 2009, including approximately 18 000 returning Swedes (see Table 3). The largest source countries of immigrants, by citizenship, in 2009 were as follows: Iraq, 8539; Somalia, 6902; Poland, 5 167; Denmark, 3 761; China; 3 0968; Thailand; 2 994; Germany, 2 773; Iran; 2 416 and Finland 2 398. This high immigration rate in recent years has underscored the importance of measures to ensure a smooth transition to Swedish society.

Education and training are especially important for many immigrants. Municipalities are required by law to offer Swedish language training for immigrants (*Svenskundervisning för invandrare*, SFI) free of charge. After gaining initial knowledge in Swedish, many immigrants enrol in upper secondary vocationally-oriented courses through the municipal adult education framework (see Chapter 6 for more information on VET for adults). There are also many initial vocational programmes for adults specially targeted at immigrants that combine vocational education with Swedish language training relevant for their intended occupation.

1.3 – ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Sweden is highly dependent on international trade and in 2009 exports, more than half of which go to other members of the EU, accounted for around 45 % of gross domestic product (GDP). Since the economic crisis in the early 1990s Sweden has experienced strong, steady economic growth exceeding the EU and OECD averages, fuelled largely by growth in the value of exports.

Since the mid-1990s, Sweden has pursued a combination of low inflation policy (2 % target) and prudent fiscal policy. Investments in human capital as well as the emergence of globally leading information and communication technology (ICT) and engineering industries are among the reasons the economy has performed comparatively well over the past 15 years.

GDP growth rates in Sweden usually exceeded average growth rates in EU-27 between 1999 and 2009. The strong fiscal situation put the country in a good position to implement fiscal stimulus in response to the sudden, and deep, economic crisis that started in the autumn of 2008, as well as the renewed economic turbulence in 2011.

TABLE 4: EMPLOYED PERSONS AGED 15+ BY ECONOMIC SECTOR OF ACTIVITY (IN THOUSANDS AND AS % OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT), 2010

GEO	PRIMARY SECTOR AND UTILITIES		MANUFACTURING		CONSTRUCTION		DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORT		BUSINESS AND OTHER SERVICES		NON MARKETED SERVICES	
	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%	PERSONS	%
EU-27	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
SE	148.2	3.3	549.0	12.1	304.7	6.7	1133.4	24.9	933.1	20.5	1464.1	32.2

Source: Eurostat

In terms of economic structure, employment in manufacturing industries is projected to continue to decline, following its long-term downward trend. Sweden can, however, expect large variations among different sectors and along with economic cycles. For example, employment in the construction industry increased with the start of a housing construction boom in 2003 but fell rapidly after the onset of the economic crisis from the autumn of 2008.

Over the longer term, the number employed in agriculture and forestry is expected to fall by more than 50 % by 2030. The number employed in the private service sector is projected to increase from 1.7 million in 2006 to 1.8 million in 2030. In public education, health and social services sectors (childcare, schools, health and medical care, care of the elderly, etc), employment growth is generally expected to follow changes in demand. Elderly care, in particular, will require a large increase in personnel in the coming years. Overall, employment in the public sector is projected to increase by 240 000 between 2006 and 2030, at which point 1.66 million individuals should be employed in this sector.

The labour market in Sweden is different for men and women. For example, over 31 % of women are employed by municipalities, which have responsibility for the delivery of education, social welfare, care of the elderly, etc., compared with only 7.5 % of men. In contrast, the private sector is male-dominated.

TABLE 5 A: EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU-27	0-2	25.1(i)	66.1(i)	41.9 (i)	24.8	66.9	43.5	21.5	62.8	43.1
	3-4	47.2 (i)	79.1 (i)	54.9 (i)	48.1	80.5	57.9	45.0	79.7	59.6
	5-6	62.0 (i)	88.0 (i)	72.4 (i)	60.5	88.5	74.2	57.1	87.4	74.5
	No A.	14.9 (i)	72.6 (i)	39.1 (i)	5.1	76.0	5.6	5.2	72.8	62.2
	TOTAL	36.0 (i)	77.4 (i)	51.5 (i)	36.6	79.1	54.4	34.1	78.1	56.7
SE	0-2	33.7	73.2	63.9	30.0	71.5	65.7	20.8	66.3	64.2
	3-4	64.4	84.6	74.8	63.8	86.8	74.8	59.5	86.8	76.5
	5-6	55.1	87.6	86.2	55.6	88.4	85.0	58.6	89.4	85.1
	No A.	12.0	33.5	:	10.6	33.8	:	25.0	41.1 (u)	:
	TOTAL	43.4	83.7	74.3	40.3	84.8	74.4	38.7	84.9	75.4

Source: Eurostat

A comparatively high proportion of people aged 15 to 65 are in the labour force and employed. In fact, in 2008 Sweden had the third highest employment rate among the 27 Member States after Denmark and the Netherlands, largely due to the high proportion of women in employment where Sweden trailed only Denmark among the 27 Member States

TABLE 5 B. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010

GEO	TIME ISCED / AGE	2003			2006			2010		
		15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
EU-27	0-2	20.2 (i)	11.6 (i)	7.2 (i)	21.2	11.2	7.5	27.4	16.3	10.2
	3-4	17.7 (i)	8.4 (i)	7.7 (i)	15.4	7.3	6.9	18.1	8.2	6.7
	5-6	12.0 (i)	4.8 (i)	3.7 (i)	13.4	4.3	3.6	16.2	5.3	3.6
	No A.	13.9 (i)	7.8 (i)	7.4 (i)	20.1	:	:	:	8.2	:
	TOTAL	18.0 (i)	8.3 (i)	6.6 (i)	17.2	7.3	6.3	20.8	8.9	6.9
SE	0-2	20.9	7.2	3.9	32.5	10.7	4.4	38.9	15.5	7.4
	3-4	10.1	4.6	4.8	14.5	4.7	5.1	18.7	5.7	5.3
	5-6	:	4.0	2.1	12.9 (u)	4.7	3.0	14.6	4.7	3.3
	No A.	29.0	:	:	31.5	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	14.3	4.8	3.9	21.5	5.5	4.3	25.2	6.4	5.2

Description: unemployment rates represent the number of unemployed persons as percentage of the active population (employed + unemployed)

Source: Eurostat

Many countries in Europe experience high unemployment rates among young people but Sweden lags behind many of the Member States. The government has introduced a number of measures designed to reduce youth unemployment including a 50 per cent reduction in employer premiums for those under the age of 26 and the earmarking of EUR 600 million in state funding to support the creation of 55 000 vocation training spaces,

TABLE 6: TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP, AT SECONDARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008

GEO	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU27	2.32 (s)	2.35 (s)	2.29 (s)	2.25 (s)	2.23 (s)	2.20 (s)	:
SE	2.74	2.69	2.70	2.68	2.68	2.64	2.60

Source: Eurostat (UOE); extracted on: 19-05-2011; last update: 12-04-2011

s – Eurostat estimate i – see explanatory notes b - break in series

1.4 – EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

In the early 1970s the highest level of completed education among 60 % of Sweden's working age adults was compulsory school (ISCED levels 1-2); only 40 per cent of adults had completed upper secondary education, and the proportion of the population with higher education (ISCED 5-6) was less than 10 %. Sweden now has relatively high levels of educational attainment compared with the OECD average but lags behind leading countries such as Canada. Relative to other Member States, Sweden has amongst the highest proportions of population with higher education. In terms of the labour market, it is expected that demand for those with only compulsory school education will fall by at least half by 2030 (*Statistics Sweden, 2008*).

GEO/ TIME	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EU-27	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4
SE	10.0	9.2 (b)	9.2	10.8 (b)	12.4 (p)	11.4 (p)	11.1 (p)	10.7 (p)

Source: Eurostat

Sweden still has a lower percentage of young people aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education compared to the EU27. This is due to strong political interest in, and commitment to, lifelong learning in Sweden.

YEAR		2007						2009					
GEO	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
SE	T	39881	0	49272	0	0	2594	41232	0	55832	0	0	3748
	M	17265	0	27160	0	0	987	17721	0	30350	0	0	1401
	F	22616	0	22112	0	0	1607	23511	0	25482	0	0	2347
EU-27*	T	2393291	:	2595569	49493	:	424537	2319746	:	2480373	:	:	394682
	M	1022202	:	1400317	23958	:	194372	995733	:	1344532	:	:	188195
	F	1371089	:	1195251	25535	:	230165	1324013	:	1135842	:	:	206487

* Available total;

S= sex; T= total; M=males; F=females; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

Source: Eurostat

Table 8.A illustrates that Sweden has a rather even distribution between students in theoretical/academic and vocationally-oriented programmes at upper secondary school. The Eurostat data over-estimate the proportion of vocational students compared with Swedish data because one of the 17 national upper secondary programmes is defined as vocational by Eurostat but theoretical by Swedish national sources. The table also reveals a strong growth in the upper secondary cohort due to a relatively high number of births in Sweden in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

TABLE 8 B: GRADUATES AT ISCED LEVEL 5 AND LEVEL 6 BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, PROGRAMME DESTINATION, 1ST/2ND STAGE AND SEX (NUMBERS), 2007, 2009

YEAR		2007						2009					
GEO	S	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5 - 6	5 A1	5 A2	5 B1	5 B2	6	5 - 6
SE	T	45641	4387	6311	0	3904	60243	41912	6672	7172	:	3564	59320
	M	16036	1131	2620	0	2094	21881	14607	2306	2974	:	1846	21733
	F	29605	3256	3691	0	1810	38362	27305	4366	4198	:	1718	37587
EU-27*	T	2348435	916150	691661	10355	109512	4076113	2465221	915360	706581	10850	100723	4198735
	M	971270	357768	280571	2703	59335	1671647	1020740	365808	278346	2568	54413	1721875
	F	1377165	558382	411090	7652	50177	2404466	1444481	549552	428235	8282	46310	2476860

* Available total;

S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; 5A1= 5a all first degrees; 5A2=5a second degree; 5B1= 5b first qualification; 5B2= 5b second qualification, 6=level 6, 5-6= level 5-6

Source: Eurostat

TABLE 9: YOUTH EDUCATION ATTAINMENT LEVEL BY SEX (%), 2002, 2005, 2009

TIME	2002			2005			2009		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU-27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.6	81.4	75.9
SE	86.7	88.3	85.2	87.5	88.7	86.4	86.4 (p)	87.9 (p)	84.9 (p)

Description: Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education

Source: Eurostat

As seen in Table 9, approximately 86 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 in Sweden have completed upper secondary school compared with an average of approximately 78 per cent in the EU as a whole. There is a strong political commitment to education in Sweden and many specific measures (e.g. strong adult education infrastructure for those who do not complete but wish to do so at a later date, the option to develop an individual programme to meet an individual's needs at upper secondary school and therefore retain them in school, etc.)

TABLE 10: LIFELONG LEARNING-ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY SEX (%), 2002, 2005, 2009

TIME	2002			2005			2009		
GEO	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU-27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.3 (p)	10.2 (p)	8.5 (p)
SE	18.4	21.2	15.7	33.4 (p)	38.5 (p)	28.5 (p)	22.2 (p)	28.5 (p)	16.1 (p)

Description: Life-long learning (adult participation in education and training) - Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey. (p) - provisional value. Source: Eurostat

The data in table 10 indicate that participation in lifelong learning is much higher in Sweden than in the EU as a whole. The participation rate of adults in lifelong learning in Sweden (22.2%) is more than double the aggregated participation rate of EU-27 (9,3%). It is interesting to note that Swedish females are significantly more likely to participate in lifelong learning than EU as a whole. This is not entirely surprising given that females in Sweden have a higher completion rate of upper secondary school and significantly higher rate of participation in higher education, accounting for over 60 % of incoming student cohorts in recent years.

1.5 – DEFINITIONS

GENERAL EDUCATION

Compulsory school (*Grundskola*): nine years of compulsory school for children, typically from the year they turn seven but they may also start the year they turn six or eight. Compulsory school is mandatory for all children, has no IVET component and leads directly to upper secondary school for the majority (over 98 %) of young people.

Special needs school (*Specialskola*): schools for deaf or hearing impaired pupils who cannot participate in the mainstream schools and need more specialised tuition. There are five regional and one national *specialskola*.

Special needs school (*Obligatorisk särskola*): schools that adjust education to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities.

Municipal adult education (*Kommunal vuxenutbildning or Komvux*): the adult education system includes municipal adult education (basic education for adults, upper secondary education and post-secondary training programmes), education for adults with learning disabilities and Swedish language training for immigrants. The aim of basic adult education is to help adults gain the knowledge and skills they need to take part in society and working life. It is also meant to prepare adults for further study.

PRE-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Does not exist in Sweden.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Initial VET (*Grundläggande yrkesutbildning*): in the Swedish context, initial vocational education and training usually refers to the 13 vocationally-oriented programmes at upper secondary school. However, IVET is also offered through municipal adult education and, less common, through programmes at folk high schools, in post-secondary training and/or in supplementary education.

Upper secondary school (*Gymnasieskola*): all young people who finish compulsory school, usually the year they turn 16, are entitled to three years of non-compulsory upper secondary school.

Workplace training (*Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning, APU*): workplace training is obligatory for all students enrolled in a vocationally-oriented upper secondary programme. Minimum 15 weeks.

Special needs school (*Specialskola*): schools for deaf or hearing impaired pupils who cannot participate in the mainstream schools and need more specialised tuition. There are five regional and one national *specialskola*.

Special needs upper secondary school (*Gymnasiesärskola*): upper secondary schools that adjust education to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities.

Individual programme (*Individuella program*): an individual programme can be taken by a student who leaves compulsory school without the necessary qualifications to enter one of the national programmes at upper secondary school. The aim is, however, to help students transfer at a later stage to a national or specially designed programme at upper secondary school.

Municipal upper secondary adult education (*Gymnasial vuxenutbildning*): municipal upper secondary adult education aims to increase adults' knowledge and skills so that they meet the standard acquired at upper secondary school level, either through complementing existing upper secondary studies or offering upper secondary education to those without any education after compulsory school. Upper secondary adult education provides access to higher education if the learner passes the appropriate courses.

Post-secondary VET (*Eftergymnasial yrkesutbildning*): unlike post-secondary training which has been a specific VET form in Sweden, post-secondary VET refers to all VET after upper secondary school. Post-secondary VET is a broader term than higher vocational education as it includes all post-secondary VET (higher vocational education, some forms of VET at folk high schools, etc.), not just those forms under the Agency for Higher VET. See also the definition for higher vocational education.

Advanced vocational education (*Kvalificerad yrkesutbildning, KY*): post-upper secondary VET designed in consultation with employers to meet labour market skill needs. One third of the learning is work-based and programmes typically cover two years but range from one to three years. This VET form was reformed on 1 July 2009. This is a form of post-secondary VET.

Higher vocational education (*Yrkeshögskola*): since 1 July 2009 higher vocational education in Sweden refers to those post-secondary, non-tertiary vocational education and training forms (mainly at ISCED 4B but also 5B rather than traditional higher education at ISCED 5A and 6) administered by the Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskola*). See also definition for post-secondary VET.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

In Sweden professional technical programmes at the tertiary level are not referred to as vocational education.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

In Sweden professional tertiary programmes are not referred to as vocational education.

FURTHER EDUCATION

Supplementary education (*Kompletterande utbildning*): programmes, which are often vocational, provided outside the public education system and lasting from 200 hours to two to three years. Supplementary education may, or may not, receive State support. There are no guidelines on the type of certificate awarded. However, the new Agency for Higher Vocational Education, established in July 2009, will devise more consistent guidelines for this VET form.

TRAINING

Labour market training (*Arbetsmarknadsutbildning*): this training aims to increase the competences of the unemployed to meet employer qualifications demands.

Continuing vocational training: this term is not typically used in Sweden but may be understood, in the Swedish context, to refer to enterprise-initiated, in-company vocational education and training.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES

National programme (*Nationella program*): the different education programmes at upper secondary school level are called *nationella program*. These programmes give students a broad education, which enables them to continue to higher education if they pass at least 90 % of the courses in their programme.

ALTERNANCE TRAINING

Work based learning (*Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning*) All VET programmes in upper secondary education and training include a minimum of 15 % work-based learning in the curriculum.

APPRENTICESHIP

A pilot project during 2008 and 2009 has introduced the possibility of **apprenticeship** (*försöksverksamhet med gymnasial lärlingsutbildning*) within the framework of VET oriented programmes for upper secondary school. As part of the new school reform for upper secondary school level in 2011 an apprenticeship will be possible as an alternative route instead of a school based programme. At least 50 % of the programme will be based on workplace learning.

CURRICULUM (KURSPLAN)

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is responsible for the development of curricula for vocational education and training at upper secondary school and for vocationally education in municipal adult education.

QUALIFICATION AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (SLUTBETYG)

Under the current system of upper secondary school and adult education in Sweden, there is no upper secondary diploma. Instead, students who complete all the requirements receive a final transcript. However, in the new system of upper secondary school starting in 2011 a diploma will be introduced.

SKILLS

In Sweden the term skills (*färdigheter*) is used to describe formal practical skills.

COMPETENCES

In Sweden the term competence (*kompetenser*) is avoided in curricula as it is seen as being too general and difficult to define. That said, competences are viewed as being broader and more general than skills.

THEME 2 – MODERNIZING VET TO SUPPORT LLL, INTERNATIONALIZATION, AND MOBILITY

2.1 – VET POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PRIORITIES IN SUPPORTING LLL

Three main principles are emphasized in the Swedish strategy for lifelong learning adopted in 2007. Firstly the right of everyone to a good education must cover all forms of learning, formal as well as informal and non-formal. It should also include all levels and parts of the education system and take into account learning in different life contexts. The role of pre-school and compulsory school in providing the foundation for lifelong learning is stressed. Secondly the policy focuses on quality and goal attainment. Individuals should not need to learn what he or she should have already learned in an earlier stage in education. Furthermore the education system should allow for transitions between different levels and parts, as well as transitions between education and working life. High quality in study and vocational guidance have here an important role. Lastly accessibility, equivalence and coordination are mentioned as an important cornerstone for lifelong learning. Within the public education system education should be free of charge and study support systems should give everyone the opportunity to study. Education should be geographically accessible and adapted to the different living conditions and situations of individuals. Coordination between the education system, working and social life is also underlined in the strategy.

The strategy is reflected in a number of measures aiming at improving the education system initiated and carried out in the period 2007-2010 by the Swedish Government. This has included among others a new teacher training programme, a new Education Act (*Skollagen*), the creation of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*), the introduction of teacher certification and a new higher vocational education. Many of these measures include VET related aspects:

Following the adoption in 2010 of the new Education Act (*Skollagen*) and the new Ordinance for Upper Secondary School (*Gymnasieförordningen*) a fundamental reform of the upper secondary school is being carried out with students starting in the new system in autumn 2011 (see further below “A reformed upper secondary school”)

An initiative in adult vocational training (*Yrkesvux*) was introduced for the period 2009-2011. It aims at providing the unemployed with training and also to prevent shortages of skilled labour by giving the individual a chance to undertake basic vocational training. (See further 3.2.3)

The Swedish Government launched in 2009 a national strategy for entrepreneurship in education and training. The strategy aims at encouraging the integration of entrepreneurship into all levels of education and training. There is a specific effort to emphasise the importance of entrepreneurship in the reformed upper secondary education mentioned above.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskola*) was established in 2009 to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at the post upper secondary level. The agency has a clear mandate to ensure that the training programmes at vocational colleges satisfy the need for skilled labour. (See further 6.2).

A REFORMED UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

The rationales behind the reform of the Swedish upper secondary school are many, the most important affecting four main areas within IVET. Students should be, after completing upper secondary school well prepared for an occupation or for further academic studies. New vocational programmes will therefore strengthen students' skills in preparation for working life. As a consequence, even though both vocational and more theoretical programmes still include the same foundation subjects, the scope is not the same. Instead more time is to be dedicated to vocational subjects. Thus vocational programmes will no longer automatically provide the subjects and credits needed for entrance to university. Nevertheless all pupils attending VET programmes should be given the possibility to study the required subjects within the scope of the programme or by taking additional credits.

Throughput should be strengthened and allow for more students to leave upper secondary schools with pass grades. Admission requirements to vocational programmes have therefore been reinforced. Before pass grades in Swedish, English and Mathematics from the 9-year compulsory school was needed to be able to access to upper secondary school. As from the autumn 2011, in addition, pass grades in five more subjects is required for admission. Five different introduction programmes have been design for pupils that do not meet these entry requirements.

The reform also stresses the importance of equivalence and transparency as an answer to the past years increased diversification of study programmes offered by schools. The wide range of courses and specially designed programmes made it difficult for students, parents and other stakeholders to get an overview and to understand and asses the output of the different study pathways. Therefore, with a few exceptions, only national programmes and orientations will be allowed. Furthermore IVET national councils, one for each of the 12 IVET programmes supports the Swedish National Agency for Education in the development of steering documents and curricula that are relevant for the labour market needs. They play also and active role in quality assurance.

Lastly within the 12 IVET programmes two different pathways will be possible: apprenticeship or school-based. In the case of apprenticeship more than 50 % of the studies should consist in work-based learning. In both cases the programmes will lead to a final vocational diploma. (For information on the upper secondary schools system 2010 se theme 5)

CURRENT DEBATES

As specified above the Government has carried our many VET related initiatives and focus lies now in the implementation and follow up of those initiatives. Nevertheless there a several areas of current debates and development:

As a result of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate's (*Skolinspektionen*) follow-up of the quality of work-based learning in upper secondary school the Government is discussing a series of measures aiming at further improving the quality of work-based learning as well as apprenticeship training. The Inspectorate identified several areas in need of development including lack of follow up from teachers, the failure in taking into account relevant course syllabi in planning the work-based learning and insufficient cooperation between schools and the place of work.

The Government wishes to strengthen teachers competence and to improve the status of the teaching profession. A professional certification for teachers has been adopted and is put in place starting from 2011. Also the Government envisages support for in-service-training specifically tailored for teachers in VET in the form of work placements in relevant industries or other organisations (se also 7.1).

2.2 – IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN TOOLS AND PRINCIPLES

A concrete example of the impact of the European tools concerns Sweden's current development of a national qualifications framework (NQF) as part of the EQF-process. Initial development of an NQF focus on the public VET system but all stakeholders are involved in development of the NQF and it will ultimately cover all VET forms. A specific website www.eqfinfo.se has been developed to inform on current developments but also to invite the public to participate in the discussion. The Swedish National Agency for higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan*) has produced a proposal for a national qualifications framework. This proposal is now being processed by the Swedish government and a decision on a Swedish NQF is forseen for 2011.

International Programme Office (*Internationella programkontoret*) was appointed as the National Europass Centre and officially launched Europass in Sweden in December 2005 in cooperation with the National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (*Högskoleverket*), the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) and the University of Uppsala.

All of the Europass tools are now implemented and supported in Sweden and have recently expanded to ensure that higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildning*) is also covered by, for example, Europass certificate Supplement.

UNIT-BASED CREDIT SYSTEM

Both theoretical and vocationally oriented programmes at upper secondary school are modular. Students achieve credits for every module they complete making it easy to transfer credits from general education to vocational training and vice versa. Students can change careers and move from one programme to another and take their credits with them and it is up to the individual school to decide what additional courses are required, if any.

Municipal adult education has the same modular system as upper secondary school. Students can take credits from upper secondary school to municipal adult education where they can add additional modules or subjects. Municipal adult education is open to students aged 20 or over or has completed three years of upper secondary education. After completing studies students receive a new certificate including credits both from the upper secondary school and municipal adult education.

Courses and programmes within higher vocational education under the responsibility of the Swedish National Agency for higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan*) are also based on a unit-based credit system, five credit-points (*yrkeshögskolepoäng*) being equivalent to one week fulltime studies. Programmes could consist in one or several courses and should comprise a minimum of 100 points.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The responsibility for competence development and innovative pedagogy in upper secondary schools and adult education is largely decentralised to municipalities and independent schools (*fristående skolor*). Responsibility for these issues for post-secondary VET forms is typically devolved to the VET provider. Goals are decided by the Parliament and the Government but the entire responsibility for providing upper secondary education is delegated to the municipalities. The way to teach the goals is a responsibility for the local authorities. That means that the local schools have already great autonomy and can for example decide themselves to develop specific teaching and learning methods. In addition to the freedom in the schools run by the municipalities, it is possible to start independent schools in Sweden with even more autonomy.

From 2011 the new upper secondary system will be established with an emphasis on quality assurance systems to ensure that local initiatives to new specialised education and training programmes fulfil quality standards. Municipalities and independent schools can still take initiatives to specially designed programmes for local or regional needs for which the national programmes can not be used. From 2011 the local proposal has to be approved by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) and the final decision is taken by this agency. In that way students and employers can be sure that an education and training programme with a profile outside the national programmes gives an education and training with good quality.

2.3 – INTERNATIONALISATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

2.3.1 – POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

Education and training has long had an international dimension in Sweden. As early as 1962, the need for schools to foster international understanding was reflected in the curriculum. The curriculum for the non-compulsory school system (*Läroplan för de frivilliga skolorna, Lpf 94*) states that schools should develop European and global values, and encourage international links and education and working experience in other countries. Sweden collaborates with other countries on education and training issues through several international organisations, the central ones being the European Union, the Council of Europe, Unesco, OECD and the Nordic Council of Ministers. This cooperation takes different forms, depending on the aim and activities of the organisation. Nordic cooperation on education and training issues has been well developed since the Helsinki Agreement in 1962.

Nordic citizens have the right to pursue upper secondary and adult education under the same conditions as a citizen of the host country. In the early 1990s, Sweden's relations with the Baltic countries grew and Sweden's entry into the European Union in 1995 was a strong catalyst for further internationalisation.

International cooperation in Sweden encompasses an array of countries from the neighbouring Nordic and Baltic region to countries all over the world. It includes both multi-country agreements to national financed schemes. Many programmes are aimed at all areas of education, whereas others are specifically geared at VET. The main areas of cooperation and existing agreements are summarized below:

- Nordic Ministers for Education meet in the Nordic Council of Ministers three times a year and education and training issues are one of the main areas of cooperation. Each Nordic country recognises qualifications from other Nordic countries as equal to corresponding national qualifications. To strengthen Nordic educational cooperation, several cooperation and mobility programmes have been created for different target groups, such as teachers and students at all levels, including IVET. The Nordplus framework programme offers financial support to educational cooperation between partners in lifelong learning for the eight participating countries in the Nordic-Baltic region.¹
- The Visby programme stimulates long-term cooperation through upper secondary education student and teacher exchanges and school projects with the Baltic countries, Poland, northwest Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. Support for projects and network building is granted in the form of scholarships for travel, board and lodging.
- Significant multilateral cooperation in education takes place within the framework of the European Commission's integrated lifelong learning programme², including Leonardo da Vinci and Study visits for VET. During the period 2007-13, the EU's lifelong learning programme will promote exchange, cooperation and mobility, between students, teachers and educational institutions in Europe. Through Euroguidance Sweden, the Swedish National Resource Centre for Guidance extensive cooperation within EU provides a range of services to Swedish and foreign guidance professionals. The centre is an information and documentation resource for guidance counsellors who require information on studying and training opportunities in Europe.
- The Swedish International Development Assistance and Cooperation Agency (*Sida*), has bilateral agreements for development support with around 40 partner countries in the developing world. Activities range from international cooperation projects in education and competence development to placements and studies abroad. *Sida* funds the Global school project (*Globala skolan*) and Athena programme. The latter is specifically geared at upper secondary schools within IVET as well as adult vocational education (*yrkesvux*).
- The national funded programme Atlas aims at stimulating cooperation with countries all over the world. Workplace training abroad for upper secondary school pupils and students within adult vocational education (*yrkesvux*) is, for example, supported through the Atlas praktik scheme.

Apart from stimulating cooperation international funding schemes may be seen as a way of reinforcing national priorities and initiatives. Continuous teacher training is a highly prioritized area in Swedish school policy. The skills enhancement initiative for teachers (*Lärarlyftet*) has for example created synergy effects with the Comenius In-service-training programme. In 2010 the Comenius In-service-training programme has included extra national funding of more than 3 million SEK. Furthermore within the Leonardo da Vinci VETPRO programmes priority has been given to projects including teachers and staff working within vocational education and training.

¹ Nordplus includes the five Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and, from 1 January 2008, the three Baltic countries: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

² The programme includes the Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Grundtvig programmes.

2.3.2 – TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES IN VET

As mentioned in 2.3.1 international mobility programmes and schemes in Sweden encompasses an array of countries from the neighbouring Nordic and Baltic region to countries all over the world. Independently of the geographical scope the schemes in VET include a variety of activities:

- Partnerships between schools and training institutions cooperating in a certain area or theme of common interest. Shorter mobility periods such as class-exchanges, study-visits, teacher or trainer exchange may be included as part of the project.
- Workplace training for pupils or students within VET include usually mobility periods of at least two weeks.
- In-Service-Training or Professional development schemes aimed at teachers, trainers and other professionals working within VET.
- Large scale network or development projects including workshops, conferences, studies and innovative courses.

The schemes are financed mainly through the Nordplus framework programme, the framework of the European Commission's integrated lifelong learning programme and national funded programmes. No major changes have been made during the past years. The International Programme Office for Education and Training (*Internationella programkontoret, IPK*) is the main government agency supporting schools, companies, organisations and private individuals who wish to take part in international cooperation, mobility and projects. The Swedish Institute (*Svenska Institutet*) administers the Visby programme (see also 2.3.1).

Participants in international projects and work-placements are most commonly upper secondary schools or students in upper secondary IVET programmes. Work-placements abroad accounts for most of the numbers in transnational mobility. To a lesser extent also students in higher vocational education participate.

VET students who participate in international exchanges through, for example Leonardo da Vinci or Atlas praktik programme receive credit for their placements and/or studies abroad, which are integrated into initial VET programmes at upper secondary school. The use of Europass Mobility is mostly applied within Leonardo projects and has only a limited spread outside the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

2.3.3 – ARRANGEMENTS TO SECURE WORK PLACEMENTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN VET

There are no specific arrangements or measures targeted to employers. Employers are usually involved through international projects and mobility actions.

Table 2.3.2. - Overview of VET transnational mobility programmes and schemes*

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding	Start – end date (programming period)	Target groups	Average duration of mobility per target group (in weeks)	Number of participants **	Implementation mechanisms	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad
EU programs								
1. Leonardo da Vinci IVT (Initial vocational training) and PLM (People in the Labour Market) EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey and Croatia.	Internationella programkontoret	EU Programmes	2007-2013	IVET students and People in the labour market	3-5 weeks	803 participants (2008) (80 % IVET students)	Standard procedures are applied	Upper secondary school: receive credit for their placements abroad, which are integrated into initial VET programmes.
2. Leonardo da Vinci VETPRO (VET professionals) EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey and Croatia.	Internationella programkontoret	EU Programmes	2007-2013	VET Professionals	1 week	123 participants (2008)	Standard procedures are applied	No specific practices

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding	Start – end date (programming period)	Target groups	Average duration of mobility per target group (in weeks)	Number of participants **	Implementation mechanisms	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad
National programs/schemes								
1. Atlas praktik. All countries in the world	Internationella programkontoret	National budget	No specific programming period	Students in upper secondary IVET programmes and adult vocational education (<i>yrkesvux</i>)	No statistics available	No statistics available	Priority given to cooperation outside EU. Eligible institutions: upper secondary schools (IVET) and adult vocational education institutions	Upper secondary school: receive credit for their placements abroad, which are integrated into initial VET programmes.
2. Athena Developing countries in accordance with OECD's DAC List of ODA (countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance)	Internationella programkontoret	National budget	No specific programming period	Students in upper secondary IVET programmes and adult vocational education (<i>yrkesvux</i>)	2 weeks	211 participants (of which 106 incoming students from partner countries) (2008).	Exchange must be reciprocal. Eligible institutions: upper secondary schools (IVET) and adult vocational education institutions	Exchanges programmes are integrated in the programmes.

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding	Start – end date (programming period)	Target groups	Average duration of mobility per target group (in weeks)	Number of participants **	Implementation mechanisms	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad
Multi-country programs								
1. Nordplus junior Denmark - including Greenland and Faeroe Islands -, Estonia, Finland - including Åland -, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden	Internationella programkontoret	The Nordic Council of Ministers	2008-2011	Pupils and students (including IVET students)	No statistics available	No statistics available	Eligible institutions: preschool, compulsory school and upper secondary school. Work placements for IVET students possible	Upper secondary school: receive credit for their placements abroad, which are integrated into initial VET programmes.

Source: The International Programme Office for Education and Training, Annual report 2010 (2011)

* The overview includes programmes that offer support for work-based learning or similar arrangements. Several other programmes such as Leonardo partnerships, Comenius partnerships, Atlas partnership, Nordplus Adult may also include shorter mobility periods for VET students and staff.

**The year refers to the year when the application was submitted and decision taken. The actual mobility may take place during the same year or the following year/years. Number of participants refers to number of participants reported after finalizing the project.

THEME 3 – VET IN TIMES OF CRISIS

3.1 – OVERVIEW

The policy emphasis has been on the implementation of the reformed upper secondary education, including upper secondary IVET upon which municipal adult IVET is based. In the meantime, in 2010, the government has channelled extra funding to adult IVET through vocationally-oriented adult education (*Yrkesvux*). This initiative has been largely developed in response to the economic crisis. It earmarks almost an additional SEK 3 billion to provide IVET places for an additional 20 000 adults under the municipal adult education framework between 2009 and 2011.³

3.2 – EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS ON VET AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES

The Swedish economy, like most open, export-dependent economies, was seriously impacted by the onset of global economic crisis in the latter part of 2008. For example, by February 2010 the unemployment rate had doubled since the autumn of 2008. However, the year 2010 shows a 5,5 % GNP growth resulting in a decreased number of unemployment.⁴

Overall, there are numerous forms of state support through fee-free training, universal student financial, labour market policy etc. to support young people and adults who wish to remain in, or enter, education and training. In a comparative perspective, it may be said that recent Swedish reforms emphasise VET for adults. The country has a tradition of publicly-funded lifelong learning, and Sweden is stressing the importance of opening the VET door to adults. The country is providing additional public funds for adult learning geared towards vocationally-oriented training to counteract the impact of the crisis. One of the more prominent measures is (*Yrkesvux*). See further 3.2.3

3.2.1 – TRENDS IN LEARNERS' BEHAVIOUR

There are no observed significant changes in Sweden regarding learner preference for VET compared to theoretical programmes over the past decade.

3.2.2 – TRENDS IN ENTERPRISES' BEHAVIOUR

There are no new trends observed in the behaviour of enterprises over the past decade.

3.2.3 – MEASURES TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OR AS A RESULT OF THE CRISIS (BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL AND BY SOCIAL PARTNERS)

Overall, it can be said that Sweden responded rapidly to the economic crisis by introducing measures to ensure that all people, including those recently displaced from the labour market, have the opportunity to participate in education and training. In this regard, measures have been introduced by agencies under both the Ministry of Education and Research (e.g. Swedish National agency for Education) and under the Ministry of Employment (e.g. the Public Employment service). The major initiatives under the Ministry of Education and Research are summarized as follows:

- The adult VET initiative (*Yrkesvux*)

A special initiative for VET for adults was introduced for the period 2009-2011, creating over 20 000 additional VET spaces for adults in municipal adult education. Almost SEK 3 billion of supplementary state grants have been earmarked to municipalities to provide more VET for adults within the public education and training system between 2009 and 2011. Please read further below for details.

³ Source: (Förordning om statsbidrag för yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning, SFS 2009:43).

⁴ Source: www.scb.se

- VET apprenticeship for adult

An initiative introduced for the period 2011-2014 creating 2 000 new apprenticeship places per year for adults. Some of these places are destined for adults with learning disabilities.

- Higher Vocational Education (*Yrkeshögskola*)

Supplementary state grants have been earmarked to support for more places within Higher vocational education, both in the short- and long-term (see also 6.2).

- Tertiary Education

State grants have been set aside for 10 000 extra study places at Universities and Higher Education Institutions during 2010 and 2011.

The adult VET initiative, also called VET boost, (*Yrkesvux*) was launched in 2009. The initiative consists of earmarked state grants to municipalities to provide more VET for adults within the system of municipal adult education (*Komvux*). The aim is to reach those who either lack upper secondary education or who need to complement their upper secondary education. In order to meet the flexible learning needs of adults municipal adult IVET should be offered in a flexible and accessible manner. At present, most adults who enter VET do so through municipal adult education and in 2009 the government announced the new adult VET initiative (*Yrkesvux*) to fund the creation of approximately 25 000 additional adult VET training places between 2009 and 2011. As of February 2011, the reports to the Government on the impact of *Yrkesvux* shows that approximately 20 000 VET (*Yrkesvux*) training places were funded in 2010.

In order for municipalities to obtain funding for *Yrkesvux*, they were required to demonstrate cooperation with the public employment service, with social partners and other relevant parties to ensure this investment in adult VET builds on other, existing programmes to support lifelong learning. *Yrkesvux* was a rapid response to the economic crisis with funding flowing to municipalities to deliver supplemental adult IVET several weeks after enactment of the legislation. Moreover, municipalities applied for approximately double the number of places funded indicating a strong demand for the policy measure.

One challenge has been ensuring that municipalities apply for funding of adult VET training spaces that meet actual labour market demand. There has been concern that most municipalities apply for funding of long-term health care vocational training, which is easier and cheaper to deliver, than more complicated, and expensive, VET training in more technical fields such as automotive mechanics. Consequently, the Swedish National agency for Education (*Skolverket*) is enacting measures to ensure the municipalities better document actual VET skills needs in local labour markets. Results so far does not support a change in the educational range.⁵

Under the Ministry of Employment, the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) offers basic or supplementary vocational training to unemployed jobseekers. The training is delivered by subcontractors such as training companies, municipalities or organisations. From 2008 until 2010 the average number of people per month in the labour market training increased from an average of 2,500 places to approximately 5,300 places.⁶

⁵ Source: Redovisning av regeringsuppdrag att förbereda och genomföra insatser inom yrkesvux, <http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/2615/a/17635>

⁶ Source: www.amv.se

THEME 4 – BACKGROUND, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The educational needs changed in line with the rapid development of society. The development of vocational education in Sweden was based on political decisions, but was influenced primarily by an industry in transition. Industrialization brought new demands on the education system but a major expansion of vocational education was not carried through until the 50's and 60's. Education and training failed to meet the needs of the labour market when work became more specialized. Vocational training consisting of two different parts was introduced, school-based vocational education and work-based training. A distinctive feature of the development of education during this time is the introduction of general curriculum at national level to create greater uniformity. The proposal that resulted in a reform adopted in 1968 on an integrated upper secondary school meant that upper secondary school (*gymnasium*) and vocational school (*fackskola and yrkesskola*) were unified. The biggest change was that vocational education at upper secondary school level became two-year vocational programmes. Several vocational subjects were reduced in favor of general subjects which meant that the programmes lost its status of vocational training.

After a long period of inquiries and discussion the Parliament (*Riksdag*) decided in 1991 on a major reform of Swedish school education and on a new management system for schools. The principle of management by objectives was introduced and a decentralisation of the school system occurred by transferring responsibility for the school system to the municipalities. The Parliament (*Riksdag*) reformed upper secondary school. Courses and special courses were replaced by 16 three-year national programmes (13 vocationally oriented). Vocationally-oriented programmes included at least 15 weeks as workplace training. All programmes giving basic eligibility for higher education.

In 1999 the Parliament (*Riksdag*) replaced the timetable of upper secondary schools with a credit plan. All programmes are worth 2 500 credits. Project work was introduced. A new national programme was introduced, the technology programme. The Committee for Upper Secondary Schools 2000 was appointed and assigned the task of reviewing the number of national programmes in upper secondary schools. Also in 2000 the Parliament (*Riksdag*) raised the number of guaranteed teaching hours in programmes that are preparatory for further studies and by 60 hours in programmes with vocational subjects.

There were a number of committees between 2001 and 2009 that investigated the state of upper secondary education in Sweden. A committee established in 2001 tabled a report entitled Eight Paths (*8 vägar*), which led to a further report entitled Eleven Steps (*11 steg*). This report then served as the main background document for the abandoned reform of upper secondary education in 2007. The Parliament (*Riksdag*) decided on reforming the upper secondary school system including VET as from the autumn of 2011.

4.2 – LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IVET

Legislative responsibility for education (including VET) rests with Parliament (*Riksdag*) and the government. With the exception of the University of Agricultural Sciences, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (*Jordbruksdepartementet*), employment training, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment (*Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet*), and the training of officers and police under the Ministries of Defence and Justice, respectively, virtually all public education comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Research (*Utbildningsdepartementet*). This is responsible for preschool education, childcare for school children, compulsory school, upper secondary school, private schools, adult education, liberal adult education, post-secondary education, universities and university colleges, research and student financial assistance.

According to the Education Act (*Skollagen, SFS 1985:1100*), all children and youth have a right to equal access to education, regardless of gender, where they live, or social or economic factors. Education shall 'provide pupils with knowledge and, in cooperation with their homes, promote their harmonious development into responsible human beings and members of the community.' Consideration shall also be given to students with special needs. Compulsory schools can be national, municipal or independent (private) but the majority of students attend municipal compulsory schools. A new Education Act (*Skollagen 2010:800*) was passed in the Parliament (Riksdag) in June 2010 and will be put into force as from 1 July 2011.

Teacher and other employee organisations are entitled, under the Codetermination Act (*Lag om medbestämmande i arbetslivet – MBL, SFS 1976:580*), to information about, participation in, and influence over, impending decisions (e.g. employee representatives on the board of an enterprise may participate in organisational re-structuring). Student determination rights are enshrined in the Education Act, but their practical implementation is determined locally.

Parental and student influence in the management of schools is enhanced by participation on local school boards. All municipalities are obliged to offer young people, up to age 20, who have completed compulsory school, or the equivalent, upper secondary school education. To be admitted to a national or a specially designed programme, students must have passed Swedish, English and Mathematics at compulsory school or demonstrate equivalent knowledge. If a student's choice of programme is not available in their home municipality, they have the right to apply to another municipality and their home municipality must pay the cost of the education.

4.3 – INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IVET AND ORGANIGRAM

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT (RESPONSIBLE FOR BROAD POLICY DEVELOPMENT)	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE POLICY)	MUNICIPAL LEVEL (ADMINISTRATION OF PRE-, COMPULSORY- AND UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLING AND ADULT EDUCATION)	EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS (HIGHER VET ADMINISTERED BY NATIONAL AGENCY)
Swedish Ministry of Education and Research	Swedish National Agency for Education	Municipal upper secondary schools	Higher VET providers are post-secondary level
	Swedish Schools Inspectorate	Independent schools (not applicable within adult education)	
	Swedish Agency for Higher Vocational Education		
	International Programme Office for Education and Training		

Initial vocational education for young people is currently part of an integrated system of upper secondary schooling. The institutional frameworks for other forms of IVET, as well as vocational education and training for adults, are covered under Section 4.5.

As part of a general trend in the Swedish society towards decentralisation of responsibility and decision-making powers, the education system (including VET) has undergone fundamental changes in recent decades.

In accordance with decisions in Parliament, in 1991, responsibility for teaching staff was transferred from central authorities to municipalities and local school authorities, which were also given the task of organising and implementing school activities.⁷ The reforms of 1991 also ushered in an era of school management by objectives and results, with fewer regulations and clearer goals. Another guiding principle of education policy has been to create scope for diversity within the education system, and freedom for individual students to choose between different types of schools as well as between study routes.

Most municipal funding comes from municipal taxes, although municipalities also receive funds from the State budget for various services (see further 10.2). The Education Act requires that each municipality establish a local school plan (*skolplan*) describing the financing, organisation, development and assessment of activities at each school. The school plan should indicate how the municipality intends to fulfil the national goals established for the school. The school administrator at each school is required to establish a local work plan (*lokal arbetsplan*) based on national goals and the local school plan. The work plan should define issues not articulated in the national regulations and should be developed in consultation with teachers and other staff. The school, or teacher, decides what teaching material to use. Independent schools that provide education equivalent to that provided in publicly-run schools are entitled to grants, paid according to the same criteria the municipality applies when distributing resources to the schools within its own organisation.

Today the Government defines national goals and guidelines while central and local education authorities together with education providers are responsible for ensuring that the system is implemented in accordance with national goals. Within the framework and guidelines established by the government and administered by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), education providers enjoy considerable freedom to determine how activities are to be implemented and resources utilised. Central and local authorities, as well as individual schools, need to follow up and evaluate educational activities systematically in relation to nationally established goals. General policy decisions on objectives, activities and financing of the education system are a responsibility shared between Parliament and the government. Legislation is passed by Parliament, which also decides on the funding of appropriations to the educational system. The Government issues ordinances, approves curricula for the school system and determines general guidelines on the distribution of appropriations.

NATIONAL LEVEL

Central government agencies work independently from the Ministry of Education and Research and determine their priorities in accordance with guidelines established by the government. There are two central agencies under the Ministry of Education and Research with responsibility for IVET: the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*); and the Swedish School Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*)

The National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) is responsible for monitoring that the national goals for pre-, compulsory and upper secondary schools as well as adult education are achieved. This covers upper secondary IVET and municipal IVET for adults. The agency also develops steering documents (such as syllabi, curricula and grading criteria), supports a training programme for school heads, and funds national competence development for teachers and school personnel.

⁷ Municipalities are responsible for the administration of preschool, preschool class, compulsory school, upper secondary education and adult education under guidelines and using curricula established by the Swedish National Agency for Education.

The School Inspectorate's (*Skolinspektionen*) main task is to examine the quality and outcome of education in municipalities and independent schools, as well as supervise their activities.

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

Municipalities (*kommuner*) have overall responsibility for educational activities within the school system. The 1991 Local Government Act (*Kommunallag, SFS 1991:900*) gives the municipalities and county councils (*landsting*) the option of designing their own organisational structures with different committees having different areas of responsibility. The school system is one of the largest, most important responsibilities of municipal governments. During the 2009/10 school year, municipal school systems included over 1.4 million children, students and adult learners. The majority of education below university level is provided by municipalities. Privately operated independent schools (*fristående skolor*) approved by the State may also provide education and are fully funded by municipalities (tuition/study fees may not be charged). Disaggregated by school form, municipalities are responsible for:

- (a) preschool (ages 1-5) and preschool classes for six-year-olds;
- (b) nine-year compulsory comprehensive school for children typically aged 7-15;
- (c) upper secondary school, attended by almost all older teenagers, including IVET
- (d) adult education, including VET for adults, as well as Swedish language instruction programmes for immigrants;
- (e) special education programmes for children and youth, as well as adult programmes for people with intellectual disabilities

County councils (*landstingen*) operate a number of folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*); these are small, often residential adult schools and are in charge of certain upper secondary school-level training programmes in healthcare professions as well as in agriculture and forestry. County councils can also cooperate with two or more municipalities to form a joint board to administer a given operation, such as upper secondary schools.

The role of social partners in IVET has been strengthened in the new Education Act (*Skollagen, 2010:801*) through the formation of national and local councils councils. This councils are mainly advisory. (Se further 8.1)

4.4 – LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET

Much of the legislative and regulatory environment described in section 4.2 apply to VET for adults. Upper secondary IVET through municipal adult education gives individuals 20 years of age or more the chance to take both theoretical/academic and vocationally-oriented courses. Municipal adult education is one of the main forms of education in Sweden and is regulated by the Ordinance on adult education (*Förordning om kommunal vuxenutbildning, SFS 2002:1012*), a supplement to the Education Act. It offers adults an opportunity to take upper secondary courses in a flexible form. Such courses may then allow the learner to either continue to post-secondary VET forms, higher education, apprenticeship-like training leading to certification at sectoral level or direct labour market entry. Steering documents and curricula are developed by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*).

Higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildning*) is regulated by the Higher Vocational Education Act (*Lag om Yrkeshögskolan, SFS 2009:128*) adopted in 2009. The provisions in this Act aim to ensure the establishment within higher vocational education of post-upper secondary (ISCED levels 4 and 5b) vocational education that meets the needs of the labour market (see further theme 6). The Ordinance on Higher Vocational education (*Förordning om yrkeshögskolan, SFS 2009:130*) further regulates the scope and specific requirements on higher vocational education.

4.5 – INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CVET AND ORGANIGRAM

In Sweden, the main distinction is between upper secondary IVET, by far the largest VET form in Sweden and VET for adults, which can be either continuing or initial VET. There are several VET forms for adults including:

- (a) upper secondary initial VET (IVET) through municipal adult education (*Yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning inom kommunal vuxenutbildning*);
- (b) advanced vocational education (*Kvalificerad yrkesutbildning – KY*)⁸;
- (c) higher vocational education (*Yrkeshögskoleutbildning*);
- (d) supplementary education (*kompletterande utbildning*);
- (e) apprenticeship-like training leading to sectoral vocational certification;
- (f) VET programmes through folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*);
- (g) labour market training funded through the Swedish public employment service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*);
- (h) in-company training or staff training.

For the organigram, see 4.3 above

NATIONAL LEVEL

A bill was presented to the Riksdag in 2009 on the creation of higher vocational education institutions. Vocational higher education brings together post-upper secondary school vocational programmes not found in the tertiary education system, including advanced vocational education which became the cornerstone of post-secondary VET in Sweden after passing the Law on Advanced Vocational Education in 2001 (*Lag om kvalificerad yrkesutbildning*: SFS 2001:239). The Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan*), established on 1 July 2009, effectively gathers all publicly-financed post-secondary VET in the country under one administrative structure leading to more consistent funding mechanisms and norms for post-secondary VET.

The National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) retains however national responsibility for VET for adults through municipal adult upper secondary education. The Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) also provides short VET programmes for eligible unemployed persons. In recent years, however, there has been a tendency for more and more VET for adults to be provided through municipal adult education.

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

Regional governments played a limited role in VET for adults through county labour market boards (*länsarbetsnämnder*) until their tasks were incorporated into those of the Swedish Public Employment service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), a major reform that took effect 1 January 2008. However, labour market training is actually delivered to individuals registered at local employment offices (*arbetsförmedlingar*).

⁸ Advanced vocational education is gradually being replaced by higher vocational education as a result of the adoption of the Law on Higher Vocational Education (*Lag om yrkeshögskolan* 2009:128).

Municipalities have administrative responsibility for IVET for adults through municipal adult upper secondary education, under the auspices of the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) and the Swedish School Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*).

SOCIAL PARTNERS

Social partners play a significant role in VET for adults in Sweden through, for example, joint business-labour occupation advisory committees (*yrkesråd*) or through the control by the joint business – labour training boards (*yrkesnämnd*) certification of many VET occupations at the sectoral level. Overall, while education as a whole has been developed as a result of government decisions, VET for adults has been more influenced by the social partners. Therefore, a significant proportion of VET for adults is not regulated by the government or parliament, but is subject to the negotiations and local solutions of social partners. This is particularly true of in-company training and various forms of workplace training, including the sector-specific apprenticeship-like training some enter after completing a vocationally-oriented upper secondary programme (IVET).

Occupational certification and qualifications are often administered by the social partners in Sweden. In fact, most vocational occupations are regulated not by Government but by joint (business and labour) training boards, which control the few apprenticeable occupations in the country as well as certification of the few regulated occupations (such as electricians).

	RESPONSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL PARTNERS	TYPE OF ROLE (ADVISORY/DECISION-MAKING, DIRECT/INDIRECT)
NATIONAL LEVEL	Policy input	Advisory
REGIONAL LEVEL	Policy input and labour market training	Advisory and decision-making
SECTORAL LEVEL	Training delivery, content and certification of occupations	Decision-making
ENTERPRISE LEVEL	In-firm training	Decision-making

THEME 5 – INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5.1 – BACKGROUND TO THE INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Lifelong learning is the key principle for learning in Sweden, including formal, non-formal and informal approaches. Sweden has a highly developed system of adult education and training, which not only offers continuing training but also qualifications that young people can acquire through initial VET. Consequently, the usual distinctions between IVET (initial vocational education and training) and CVET (continuing vocational education and training) are difficult to apply in the Swedish context. Instead, it is usual in Sweden to distinguish between IVET (*grundläggande yrkesutbildning*), for those up to 19 years of age, and VET for adults (*yrkesutbildning för vuxna*), for those 19 years of age and older (see further theme 6). This simple dichotomy is complicated somewhat by the well-developed system of adult education, which aids the entrance of many adults into VET through municipal adult upper secondary IVET.

Compulsory school in Sweden covers nine years; it typically starts in the autumn of the year a child turns seven and ends in the spring of the year a child reaches the age of 15. Prior to this, most children have the right to attend preschool between the ages of one and five. Over 98 % of compulsory school leavers proceed to the three-year upper secondary school, which offers both vocationally-oriented (IVET) and academic programmes. Municipalities are obliged under the Education Act to offer young people (typically between the ages of 15 and 20) who have completed compulsory school, upper secondary school education.

To be admitted to a national or specially designed programme students must have passed Swedish, English and Mathematics at compulsory school or demonstrate equivalent knowledge. The municipality must provide a broad range of education and try to match the number of places in different programmes with student choice. If the programme of choice is not available in a student's home municipality they have the right to apply to another municipality. If the number of applicants in a programme is higher than the number of places available, selection is on the basis of final grades from compulsory school. Completion of both theoretical/academic and vocationally-oriented programmes includes common core curricula that provide adequate credits to aid entrance to university. Moreover, academic and IVET programmes share several common core courses and are both categorised as ISCED 3A. In this regard, the system is flexible, with IVET completers having options ranging from direct labour market entry to post-secondary VET to higher education.

Upper secondary programmes that are primarily vocationally-oriented must give broad basic education within the vocational field, as well as providing the foundation for further studies (all upper secondary programmes can lead to higher education). Vocationally oriented programmes must offer at least 15 weeks of work-based training during the three years of upper secondary school.

The curriculum for upper secondary school sets out the basic values for the whole of the non-compulsory educational system. Programme goals and syllabi supplement the curriculum. There are programme goals for all national programmes and syllabi for all subjects. The syllabi state the aims and goals of the course as well as the knowledge and skills that all students shall achieve on completion of the course. The government has issued syllabi for all core subjects; syllabi for other subjects are determined by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*).

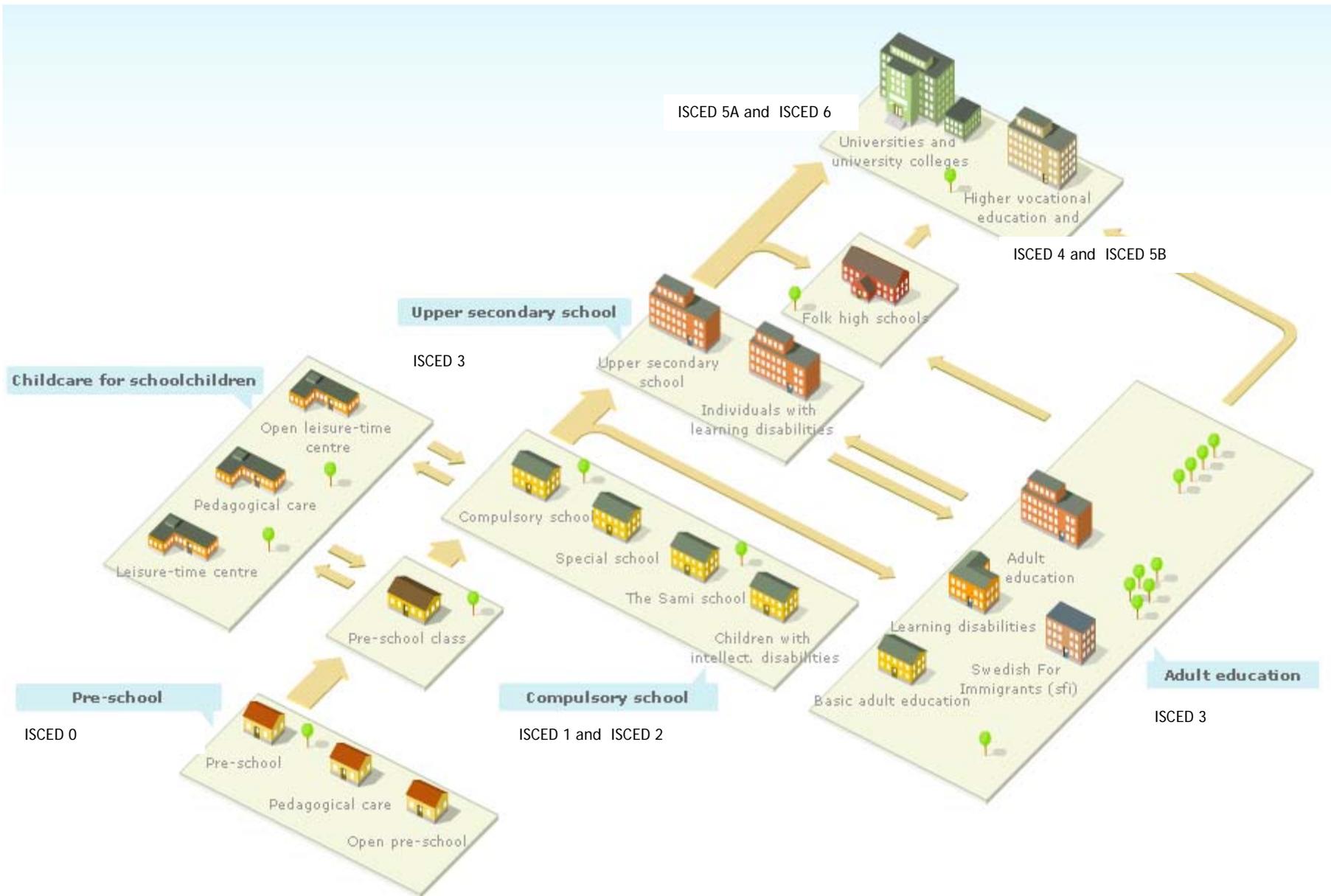
Teaching in terms of classes and teaching hours is decided locally at each school as long as they follow the national scheme for number of credits to be given for each subject. The Education Act also states the total guaranteed teaching time a pupil has the right to get in upper secondary school. The teachers are free to choose teaching materials and methods.

One of the main quality assurance mechanisms for upper secondary IVET and IVET offered through municipal adult education is inspection carried out by the Swedish National Schools Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*). Municipalities, which administer the delivery of IVET through upper secondary schools and municipal adult education also play a role in quality assurance as do schools and adult learning centres themselves. National exams are a feature of upper secondary school and provide a level of quality assurance in terms of assessment and grading. Finally, the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) gathers a wide range of statistics and quality indicators and publishes them on its website.

Like compulsory schools, upper secondary schools can be regional, municipal or independent. In 2010/11, approximately 75,2 % of upper secondary students in Sweden attended municipal schools, 23,8 % attended independent schools and 0.9 % attended schools administered at county level. A growing number attend independent schools, which are also fully funded and may not charge tuition fees. Studies in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and certain caring occupations take often place in schools run by county councils in cooperation with two or more municipalities.

A major reform of upper secondary school has been adopted and put in place as from the autumn term 2011 leading to changes in the structure and content of the IVET programmes as well as new admission requirements and diplomas. As a consequence new syllabi have been developed for all subject in close cooperation with stakeholders, including social partners. Vocational programmes will no longer automatically provide the subjects and credits needed for entrance to university. Nevertheless all pupils attending VET programmes should be given the possibility to study the required subjects within the scope of the VET programme or by taking additional credits. (Se also 2.1 and 8.1).

DIAGRAM 1: STRUCTURE OF THE SWEDISH EDUCATION SYSTEM, 2010



5.2 – IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

Although there is a degree of introduction to practical skills at compulsory school level in Sweden, there is no IVET at lower secondary level. IVET commences at the upper secondary level for those who enter one of the vocationally oriented programmes.

5.3 – IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (MAINLY SCHOOL-BASED)

In 2010/11, there were 177 935 students enrolled in IVET at upper secondary schools in Sweden, representing 53,1 % of the upper secondary student population enrolled in national programmes⁹. Under the current system, which is based on the 1994 reform, IVET programmes are designed to confer wider and deeper knowledge compared to previous times. Successful completion of an upper secondary programme, whether theoretical/academic or vocationally oriented, fulfils the requirements to enter higher education. However, the majority of higher education students come from one of the four academic programmes. Under the current system, students are also given significant choice with respect to the content of their own education and can choose from a variety of both common core and courses specific to their programme.

TABLE 12: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009

GEO	TOTAL ISCED3	ISCED3GEN (NUM)	ISCE3 GEN (%)	ISCED3PV (NUM)	ISCE3PV (%)	ISCED3VOC (NUM)	ISCED3 VOC (%)
EU-27	20633767	10946188	53.0	:	:	9687579	47.0
SE	535173	233346	43.6	6029	1.1	295798	55.3

Description: Students at ISCED level 3 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

Source: Eurostat

Currently, there are 17 national programmes, 13 of which are vocationally-oriented, and all cover three years (see further table 13 A below). The VET programmes are typically 85 % school-based. Every programme comprises 2 500 credits and all national programmes include eight core subjects: English, arts, physical education and health, mathematics, general science, social studies, Swedish (or Swedish as a second language) and religion. Together, the core subjects add up to 750 credits. Under the current system there is no upper secondary certificate issued but, instead, students receive a transcript of courses and grades. The programme-specific subjects, determined by the Government, entail a total of 1 450 credits. The remaining 300 credits may be chosen freely by the individual. The vocationally-oriented programmes (13 of the 17 upper secondary programmes) contain at least 15 weeks at a workplace outside the school, so-called workplace training (*APU – Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning*). Four programmes – arts, natural science, social science and technology – have an optional rather than compulsory workplace training component.

⁹ This differs from Eurostat data indicating that approximately 55 % of the Swedish upper secondary population is enrolled in IVET because Eurostat defines the arts programme (art and design, dance, music and theatre, the *Estetiska programmet*) as vocational while Sweden defines it as non-vocational as it does not require at least 15 weeks of work-based training.

TABLE13 A: NATIONAL IVET PROGRAMMES AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL - 2010		
NAME OF PROGRAMME	MAIN ECONOMIC SECTORS	CORRESPONDING ISCED LEVEL AND ORIENTATION/DESTINATION
Business and administration (<i>Handels- och administrationsprogrammet</i>)	Business and other services; Distribution and transport	ISCED 3A. Commerce and service, tourism and travel
Child- and recreation (<i>Barn- och fritidsprogrammet</i>)	Non-marketed services	ISCED 3A. Recreational, pedagogical and social activities
Construction (<i>Byggprogrammet</i>)	Construction	ISCED 3A. Building, house construction, painting, platerwork
Electrical engineering (<i>Elprogrammet</i>)	Manufacturing	ISCED 3A. Automation, electronics, electrical engineering and computer technology
Energy (<i>Energiprogrammet</i>)	Manufacturing; Primary sector and utilities	ISCED 3A. Operations and maintenance, marine technology, heating, ventilation and sanitation and refrigeration
Food(<i>Livsmedelsprogrammet</i>)	Distribution and transport; Manufacturing	ISCED 3A. Local specialisations, countrywide recruiting
Handicraft (<i>Hantverksprogrammet</i>)	Business and other services	ISCED 3A. Various trades and crafts
Health and nursing programme (<i>Omvårdnadsprogrammet</i>)	Non-marketed services	ISCED 3A. Health and nursing
Hotel- , restaurant and catering programme (<i>Hotel- och restaurangprogrammet</i>)	Distribution and transport	ISCED 3A Hotel, restaurants and mealservices
Industry programme (<i>Industriprogrammet</i>)	Manufacturing	ISCED 3A. Local orientations, countrywide recruiting
Media (<i>Mediaprogrammet</i>)	Business and other services	ISCED 3A. Media production, printing technology
Natural resource use (<i>Naturbruksprogrammet</i>)	Primary sector and utilities	ISCED 3A. Agriculture and Forestry
Vehicle engineering (<i>Fordonsprogrammet</i>)	Manufacturing; Distribution and transport	ISCED 3A. Vehicle engineering, aircraft, coach work, machine and lorry, cars, transports

Education providers (organisers of schooling such as municipalities, independent schools, etc.) are responsible for finding workplace training opportunities and for supervising students; many schools see this as requiring major effort. Opportunities for arranging workplace learning vary as schools are dependent on the links they have established with private and public organisations and the local business community. It can be difficult to secure sufficient high quality placements, which underscores the importance of the network schools build with social partners in their community. Another challenge regarding the work-based training component of upper secondary education is ensuring that supervisors (those supervising students on work-based training placements) have sufficient knowledge of education and training to ensure a positive learning experience in the workplace.

Most Swedish programmes are divided into different specialisations (e.g. in 2009 there were 36 different specialisations) offered in years two and three. The Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) determines which courses are compulsory for national specialisations. By combining specific subjects from different programmes, a municipality can put together specially designed programmes (*specialutformade program*) to meet local and regional needs. They must include the eight core subjects and project work, and correspond to a national programme in terms of level of difficulty and number of hours. Over 41 000 students (10.7 % of the upper secondary student population) were enrolled in specially designed programmes in the 2010/11 study year.

A student who has completed vocationally oriented education at an upper secondary school is more of a generalist than a specialist and the acquisition of more specialised skills is often the responsibility of the employer. Upper secondary completers do not receive specific qualifications¹⁰, partly because the majority of jobs do not require qualifications or certification in Sweden. For the few occupations that do require occupational certification (such as electrician, plumber) a learner must complete an apprenticeship-like programme administered by joint business-labour training boards at the sectoral level (see 4.5). These joint training boards issue journeyman certificates (*Yrkesbevis*) for many trades though healthcare occupations are certified by the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*).

TABLE 13 B: OVERVIEW OF GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIONAL IVET PROGRAMMES AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL - 2010

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	BALANCE BETWEEN GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS	BALANCE BETWEEN SCHOOL- AND WORK-BASED TRAINING	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	TRANSFER TO OTHER PATHWAYS
Passing grades in English, mathematics and Swedish or Swedish as a second language	General subjects (30%) Vocational subjects (58%) Individual choice (12%)	Schoolbased VET (85%) Workbased training (15%)	3 Years	Higher education, postsecondary VET or labour market entry

¹⁰ The proposed new system of upper secondary education in Sweden, to be launched in the autumn of 2011, has provisions for awarding an upper secondary diploma to those who successfully complete

Overall, it is felt that upper secondary school should not be a dead end but, instead, the first step in a process of lifelong learning. Indeed, the transition rate from upper secondary to tertiary education has increased significantly during the past decade with almost 45 % of upper secondary students continuing to higher education within three years of upper secondary completion. In principle, all IVET is provided at upper secondary school level and is almost entirely (over 99 %) financed by public funds.

Several enterprise-based independent upper secondary schools have also been started during recent years. This type of school provides more company-based education and training, often with education adapted to the enterprise's own needs. This type of upper secondary school receives the same funding formula as other schools, follow the core upper secondary curricula and students receive the same upper secondary leaving certificate.

5.4 – ALTERNANCE TRAINING (INCL. APPRENTICESHIP)

There is broad agreement among observers that there is a need for a better match between education and training output and labour market needs. Many also argue that there has been too little emphasis on VET in Sweden in recent decades. Therefore, the new upper secondary school system from 2011 will also include a new apprenticeship-based pathway, in each VET- programme. Pilots were launched in the second half of 2008 and will run parallel with the new system until 2012/2013.

Both within the pilot and in the new secondary school system introduced in 2011 apprenticeship training is offered within the same national programmes as schools based training. (For information on admission requirements, economic sectors etc. please see 5.3 and table 13a and 13b above.) The main difference is that apprenticeship training entails at least 50 % workbased training and apprentices may or may not earn a wage.

There is a great degree of flexibility to design programmes to meet local and regional needs, but, ultimately, upper secondary apprenticeship training must meet nationally established goals within each national VET - programme. The admission requirements will be the same as for a student entering a school based pathway.

Those who participate in upper secondary apprenticeship training during the running pilot phase take the same core courses in Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English, mathematics, social sciences, general science, religion, arts and physical education and health as other school-based VET programmes. The school-based training takes place at upper secondary schools. Upper secondary apprentices receive their grades from the responsible teachers at upper secondary school but are supervised in the workplace by a designated supervisor (*handledare*). Enterprises are not certified but quality assurance of the work-based training component of upper secondary apprenticeship is carried out by the school.

To meet the entry requirements to higher education, upper secondary apprentices may take additional core courses during their time at upper secondary school or can, at a later date, supplement their education through municipal adult education (*Komvux*).

Both for the pilot phase and for the reformed upper secondary school (starting in 2011) the government has set aside funding as an incentive and to cover the costs for developing the apprenticeship training. Schools are eligible to apply for this funding on the condition that they meet specific quality requirements, as for example the establishment of contracts and learning agreements.

5.5 – PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The main programme in Sweden designed to retain young people in education and training is the "individual programme" (*Individuella program*) in upper secondary education. Municipalities are obliged under the Education Act to procure the individual programme but also independent schools may offer this kind of alternative pathway.

It helps students who are not eligible, due to shortcomings in the three core subjects English, Mathematics and Swedish/Swedish as a second language, to apply to national or specially designed programmes. The programme is based on student needs and each student has an individual study plan which can vary both in terms of length and content. The main point of the individual programme is to give the students a chance to enter/re-enter one of the regular national or specially designed upper secondary programmes.

Municipalities and independent schools also have the right to establish individual programmes to which students may apply (PRIV). The aim of this alternative is that a student should be able to start education in national courses in a national programme at the same time as having the opportunity to study one or more of the subjects from compulsory school if necessary. Having done this a student can then be admitted to a national or a specially designed programme. The student is then credited with the courses completed in the individual programme. Upon completion of such a programme, the learner receives an upper secondary leaving certificate, which can lead to higher education, post-secondary VET or labour market entry.

The individual programme can also be customised to incorporate different contents for young persons who have recently arrived in Sweden (e.g. special introductory courses in Swedish as a second language and social studies). A student in the individual programme can also combine employment, as part of a vocational education with studies of certain subjects in upper secondary school. Other courses of study that may be accommodated within the framework of the individual programme are those that cater for students with special needs, such as those with learning disabilities.

Those who are 20 years of age or older can enrol in municipal adult education (*Komvux*) in order to complete or supplement their upper secondary education (see further 6.2).

As from 2011 the individual programmes will be replaced by five introduction programmes with a similar content to the individual programme. Two of these introduction programmes will mainly consist of vocational courses and include work-based learning.

After nine/ten years in compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, pupils are entitled to four years of education in upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments (*gymnasiesärskola*). It encompasses eight national programmes and an individual programme and aims, among other things, to prepare the pupils for a vocation. As for the individual programme municipalities are obliged to offer upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments (*gymnasiesärskola*)

5.6 – VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL (MAINLY SCHOOL-BASED)

VET programmes under Swedish Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) are post-secondary and are typically one-to two-years in length. (See further theme 6)

TABLE 13: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN POST SECONDARY NON TERTIARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009					
GEO	TOTAL ISCED4	ISCED4GEN (NUM)	ISCE4 GEN (%)	ISCED4VOC (NUM)	ISCED4 (%)
EU 27	1501995	173928	11.6	1328067 (s)	88.4
SE	22543	3120	13.8	19423	86.2

Description: Students at ISCED level 4 by programme orientation (values and share of the total)

5.7 – VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

In Sweden, education and training at the tertiary level is not considered to be vocational education and training except for VET at ISCED level 5B offered under the Swedish Agency for Higher Vocational Education. Professional higher education programmes at ISCED levels 5A and 6 are not considered to be VET in Sweden. (See further theme 6)

TABLE 14: STUDENTS AT ISCED LEVEL 5 BY PROGRAMME DESTINATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL) AND AT ISCED LEVEL 6 (VALUES), 2009						
GEO	TOTAL ISCED5	ISCED5A (NUM)	ISCED 5A (%)	ISCED5B (NUM)	ISCED 5B (%)	TOTAL ISCED 6
EU-27	19505749	16370782	83.9	2617882	13.4	517085
SE	422580	377191	89.3	25478	6.0	19911

Description: Students at ISCED level 5 by programme destination (values and share of the total) and at ISCED level 6. Source: Eurostat

5.8 – LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IVET

Language learning in general in IVET in Sweden is defined by the same aims and objectives as language learning in all upper secondary education in Sweden. Students should be given the opportunity to learn how to “express themselves in speech and writing so that the pupil’s language works in civic, vocational and everyday life as well as for further studies (... to) use specialist literature, fiction and other forms of culture as a source of knowledge, insight and joy (... and to) use English in a functional way in vocational and daily life and for further studies.”¹¹

All students who speak a language other than Swedish at home can receive tuition in their mother tongue. In the case of Sweden's official minority languages (Meänkieli, Saami, Romani chib, Finnish spoken in Sweden and Yiddisch) mother tongue tuition can also be provided to children who do not use the language in their everyday communication at home.

The IVET programmes in upper secondary school include Swedish or Swedish as a second language with a compulsory 100 points as a minimum (100 points roughly equalling 85 hours of teaching) and English with a compulsory 100 points as a minimum.

All students at the IVET programmes are guaranteed the choice of studying up to an extra 200 points of Swedish or Swedish as a second language as well as an extra 100 points of English where this is not included in the compulsory study programme, thus meeting the general entry requirements for higher education.

No IVET programmes include compulsory additional foreign languages, hereafter called modern languages. Studying modern languages is on the whole not very common in IVET. As an example, if we look at the largest modern language, Spanish, we can see that in the year 2009/2010 only 1,6% of the students at the national vocational programmes received grades after studying at least one course (at any level of proficiency) of Spanish.

The IVET programme with the highest number of students studying a modern language is the Business and administration programme.

¹¹ Source: Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system Lpf 94

After Spanish, the largest modern languages in Swedish upper secondary education are German and French. All in all, 40 languages were offered as modern languages in 2009/2010, and 140 languages were offered as mother tongue.

Since the Swedish education system is highly decentralised; the schools and the teachers decide on what methods to use. Thus, the curriculum contains no explicit instructions on how teachers should teach, just what content they should teach and why. An overarching objective however for the teaching of English and modern languages is to use a highly communicative approach and that instruction should be delivered to the widest extent possible in the target language. There are no official statistics on how widespread the use of CLIL, content and language integrated learning in other subjects, is even though it does exist to some extent in upper secondary schools.

National assessment in English and Swedish or Swedish as a second language is common for all at the end of the compulsory courses. The national assessment should give guidance for grading, but the individual test result is not in itself necessarily the equivalent to the grade of the individual student, since the total performance of the student throughout the course has to be considered in the grading process. For a specific course, national assessment is identical for IVET programmes and higher education preparatory programmes.

In the reformed upper secondary schools (starting in 2011) there is a total of seven courses or so called steps in English and Modern Languages in the Swedish school system, of which the pass level (grade E) of the first step (course 1, equalling primary school for English) is geared to the CEFR level A1.2. The pass level (grade E) of the seventh step (course 7), i.e. the most advanced language course in the Swedish school system, is geared to B2.2. The compulsory English course in IVET (called English 5) corresponds to the CEFR level of B1.2 as a minimum.

The use of ELP, the European Language Portfolio is encouraged but optional. There is no national tool for validation of language competences in e.g. migrant languages, but schools can and do provide validation locally, based on the subject specific syllabuses.

THEME 6 – CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 – GENERAL BACKGROUND

Sweden has a long tradition of VET for adults, provided in many different forms including IVET for adults, higher vocational education, labour market training and competence development in the workplace.

Between 1997 and 2002, a major programme, the adult education initiative (*Kunskapslyftet*), was established to stimulate lifelong learning by earmarking extra funding for municipalities to offer hundreds of thousands of additional municipal adult education places, primarily for those without a complete upper secondary education. Following this major investment in adult education, the policy emphasis shifted to the need to reform upper secondary education, including upper secondary IVET upon which municipal adult IVET is based. In the meantime, in 2009, the government has channelled extra funding to adult IVET through vocationally-oriented adult education (*YrkesVux*). This initiative has been largely developed in response to the economic crisis. It earmarks an additional SEK 1.1 billion to provide IVET places for an additional 25 000 adults under the municipal adult education framework between 2009-2011 (*Förordning om statsbidrag för yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning*, SFS 2009:43).

Since 2009 the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) is responsible of ensuring that training programmes in higher vocational education satisfy the needs for skilled labour. Labour market councils with representatives from social partners and other relevant actors play an important role in the analysis and identification of labour market needs.

6.2 – FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

The two largest forms of VET for adults in Sweden are:

- Higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildning*), the majority of which was called advanced vocational education (*kvalificerad yrkesutbildning*) until 1 July 2009;
- Upper secondary initial VET (IVET) through municipal adult education (*Yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning*). Upper secondary IVET through municipal adult education is the largest form of VET for adults in Sweden. It follows guidelines established by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*). Over 190 000 participants enrol in approximately 800 000 courses per year. Municipalities are required to offer adult education free of fees to residents 20 years of age or older.

There are, however, several smaller VET forms for adults including programmes through supplementary education (*kompletterande utbildning*) and folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*). There is also VET for adults through joint training boards at the sector level. These are apprenticeship-like programmes leading to certification in trades such as electrician, automotive mechanic, and plumber and are administered exclusively by the social partners.

UPPER SECONDARY IVET FOR ADULTS

Municipal adult education gives individuals 20 years of age or more the chance to take both theoretical/academic and vocationally-oriented courses. Such courses may then allow the learner to either continue to post-secondary VET forms, higher education, apprenticeship-like training leading to certification at sectoral level or direct labour market entry. VET for adults (*yrkesutbildning för vuxna*) can be targeted at both upper secondary completers and non-completers. Many participants are in their mid-20s but individuals in all adult age groups can participate. The main objective of this type of training is usually to assist labour force entry but it can also lead directly to higher vocational education and training (ISCED 4B and 5B) or to higher education (ISCED 5A and 6).

Adult VET programmes in Sweden include individual courses, apprenticeship-like training leading to certification to three-year diploma programmes.

VET for adults is characterised by flexible and demand-driven curricula but does not always offer the same clear learning pathways featured in upper secondary IVET programmes (i.e. municipal upper secondary IVET for adults) (see also 5.2). The few VET forms that result in occupational certification are usually administered by business-labour joint training boards (*Yrkesnämnd*) at sector level. Sweden does not have individual training accounts, which is perhaps not surprising given the combination of fee-free VET for adults, the right to unpaid education leave and the comprehensive system of student financial assistance, as articulated in the Act on Study Support (*Studiestödslagen*, 1996:605) (28).

Steering documents and curricula are developed by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), most of them being the same as for upper secondary school. Municipal adult education has the same modular system as upper secondary school allowing students to take credits from upper secondary school to municipal adult education where they can add additional modules or subjects.

As for upper secondary schools the Swedish National Schools Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*) carries out regular inspections. Municipalities responsible of the administration of adult education also play a role in quality assurance as do adult learning centres themselves.

HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Higher vocational education is the largest form of purely vocational post-secondary training in Sweden with approximately 44 000 students in 2010. This type of training was first piloted in 1996 and made permanent in 2002. It is designed to provide training to meet labour market demand for specialist know-how in various sectors. Programmes are designed in consultation with employers and delivered by various education and training providers including public institutions, private training companies, craft-related organisations, etc. Programmes can vary between one and three years and are sometimes offered as distance learning programmes. Tuition is free of charge and many students are eligible for financial aid from the Swedish National Board for Student Aid (*CSM*)

The Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) establishes guidelines to ensure that higher vocational education meets quality measures and better reflects actual labour market skill needs. Courses and programmes within higher vocational education are based on a unit-based credit system, five credit-points (*yrkeshögskolepoäng*) being equivalent to one week fulltime studies. Programmes could consist in one or several courses and should comprise a minimum of 100 points. Workplace training (*Lärande i arbetslivet* (*LIA*)) forms an integral part of the programmes.

Until 2009 quality had mainly been assured through follow-up studies on, for example, the destination of higher vocational completers, but The Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) has a mandate to develop more robust quality assurance and improvement procedures

SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION

Supplementary education is provided outside the public education system and lasts from 200 hours to two years or more. Some of these programmes receive government funding. In others, participants may apply for student financial assistance. The third category covers programmes with government approval without funding or financial assistance. There are currently about 150 different education providers offering courses in, for example, fine arts, music, design, handicrafts and pilot training. Supplementary education programmes do not provide any formal eligibility for further study, but can be seen as vocational training that prepares for higher educational courses or labour market entry. Administration of this form of VET for adults moved from the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) to the Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) on 1 July 2009.

VET AT FOLK HIGH SCHOOLS

VET at folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*) - independent adult education colleges – varies widely as each school decides independently what courses it provides and teaching methods to be used. Programmes can vary in length but year-long courses are common. Examples are specialised handicrafts, recreation leadership, sign language interpretation, etc. Folk high schools receive significant state funding following guidelines established in the Ordinance on State subsidies for popular education (SFS 1991:977).

APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship-like training for adults is provided outside the public education and training system and governed solely by joint training boards (the social partners at sectoral level). This apprenticeship-like training or in some cases validation of prior learning or of education and training acquired abroad, leads to certification in some trades.

PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

It is difficult to specify an exact number of learners in VET for adult programmes in Sweden because of the decentralised system as well as problems defining whether or not a student is in a VET programme. It is estimated that just over half the participants in municipal adult education pursue vocationally-oriented studies, which means approximately 80 000 actual learners or an estimated 40 000 on a full-time basis in 2010 (National Agency for Education, 2011)

TABLE 15 A: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU 27	2.7	6	12.7	6.6
SE	6.3	8.8	24.8	12.7

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained. Source of data: Eurostat

TABLE 15 B: PARTICIPATION RATE IN FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007				
WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU 27	6,6	6,3	6,6	7,1
SE	8,5	29,2	12,7	20

Description: The indicator represent the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status. Source of data: Eurostat

6.3 – NON-FORMAL LEARNING IN CVET

As in many other countries, the focus in Sweden has shifted in recent years from education

and training to individual learning, in line with the concept of lifelong and lifewide learning.

VET FOR ADULTS AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS

Two-thirds of this training is organised in the company or at the workplace. Teachers or trainers are internal or external. It can, however, also be arranged by external providers such as higher education institutions, educational associations or private training companies. During the first half of 2010 almost two million persons participated in some kind of in-service training such as for example conferences, seminars, courses or study visits, representing 44 percent of the work force (aged 16-64) in June 2010. Staff training is fairly evenly distributed among those aged 25-64 but younger people (16-24) are less likely to participate. On average, a higher proportion of women than men participate.

There are no government regulations that require enterprises or social partners to provide CVET to employees and members. Instead, these matters are often negotiated between social partners at either sector or enterprise levels. Moreover, since the mid-1970s, all employees have the right to unpaid leave for studies of any kind, without any restriction on the duration of the studies (*Lagen om arbetstagares rätt till ledighet för utbildning*, SFS 1974:981). Paid education and training leave can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis at either firm level or, more commonly, individual level.

Employees are also entitled to attend training arranged by trade unions. Since 1982, there has been an agreement on development and on-the-job training in the private sector between the Employers' Confederation (*Svenskt Näringsliv*), the Trade Union Confederation (*Landsorganisationen i Sverige, LO*) and the Council for Negotiation and Cooperation (*Privattjänstemannakartellen, PTK*) representing 26 trade unions of salaried employees. This is a general agreement on in-service training and information to employees about work organisation, technology and finance. These agreements contain provisions on the responsibility of local partners to contribute together to improve conditions for employees to cope with new demands for knowledge and qualifications. Several trade unions have agreements with their employers' organisations on education and in-service training (such as between the Electricians' Association and the Building Workers' Union). Others have signed development agreements. In other cases, the conditions for in-service training are negotiated under the Act on Employee Participation in Decision-Making (*Lag om medbestämmande i arbetslivet* – MBL, SFS 1976:580).

Several projects have been carried out, both at the initiative of the employers and of the trade unions. The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (*LO*) supports a large number of study circles through its partner organisation, the Workers' Educational Association (*Arbetarnas bildningsförbund (ABF)*), and this allows unions to provide training opportunities to tens of thousands of workers annually.

The likelihood of participating in enterprise initiated training increases with the size of the enterprise. In-service training in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is occasionally funded through European programmes such as the European Social Fund. During 2010 more than 125 000 individuals participated in in-service-training or integration projects partially funded through the European Social Fund .

A range of competence development and informal learning takes place in Swedish workplaces. Enterprise-initiated CVET is often a response to job rotation or restructured work organisation. In other cases, employers supply employees with literature or study materials for independent learning. In many workplaces, employees learn from one another but these types of informal learning are usually not included in statistics.

Many employees also participate in study circles through one of the large associations such as the Workers' Educational Association (*Arbetarnas bildningsförbund (ABF)*) or through others linked to the Swedish Adult Education Association (*Folkbildningsförbundet*)

VET FOR ADULTS AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Within the framework of municipal adult education (*Komvux*), many municipalities have established special learning centres in community centres or in libraries. Here learning is

provided and supported in various subject areas at the initiative of the individual. However, there are no data indicating the proportion of formal, non-formal and informal learning pursued by adults that is CVET.

A 2002 survey of informal learning at the initiative of the individual during the academic year 2001/02 (Shapiro, 2004)¹² covered the adult population and four types of informal learning:

- (a) reading professional, technical or scientific literature;
- (b) visits to exhibitions and fairs;
- (c) learning through computers and the internet;
- (d) learning through educational radio and television.

The survey showed that a large proportion of the adult population (77 %) participated in informal learning of these kinds. The most frequent type of informal learning was reading professional literature and the least frequent type was learning through radio and television. The survey also showed that those who took part in formal or non-formal learning (such as courses and study circles) were more inclined to take part in informal learning (91 %) than those who have not taken part in formal or non-formal learning (65 %). Participation in informal learning follows a similar pattern to participation in all other kinds of education and training (persons with a high level of education are more inclined to take part in informal learning than those with only a compulsory education).

TABLE 16 A: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU 27	15.6	31.4	51.5	31.3
SE	52.1	69.1	84.6	69.4

Description: The indicator represents the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in non formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by highest level of education attained. Source of data: Eurostat

A more recent study on adult participation in education (*Vuxnas deltagande i utbildning*) by Statistics Sweden was published in 2007 and found that 73 % of 5 000 adults surveyed aged 25-64 participated in formal or non-formal learning during the autumn of 2005 and spring of 2006 (Statistics Sweden, 2007). Participation was quite similar between men and women (78 % and 74 %, respectively) and was higher among those with higher levels of education and among those employed. Participation in adult learning decreased with age.

TABLE 16 B: PARTICIPATION RATE IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BY LABOUR STATUS (%), 2007

¹² The survey is cited in Shapiro's country report on Sweden: Achieving the Lisbon goal: the contribution of vocational education and training systems (Shapiro, 2004)

WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU 27	38.8	12.4	31.3	19.5
SE	78	38	69.4	47.4

Description: The indicator represent the share of people (aged 25-64) that participated in formal education and training in the 12 months prior to the survey. Specific rates are calculated by labour status. Source of data: Eurostat

VALIDATION

The Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan) is responsible for coordinating the national framework for prior learning and validation in close cooperation with validation centres, social partners and other national authorities. There are several mechanism to accredit non-formal or informal learning through validation, some of which are highlighted below:

- Municipal adult education (*Komvux*). Validation can be carried out either as part of the training or as a special activity. There is a special course, an orientation course for introduction and guidance, and validation could be part of this.
- The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). For unemployed people labour market agencies are responsible either to find a new job or to initiate training. Validation could be a necessary measure in either of these processes. Validation is usually commissioned from a regional or a private validation centre and financed by the labour market agency.
- The social partners. In several sectors employers' organisations and trade unions have cooperated in developing tools and methods for validation. When companies have re-organized their work it has often become necessary to further train employees and validation has usually been necessary. Employers usually finance this validation.
- Higher Vocational Education. Validation may be carried out by education providers during the admission process. The Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan) has the main responsibility for validating international vocational qualifications.

6.4 – LANGUAGE LEARNING IN CVET

Education in Swedish for immigrants (*svenska för invandrare (sfi)*) is part of the school system in Sweden. The education should result in basic knowledge of Swedish. Sfi is also aimed at giving adult immigrants who can't read and write the possibility to gain this knowledge. The individual has the right to develop communicative skills both orally and in writing in the Swedish language in everyday situations both during working and social life. Sfi should also prepare for further studies. The municipalities are obliged to offer sfi to adult immigrants who lack basic knowledge of Swedish. Within three months from the time that the immigrant has been registered in the municipality this education should be available.

Depending on former level of learning and background the student is placed in one of three study pathways with different aims and speed. The courses A-D build on to each other. Whichever level the student enters at he or she has the right to continue to level D on study path 3. The Government has decided to speed up the introduction of newly arrived immigrants to working and social life by means of the reform 'Labour market introduction of newly arrived immigrants - individual responsibility with professional support'. This law dates from 1 December 2010. There is also discussion about the possibility to put a limit to the time sfi can be obtained.

6.5 – TRAINING PROGRAMS TO HELP JOB-SEEKERS AND PEOPLE VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

The main authorities involved with training for the unemployed and others vulnerable to exclusion in the labour market are the Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) and the Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan*). The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) is responsible for developing, administering and evaluating labour market policy and funding active policy measures such as labour market training and skills upgrading for the unemployed, as articulated in the Ordinance on Labour Market Training (*Förordningen (2000:634) om arbetsmarknadspolitiska program:29/06/2000*). However, much skills upgrading occurs through the framework of municipal adult education.

Until the mid-1980s, training for the unemployed was provided almost entirely by public training institutions but there is now a wide range of providers including public schools, social partners, non-profit organisations and private training enterprises. Labour market training is arranged in all municipalities through both regular and specially procured provision. The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) purchases and funds training for the unemployed and offers targeted support for vulnerable groups such as new Swedes/immigrants, people with disabilities, and those with low skills levels. There has been a trend towards shorter, more targeted training to support as rapid an entrance, or return, to the labour market as possible. Longer-term training, not considered to be directly tied to the labour market, is mainly supported through public VET for adults.

THEME 7 – TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

7.1 – PRIORITIES IN TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

A report in 2006 concluded that Sweden would need to educate almost 4 000 vocational teachers between 2006 and 2011 (almost 800 teachers per year until 2011) but in 2006 only 200 vocational teachers graduated from teacher training (National Agency for Education, 2007a). Given the current and future shortage of vocational teachers in upper secondary IVET, several initiatives have been developed to attract more people into the VET teaching profession. Between 2002 and 2006, an initiative (*Särskild lärarutbildning – SÅL II*) supported over 4 000 IVET teachers to become fully qualified teachers by combining teaching with studies to gain a teaching degree. This was followed in 2005 by an initiative for IVET teachers at upper secondary school (*SÅL III – Särskild lärarutbildning för lärare i yrkesämnen i gymnasieskolan*) involving eight teacher education institutions and geared to IVET teachers without teaching degrees. SÅL III was offered through distance and open education and the last students (the final intake was in 2007) completed the programme at the end of 2009. Another initiative called special teacher education (VAL) was in effect until 2009 and allows non fully-qualified teachers to gain a teaching degree through a combination of work and study on either a full- or part-time basis or through Internet-based distance education. Several government commissions have examined these issues in recent years.

Both the current and previous governments have expressed concerns about the relatively high number of teachers without a teaching degree. In response, three government commissions were appointed to investigate teacher training and qualification issues between 2006 and 2008.

To stimulate professional development, 'specially qualified teachers' will be recognised and be able to assume responsibility for fields of study, quality assurance, and to serve as advisors for teacherstudents and as mentors for newly-educated teachers. A new system of teacher certification has been decided in 2011.

The commission, investigating teacher education (*Utredningen om en ny lärarutbildning*, U 2007:10), released a final report entitled *A sustainable teacher education (En hållbar lärarutbildning)*. The commission recommended the introduction of two new teacher degrees, one geared to general teaching and the other more rooted in in-depth knowledge of a field/subject. It proposed that universities and university colleges be required to seek approval to deliver teacher education. Despite the fact that teacher education programmes have the highest number of participants among all programmes at higher education institutions in Sweden, many reports have pointed to weaknesses in teacher education, including an underdeveloped culture of academic research and lower than average levels of internationalisation. The commission's conclusions note that too few young people apply to enter teacher education today and that a more clear structure, higher quality and higher requirements will raise the attractiveness of the teaching profession (Swedish Ministry of Education and Research – SOU, 2008:109).

The commission, investigating vocational teacher training (*Utbildning till yrkeslärare*, U 2008:5), issued a final report entitled *New paths to VET teacher education (Nya vägar till yrkeslärarutbildning)* at the end of 2008. The goal is to help recruitment for VET teacher training and develop a system for assessing and recognising individuals' VET knowledge and skills, which could have been attained through higher education, work or a combination of both.

At present, to work as an upper secondary IVET teacher, 180 ECTS (European credit transfer and accumulation system) credits (three years of full-time study) are the minimum. Several initiatives have attempted to address the need to ensure that vocational skills are validated by awarding advanced standing for vocational knowledge and experience. The commission concludes that knowledge and skills acquired outside formal education should have the same legitimacy as knowledge and skills acquired through traditional courses at higher education institutions.

The VET teacher commission recommends the introduction of a one-and-a-half year (90 ECTS credits) programme for skilled vocational work comprising one year (60 credits) of course-based study and one semester (30 credits) of work-based training in upper secondary schools. The commission recommends three variations of IVET teacher education pathways:

- (a) completion of 90 ECTS credits in a relevant field combined with relevant vocational experience in the workplace;
- (b) completion of at least 60 credits of other post-secondary education in a relevant vocational field combined with relevant vocational experience;
- (c) a certificate issued by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) confirming knowledge and competencies that meet the qualifications required in the selected field of teaching.

The commission concludes that the National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), in cooperation with its national programme councils, comprising VET programme stakeholders, develop criteria of required competences as well as validation procedures to support IVET teacher education and certification. It is also concluded that the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) be the body that assesses and certifies the knowledge and skills that serve as the basis for upper secondary IVET teacher qualification and certification (Swedish Ministry of Education and Research – SOU, 2008:112).

In response to teacher training and certification concerns, a Government Bill (*Bäst i klassen* – Best in the Class) on teacher education was introduced in February 2010 and suggests a new structure for teacher training. The highlight of the Bill is a suggestion that the current single teacher degree be disaggregated into four teacher degrees: pre-school teacher; compulsory school teacher; subject teacher (for junior and upper secondary); and vocational teachers. The new vocational teacher degree follows most of the aforementioned Commission's recommendations and would make it easier for competent people with vocational skills to become vocational teachers. The vocational teacher degree would be characterised by flexibility and would require a total of 90 ECTS credits.

In 2007, the government launched a major initiative – the teacher knowledge lift (*Läraryftet*) – to invest in the further education of teachers and raise the status of teaching. In total, SEK 2.8 billion are available, enough to fund the participation of 30 000 teachers. The National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) is responsible for administering the initiative and the aim is to improve teacher competence, thereby increasing the proportion of students reaching national knowledge goals. Upper secondary teachers can study between 20 and 45 ECTS credits from either higher education institutions or education commissioned by the National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), which are more tailored to the specific needs of active teachers. During 2008, the first full year of the programme, 5 700 teachers participated in further education with support from the initiative.

7.2 – TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

7.2.1 – TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN IVET

Teacher education is currently regulated by the Higher Education Act (*Högskolelagen*, SFS 1434). Fully qualified teachers are trained at university level and receive a teaching degree after a combination of study at higher education institutions and work-based learning in schools. During the 2009/10 school year, approximately 77 % of upper secondary teachers held teaching degrees. In upper secondary IVET, only 61 % held a teaching degree. Media (48,3 %) and vehicle engineering (46.8 %) programmes were the programmes with the lowest proportion of teachers with a teaching degree. The highest proportion of fully qualified teachers was found in the child and recreation (89.6 %) and health and nursing (79.1 %) programmes (Swedish National Agency for Education).

In the largest VET form, upper secondary IVET, there are approximately 11 800 vocational teachers dedicated to purely vocational subjects¹³ (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2010). VET teachers, therefore, account for approximately 30 % of upper secondary teaching staff. The situation is similar in municipal adult IVET, as it is governed by the same curriculum as upper secondary IVET.

Recruitment procedures for teachers in upper secondary education are open and unregulated. The responsibility for recruitment is decentralised to the municipalities or schools. According to a central agreement, fully qualified teachers (those with a teaching degree) are employed on a 12-month probationary basis before they receive a permanent position; the purpose is to give newly-qualified teachers a year of introduction under the guidance of an experienced teacher. An applicant without full qualifications may be employed on a temporary basis but this may be extended year after year.

Upper secondary IVET is typically 85 % school-based and the school-based components are taught by specific subject teachers (*karaktärsämneslärare*) and core subject teachers (*kämneslärare*), for general subjects common for all programmes. The 15 % work-based training (*arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning*) component is overseen by trainers for whom there are no formal or general requirements. For the apprenticeship training under the pilot projects the school-based component is the same as for regular IVET as described above. Supervision during the work-based component of apprenticeship is carried out by supervisors who may receive training from either earmarked state funds for the training of apprentice supervisors and/or from the municipality and/or the enterprise.

The types of teachers and trainers in Swedish vocational education and training vary widely by VET type. VET teachers typically work at schools/educational institutions while trainers work in a more mentor-like role, supervising trainees in a workplace. In general, the regulation of VET teachers at the upper secondary level has followed similar guidelines to non-VET teachers in upper secondary education. However, the situation with teachers involved with VET for adults is much more diverse, with a wide range of teaching and training staffing procedures and norms used by a variety of education and training providers.

¹³) It is important to note that all upper secondary students in Sweden take common core courses, which account for one third of the upper secondary curriculum and are not taught by vocational teachers but general subject teachers. Therefore, although almost 50 % of upper secondary students are in IVET programmes, the actual proportion of teaching that is VET-related is closer to 35 %.

Types of IVET and CVET teachers and trainers are summarised in the table below.

TABLE 1: TYPES OF INITIAL- AND CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN SWEDEN

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION & LEVEL:	UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL		MUNICIPAL ADULT EDUCATION		HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (FORMER ADVANCED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION)			SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION AND POST-SECONDARY TRAINING FOR ADULTS	
	IVET	CVET	IVET	CVET	COLLEGE	MUNIC. ADULT EDUC.	OTHER	IVET	CVET (AVE)
VOCATIONAL TEACHERS	X	X	X	X	(X)	X	(X)	(X)	(X)
GENERAL TEACHERS	X	(X)	(X)	(X)	X	X	X	X	X
TRAINERS, APPROVED BY EMPLOYER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-
TRAINER, APPROVED BY PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION	(X)	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X
ASSISTANT MASTERS (SEE 7.3.2)	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-

(X) indicates that this category of teachers may be found within some, but not all programmes.

7.2.2 – PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF IVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

For information on pre-service training see 7.2.1. Every municipality and county council is obliged to facilitate in-service training for its teachers. Due to the decentralisation of the educational system, in-service training for IVET teachers lacks organisation. Instead, it is an open market, with enterprises or organisations offering specific in-service courses related either to each of the vocational programmes of upper secondary school or to specific areas within one or a few vocational programmes.

7.3 – TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET

7.3.1 – TEACHERS, TRAINERS AND TRAINING FACILITATORS IN CVET

The two main forms of VET for adults in Sweden are upper secondary IVET for adults (*yrkesvux*) and higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildningar*). Teachers in municipal adult education follow the same requirements as IVET teachers (specific subject teachers within vocational programmes or core subject teachers) within upper secondary school. Teachers with other qualifications may also be hired when necessary. When the training is organised by an independent training provider rather than a municipality, they use both specific subject teachers and other employees with relevant experience for the school-based part of the programme and employees from the respective company as trainers. Although IVET organisation within municipal adult education is separated from upper secondary school, they often share the same buildings (workshops, classrooms, etc.) and many teachers teach in both institutions.

Higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildningar*), known as advanced vocational education (*kvalificerad yrkesutbildning, KY*) until 1 July 2009, has a variety of different types of teachers and trainers, depending on the type of programme and on the training provider/institution (see 6.2). The only broad requirements are that teachers and trainers are to be competent for the teaching they provide, either through education or vocational experience. The trainers (*handledare*) in the work-based training component, around 30 % of the total time in higher vocational education programmes, are typically employees with significant vocational experience, but not working strictly in training roles in their companies. There are also teachers for those enrolled in VET programmes at folk high schools¹⁴ and trainers for those active in apprenticeship-like training leading to certification at joint training boards at the sector level. However, these training forms are not subject to consistent national guidelines. In summary, issues concerning VET for adult teachers, except for municipal adult education, tend to be managed by individual training providers rather than any regulatory regime.

The different types of CVET teachers and trainers are highlighted in the table below.

TABLE 2: TYPES OF TEACHERS WITHIN VOCATIONAL CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION & LEVEL:	MUNICIPAL ADULT EDUCATION (CONTINUATION COURSES)	HIGHER VOC. EDUC. & TRAINING	ADVANCED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (CURRENTLY HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION)			SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION AND POST-SECONDARY TRAINING FOR ADULTS
			COLLEGE	MUNIC ADULT EDUC.	OTHER	
TYPE OF TEACHER:	CVET	CVET				CVET
VOCATIONAL TEACHER	X	X	(X)	X	X	(X)

¹⁴ There are no national data on the number of individuals enrolled in VET programmes at folk high schools or on those active in apprenticeship-like training leading.

GENERAL TEACHER	(X)	X	X	X	X	X
TRAINER, APPROVED BY EMPLOYER	(X)	(X)	X	X	X	-
TRAINER, APPROVED BY PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION	-	(X)	-	-	-	X
ASSISTANT MASTER (SEE 7.3.2)	-	X	X	-	-	-

An (X) indicates that this category of teachers may be found within some but not all programmes.

7.3.2 – PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF CVET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

The initial pre-service training for CVET teachers varies. For all teachers within higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildning*) (until 2009 referred to as advanced vocational education programmes), the following formulation is the only guidance regarding formal qualifications: "Teachers and trainers are to be competent for the teaching they are to provide, either by education or by experience." The various facilitators have interpreted this sentence differently. E.g. For teachers employed by municipalities (municipal adult education or continuation courses, and higher vocational education programmes), the pre-service training is the same as for IVET teachers (specific subject teachers within vocational programmes or core subject teachers) within upper secondary school. Others may, however, also be used when considered necessary with regards to the competence needed.

In cases when universities/university colleges are the facilitators of higher vocational education programmes, the formal qualifications primarily concern the teachers' subject knowledge as specified by the Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 2002:761) for a position as an *adjunkt* (assistant master).

For CVET-trainers working within higher vocational education programmes organised as apprenticeship, the vocational competence of each trainer is assessed by the respective vocational/branch organisation. No general qualifications are specified and no teacher education is required.

General subject teachers require a teacher education relevant for upper secondary school.

When an higher vocational education programme is organised by an enterprise, the employer is responsible for the interpretation, as there are no further guidelines. To date, there is no general description of the qualifications of these teachers.

For CVET-teachers employed within municipal adult education, the same applies as for teachers within IVET. Every municipality and county council is obliged to facilitate in-service training for its teachers. Due to the decentralisation of the educational system, in-service training for IVET teachers lacks organisation. Instead, it is an open market, with enterprises or organisations offering specific in-service courses related either to each of the vocational programmes of upper secondary school or to specific areas within one or a few vocational programmes. The examples found regarding in-service and continuing training all relate to IVET.

THEME 8 – MATCHING VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS (JOBS)

8.1– SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILLS NEEDS

Although there is a wealth of high quality labour market and education data in Sweden, there has been limited coordination between Statistics Sweden (*SCB, Statistiska centralbyrån*) and bodies responsible for education and training. Instead, the main agency working on this issue (anticipation of future skills) has been the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). Work on this by agencies responsible for VET in Sweden has been more characterised by one-off studies than regular, institutionalised cooperation between responsible agencies for statistics, labour market policy and education and training. However, since July 1, 2009 the new Swedish Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) has had a mandate to map and forecast the country's needs for post-secondary vocational skills. This is accomplished by a combination of in-house forecasting capacity, a labour market skills council (*arbetsmarknadsråd*) composed mainly of social partners and inter-agency cooperation.

In 2010 the Swedish government gave several authorities the task to explore ways of improving the agencies' cooperation to increase coordination of skills provision at national level. It should contribute to the creation of better bases for planning and resource utilisation with respect to skills provision initiatives. Reflecting the focus on coordination and cooperation the mission was given jointly by the Ministry of Employment, the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications and the Ministry of Education and Research. The six authorities, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*), Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), Statistics Sweden (*SCB, Statistiska centralbyrån*), National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) and Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis (*Myndigheten för tillväxtpolitiska utvärderingar och analyser*), work will be reported in 2012.

Overall, the links between labour market skill needs and VET programmes can vary according to the type of VET. For example, the provision of upper secondary IVET, the largest VET form, is largely driven by student choice of programme, while post-secondary VET for adults is often driven by industry skills needs motivated by training providers. As stated above the Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan*) has a mandate to conduct labour market skill needs analyses to ensure that post-secondary vocational education and training delivery reflects industry skill needs. Furthermore the government has by law established that in the new secondary school, starting in autumn 2011, there should be local and national councils for all vocational programs to improve links between schools and social partners. The national programme councils (*nationella programråd*), one for each of the upper secondary vocational programmes will support the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) in developing steering documents and curricula that are relevant for the labour market needs. They will also play an active role in quality assurance, continuous development as well as analysing the participation in the different programmes and the establishment of youth in the labour market. On the other hand, the local councils will aid the schools in finding relevant work placements and defining orientations that correspond to local or regional needs.

EXAMPLES OF STUDIES FOCUSED ON SKILL NEEDS

Handlingsplan för ökad rekrytering av personal till sjöfartssektorn, Sjöfartsverket, 2010 (Recruitment in the maritime sector, Swedish Maritime Administration)

Malmfälten under förändring - En rapport om arbetskraftsförsörjning och utvecklingsmöjligheter i Gällivare, Kiruna och Pajala, Myndigheten för tillväxtpolitiska utvärderingar och analyser, rapport 2010:05 (Report on future supply and demand for labour in the municipalities Gällivare, Pajala and Kiruna, following the expansion of the mining industry, Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis)

Utbildningsanalys 2010 - Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolans analys av arbetslivets

8.2 – PRACTICES TO MATCH VET PROVISION (SKILLS) WITH SKILLS NEEDS (JOBS)

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND CHOICE OF SCHOOLS

All municipalities are obliged under the Education Act to offer young people, until age 20, who have completed compulsory school, or the equivalent, upper secondary school education. The municipality must provide a broad range of education and try to match the number of places in different programmes with student choice. If the programme of choice is not available in a student's home municipality, they have the right to apply to another municipality. If accepted, their municipality must pay the cost of the education. If the number of applicants is higher than the number of places available, selection is on the basis of final grades from compulsory school. A limited number of places at upper secondary school are set aside for pupils who should be given preferential access.

COURSE-BASED SYSTEM

The course-based system together with the absence of a nationally decided timetable gives upper secondary schools freedom to organise education. Courses may be studied intensively by taking several subjects at once or, instead, spreading them out over their entire upper secondary education. Courses may be integrated with other subjects, grouped into modules or studied by themes. Students studying a course may be grouped together from different classes and programmes. Subjects are divided into one or more courses.

Students may choose to specialise within the block of options and have greater freedom of choice within their individual options or take part in one or more courses outside the complete programme, referred to as an expanded programme. Those experiencing significant study-related difficulties may be allowed to opt out of one or more courses in what is called a reduced programme. The normal period of study is three years, but under the system of courses and credits, pupils can complete upper secondary schooling over a shorter or longer period.

BRIDGING POST-SECONDARY VET PATHWAYS

VET forms at the post secondary level (i.e. advanced vocational education, post secondary training and supplementary education) often have very close links with the labour market and with social partners but have not achieved satisfactory bridging mechanisms with higher education. In future, it is hoped that advanced vocational education will provide transfer credit in case the student wishes to pursue a degree programme at a higher education institution.

RENEWAL OF CURRICULA

A major reform of upper secondary education was planned for the autumn of 2007 but the new government, elected in September 2006, stated its intention to develop a new system, based on new priorities. The new upper secondary school system from the autumn of 2011 will feature two distinct components consisting of: 1) general/academic programmes; 2) vocationally-oriented programmes without the same mandatory academic requirements as under the current system. The vocationally-oriented programmes can be studied school-based or as an apprentice.

National, regional, local and sectoral stakeholders have had an active role on renewing the curricula as well as other quality improvement issues with researchers, teachers/trainers, education authorities, social partners and learners.

BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Curricula state that activities in school should be combined with contact with the labour market as well as with other activities outside school. Teachers have a responsibility to contribute to developing contacts with organisations, companies and other bodies. Compulsory and upper secondary schools should also cooperate closely with working life, higher education institutions and society in general.

This helps ensure quality and provides a basis for choosing courses and continuing to further studies or vocational activity. At secondary schools In the vocational programs student shall be out working at least 15 weeks during the 3 years of education.

Post-secondary level VET often has very close links with the labour market and with social partners but links are not as well developed with higher education institutions (such as with universities and university colleges). It is hoped that vocational higher education will assist transfer of credits in case the student wishes to pursue a degree programme (ISCED 5A) at a higher education institution.

THEME 9 – LIFELONG GUIDANCE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

9.1 – STRATEGY AND PROVISION

There are no formal special institutions for guidance. All educational and vocational guidance (*studie- och yrkesvägledning*) is given in schools or municipalities. In all types of schools, it is the responsibility of the principal/headmaster to ensure that all students receive educational and vocational guidance before choosing from the range of options that the school has to offer and before deciding how best to continue an educational route. Most schools and municipal adult education centres have specially trained counsellors that provide learners with education and vocational guidance. Also, as from July 1, 2011, all pupils should have access to competent guidance counselling personnel in accordance with the new Education Act (2010:800).

The earliest education and career guidance typically occurs in the latter stages of compulsory school, where practical working life orientation (*praktisk arbetslivsorientering*) is usually arranged for students around the age of 15. During these placements, students spend one to two weeks gaining practical experience at a workplace mutually agreed between the student and school. Study visits and information about the labour market, different professions and career options are also often included in many subjects at compulsory school.

Schools cooperate locally with industry, the social partners and universities and colleges to provide students with guidance. This is not regulated centrally. Educational and career guidance are also provided by the Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), trade unions and private employment service.

The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) offers several types of support for those seeking employment. Support can be anything from recruitment meetings to tips about the way to write a job application, to reconfiguring a workplace for people with special needs. This all depends on the jobseeker's situation and background.

Jobseekers can register their CV at www.arbetsformedlingen.se, search through available vacancies, subscribe to job advertisements, etc. There are employment counsellors at The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) customer service desk who answer questions via telephone and e-mail, and offer help and support for writing a CV or preparing for an employment interview. The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) has a clear mandate to give special support to people with a weak status in the labour market, such as newly arrived immigrants, young people, people on longterm sick leave and people with reduced mobility that leads to reduced work capacity.

Several national websites offer information and guidance to young people and adults including Utbildningsinfo.se¹⁵, a national portal for education and career guidance, geared to students, parents and education professionals (education and career counsellors as well as teachers). The website features a search tool for education pathways in Sweden, primarily at the upper secondary and municipal adult education levels, and is financed and administered by the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*). It also offers a web-based career guidance tool, a description of the Swedish school system, a personal folder and a special section for guidance practitioners, which supports them in their daily work. Although Swedish guidance counsellors represent the main target group, practitioners from abroad are also welcome to register and take part in the discussions and information sharing. Although some information is provided in English, most of the content is in Swedish. There is also a national website primarily geared to inform about higher education, including a searchable database containing descriptions of courses and education programmes available.¹⁶

¹⁵ www.utbildningsinfo.se [cited 13.7.2011].

¹⁶ www.studera.nu

9.2 – TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

The main target groups of guidance and counselling services are those in education and training as well as those seeking employment. There are a wide range of targeted measures for at risks groups including immigrants and those with learning difficulties. Lifelong learning is strongly supported through guidance and counselling via municipal adult education and through liberal adult education (*folkbildning*) including folk high schools and thousands of study circles.

More specifically, Sweden supports several measures to strengthen access to independent guidance and counselling such as the website www.utbildningsinfo.se. Euroguidance Sweden (the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance)¹⁷ is a resource for vocational and career guidance counsellors and professionals abroad. It offers information and documentation for counsellors who require information on studying and training opportunities in Europe.

As stated in section 9.1, the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) provides services such as the job bank, job-seeker bank, temporary worker bank, image and artist bank, information on occupations and training programmes, plus general information on the labour market, forecasts and analyses of current labour market dynamics. The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) is also Sweden's partner in the EURES network.

Counselling for adults is mainly delivered via municipal adult education and the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) but also through liberal adult education. According to the new Education Act (2010:800), each municipality must try to reach all who have the right to basic adult education and motivate them to participate. Several initiatives have been developed to reach groups traditionally without access to education and career counselling, such as adults outside the school system.

One approach is to provide guidance and counselling in the workplace, in cooperation with trade unions, to try and reach those who did not attend, or complete, upper secondary school and/or have had negative experiences at school. Some employers also offer career counselling as part of in-company training and/or personal development.

Another approach has been information in shops and special market stalls in municipalities, which complement initiatives such as 'open houses' at the different training centres. In certain municipalities, brochures with education and career information have been distributed to all households. National and regional advertising in newspapers, on the radio and via other means is also common, partly because of the increasing number of independent upper secondary schools and higher vocational education providers competing for students.

The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) also offers an online education and career guidance portal, the occupation compass (*Yrkeskompassen*). This portal provides information on approximately 200 occupations in Sweden and employment prospects by occupation over the next year as well as five- and 10-year periods. The one-year occupational forecast is available for the national and regional levels while the five- and ten-year forecasts are only at the national level¹⁸. Finally, from December 1, 2010 The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) coordinates a new initiative targeted to recent immigrants (establishment support -- *etableringsstöd*) offering a wide range of information, guidance and counselling, assessment, validation, coaching and employment introduction services for recent immigrants. This strong support package can be utilised by recent immigrants over a period of up to 24 months.

¹⁷ <http://www.programkontoret.se/sv/Program-Stipendier/Euroguidance/Euroguidance---In-English/Guidance-in-Sweden/>

¹⁸ More information on Yrkeskompassen is available in Swedish at: <http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/For-arbetssookande/Yrke-och-framtid/Yrkesinformation/Yrkeskompassen.html>

9.3 – GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL

There are approximately 5 000 guidance specialists in Sweden, 2 000 of whom work in schools and the remainder at the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). However, education and career guidance offered by the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) has, in recent years, become increasingly intertwined with job placement and other functions designed to get unemployed people into employment as quickly as possible.

Municipalities or the headmaster/principal for the private school are responsible for guidance and counselling staff in schools while the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) is responsible for most labour market counselling. Most counselling staff in schools have a bachelor's degree in career counselling ¹⁹.

A university degree for education and career counsellors in Sweden takes the form of a three-year course leading to a bachelor's degree. It includes several different elements including sociology, psychology and practical placements of about six months. There is also special examination work including a major research paper connected to an area of counselling. Counsellors with a degree normally seek employment at schools or with the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) but a limited number seek employment in the private sector. An increasing number of counsellors have been employed at the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan*) or within projects aimed at people who are difficult to place in the job market.

Schools and the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) provide further in-service training to improve counselling skills and keep skills and information up-to-date.

The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) has special internal training for counsellors, which lasts for about a year and includes both short courses as well as a practical placement with a tutor. The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) also offers a range of courses, which can be described as further education. It has traditionally recruited people with long work experience and/or experience of trade union work but the trend is to employ people with academic qualifications in counselling, personnel administration or social work. Group counselling is more prominent at the employment service than in schools.

¹⁹ Guidance counsellors typically must have at least one year of work experience before entering a three-year university programme leading to the education and career guidance counsellor degree (studie- och yrkesvägledarexamen).

THEME 10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 – VET FINANCING POLICY

The majority of VET in Sweden is publicly funded. Funding of schools (including initial vocational education and training through upper secondary schools or via municipal adult IVET) is shared between the State and municipalities. State funds are paid through general State grants to municipalities which may also receive revenues from municipal taxes, and then allocate resources to individual schools. Higher vocational education is financed directly from the State budget.

Most in-company training is paid by companies rather than through State subsidies or via training levies or funds.

Training for the unemployed and other groups excluded from the labour market is publicly financed as stipulated in the Ordinance on labour market training (*Förordning om arbetsmarknadsutbildning, SFS 1987:406*).

Various forms of financial assistance are available to students: study assistance (grants and loans) and special educational grants. The system for study assistance covers all students in adult education, as well as higher education and other post-secondary education. Adults in municipal adult education can apply for study assistance or special education grants. This funding is administered by the National Board of Student Aid (CSM)²⁰. Priority has recently been given to investment in teacher competence.

10.2 – FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The largest share of VET funding goes to upper secondary IVET. In 2010 the total costs for upper secondary school (including IVET) amounted to SEK 37 billion, only a slight decrease (less than one percent) compared with 2009.

Upper secondary level IVET is funded by municipal budget, through State funds and municipal taxes. Calculation of State grants is determined by several underlying factors such as the size of the population in the municipality, its age structure, population density, social structure and number of immigrants. Tax revenues and State grants thus provide the majority of resources for compulsory and non-compulsory education in the municipalities. State funding is not directly linked to school organisation; each municipality determines how it will allocate resources and organise its activities. However, municipalities are obliged to provide their inhabitants with a certain level of services and schooling as determined by the government and central State agencies. In education, municipalities must fulfil obligations such as activities and quality in accordance with the Education Act. (See also 4.2)

A grant-aided independent school is entitled to financial support once approved by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (*Skolinspektionen*). The municipalities pay an amount for each pupil attending such a school, on basis of the same principles that the municipality applies when allocating resources to its own compulsory schools, i.e. the schools' commitments and pupils' needs. If the establishment of a grant-aided independent school creates severe problems for the municipal schools in the municipality, the Swedish National Agency for Education can deny its right to financial support.

There are no collective funds or training levies allocated to IVET but the new system of upper secondary apprenticeship will include funding to support the incremental costs of apprenticeship, to both municipalities and companies. SEK 25 000 per apprentice has been allocated for upper secondary apprenticeship pilot projects and apprentices within the new reformed upper secondary school (see further 5.4).

²⁰ www.csn.se

10.3 – FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ADULT LEARNING

10.3.1 – PUBLIC FUNDING SCHEMS AND MECHANISMS TO FINANCE CVET

The two largest forms of VET for adults in Sweden - upper secondary initial VET through municipal adult education (*Yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning*) and higher vocational education (*yrkeshögskoleutbildning*) are free of charge (see also 6.2). However, institutional and funding patterns vary.

Just as upper secondary school, adult education is funded by municipal budget, through state funds and municipal taxes (see further 10.2 above). In 2010 the total costs for municipal adult education (including IVET) amounted to SEK 3,8 billion, an increase of 2,2 percent compared with 2009.

Higher vocational education is funded through state funds administered by the The Swedish National Agency for higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan*). In 2010 the grants issued to training providers amounted to SEK 1,7 billion²¹. Organisations wishing to provide higher vocational education programmes apply for funding to the Agency. Evaluation is based on information on several areas including labour market needs, cooperation with labour market, the educational level (post-secondary), entrepreneurship, economy and study plan.

10.3.2 – PUBLIC-PRIVATE COST-SHARING

Supplementary education (*kompletterande utbildningar*) providers usually charge tuition fees, the amount depending on if they receive state grants. Some of these education programmes give also students eligibility for study assistance and may include grants covering tuition fees.

Study associations and folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*) are largely financed by funds from the State, county councils and municipalities. In addition, they have incomes from educational activities organised on a commission basis. The state support is allocated by the Swedish National Council of Adult Education (*Folkbildningsrådet*). Tuition is free of charge but students pay for their own board and lodging. Study assistance may be granted to cover part of the cost.

10.3.3 – COLLECTIVE (EMPLOYER, EMPLOYEE) INVESTMENT TO FINANCE CVET

Sweden has one of the most intensive in-company CVET regimes in Europe along with Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK. This form of training in Sweden is primarily determined by collective agreements rather than by any State regulatory framework. However, State subsidies can be paid to companies to assist with labour market training (*Förordning om bidrag till arbetsmarknadsutbildning i företag*; Ordinance on subsidies to labour market training in companies, SFS 1984:518). In-company training has expanded faster than any other form of continuing vocational training in recent decades and every year, about 40 % of employees participate. In-company training is financed by employers. Most staff training (about two-thirds) is given inside enterprises or organisations but it is unevenly spread within the workforce, with employees with higher education receiving more in-service training than their lower education counterparts (see 6.3).

²¹ This sum includes grants for higher vocational education (*yrkesutbildning*), the former advanced vocational education (*kvalificerad yrkesutbildning*) and supplementary education (*kompletterande utbildningar*) as well as other smaller forms of CVET. (see also 6.2)

10.3.4 – REACHING THE GROUPS AT RISK THROUGH FUNDING SCHEMES AND MECHANISMS

A special initiative for VET for adults was introduced for the period 2009-2011, creating over 20 000 additional VET spaces for adults in municipal adult education. Almost SEK 3 billion of supplementary state grants have been earmarked to municipalities to provide more VET for adults within the public education and training system between 2009 and 2011. The government envisages that this initiative will continue during 2012 and 2013.

Another initiative introduced for the period 2011-2014 with the intention of creating 2 000 new apprenticeship places per year for adults. Some of these places are destined for adults with learning disabilities.

10.4 – FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED

Training for the unemployed and other groups excluded from the labour market in Sweden is totally publicly financed and integrated into the country's labour market policies and programmes. The government (cabinet) and parliament decide on the objectives, rule systems and financial framework of labour market policy. The Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) was recently created by merging the previous labour market boards at national and county level with the Labour Market Administration and Work Life Services. It is divided into 68 labour market regions based on commuting patterns and on the regional preferences of companies in staff recruitment. In total, the Public Employment Service has a staff of 10 000 and reports to the Ministry of Employment.

Employment training is primarily intended to help unemployed people and hard-to-place job seekers lacking occupational skills. Training programmes are primarily vocational but can also include introductory and general theoretical instruction as a necessary adjunct of training. Employment training is conditional on current and imminent unemployment. In addition, the applicant must be at least 20 years old and registered as a job-seeker. Services provided include various job banks, information on occupations and training programmes as well as general information on the labour market, forecasts and analyses of the job market situation, all accessible via the agency's offices or the Internet. Funding this training is an important part of active labour market policy. Employment training primarily takes the form of courses purchased by regional employment offices in response to the needs of the labour market and based on their knowledge of which jobseekers have difficulty finding work. Training lasts on average for about 20 weeks and the main goal is to prepare individuals, to make it easier for people wishing to work to enter the employment sector and find the right job. In 2010, more than 29 000 unemployed individuals participated in training to meet employer skill needs and eliminate bottlenecks in the labour market.

THEME 11 – AUTHORS, SOURCES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

11.1 – AUTHORS

Unit for Upper secondary school and Unit for adult education, Swedish National Agency for Education

Coordination: Cristina Pontis, Director of education

11.2 – SOURCES, REFERENCES AND WEBSITES

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EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Cedefop: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu>

Europass: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>

European Union: <http://www.europa.eu>

Eurostat: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/>

Eurydice: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php

OECD: <http://www.oecd.org>

MINISTRIES AND NATIONAL AGENCIES

Regeringen (The Swedish Government): <http://www.regeringen.se>

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research):
<http://www.regeringen.se>

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education): <http://www.skolverket.se>

Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education) <http://www.eqfinfo.se>

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish School Inspectorate): <http://www.skolinspektionen.se>

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training): www.programkontoret.se

Arbetsförmedlingen (The Swedish Public Employment Service):
<http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se>

Tillväxtverket (the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth):
<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/>

Myndigheten för tillväxtpolitiska utvärderingar och analyser (Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis) <http://tillvaxtanalys.se/sv/>

Svenska ESF-rådet (The Swedish ESF Council): <http://www.esf.se/sv/>

Centrala studiestödsnämnden (The National Board of Student Aid): <http://www.csn.se>

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden): <http://www.scb.se>

CENTRAL LABOR MARKET ORGANISATIONS

Landsorganisationen i Sverige (The Swedish Trade Union Confederation):
<http://www.lo.se>

Privattjänstemannakartellen (The Council for Negotiation and Co-operation)
<http://www.ptk.se/>

Svenskt Näringsliv (The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise):
<http://www.svensktnaringsliv.se/>

OTHERS

Utbildningsinfo.se (A portal for education information and guidance):
<http://www.utbildningsinfo.se>

NQF/EQF (A portal for information on NQF/EQF development in Sweden)
<http://www.eqfinfo.se/>

Valideringsinfo (A portal for information on validation) <http://www.valideringsinfo.se/>

Vägledarföreningen (The Swedish Association of Guidance Counsellors):
<http://www.vagledarforeningen.org/>

Folkbildningsförbundet (The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations)
Website:<http://www.studieforbunden.se>

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)
Website:<http://www.folkbildning.se>

Folkhögskolornas informationstjänst (The Folk High School's Information Service)
Website:<http://www.folkhogskola.nu>

11.3 – LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABF - *Arbetarnas bildningsförbund* (The Workers' Educational Association)

APU - *Arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning* (Workplace training)

CSN - *Centrala studiestödsnämnden* (The National Board of Student Aid)

LO - *Landsorganisationen i Sverige* (The Swedish Trade Union Confederation)

PRIV – *Programinriktad individuellt val* (Individual programmes to which students may apply)

SFI - *Svenskundervisning för invandrare* (Swedish language training for immigrants)

SIDA – *Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbeten* (Swedish International – Development Cooperation Agency)