

Chapter 6. Unlocking the potential of migrants through vocational education and training in Sweden

In response to labour market demand and the recent increase in young humanitarian migrants, Sweden has recently introduced Vocational Packages that provide the possibility of obtaining partial qualifications within Introductory Programmes. Chapter 6 discusses ways to better implement this promising measure and the importance of building seamless vocational education and training (VET) pathways. This chapter also discusses ways to address the barriers faced by an increasingly diverse cohort of VET learners.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Introduction: Background

Sweden has experienced a large inflow of humanitarian migrants in recent years. This chapter discusses how the vocational education and training (VET) system in Sweden has addressed the challenge of an increasingly diverse cohort of learners, and provides policy options on how to better integrate migrants into VET in order to better unlock their potential.

The introduction discusses the issue of migration in the context of the labour market in Sweden. It also looks at measures that have been developed to facilitate transition of young migrants into VET programmes and the labour market.

Migration in the context of skills shortages in Sweden

Sweden is experiencing shortages of vocational upper-secondary graduates

Sweden is currently facing and will continue to face a severe shortage of vocational upper-secondary graduates (Statistics Sweden, 2017_[1]) due largely to falling enrolment rates in vocational education and training (Chapter 5) as well as increasing labour market demand due to an ageing population. Meanwhile, the employment rate of vocational upper-secondary graduates (25-34 year-olds) is almost 90%, comparable to the employment rate of tertiary graduates (OECD, 2018_[2]). Sweden was the top ranking OECD country in terms of employment rate of vocational upper-secondary graduates in 2016 and the second highest in 2017.

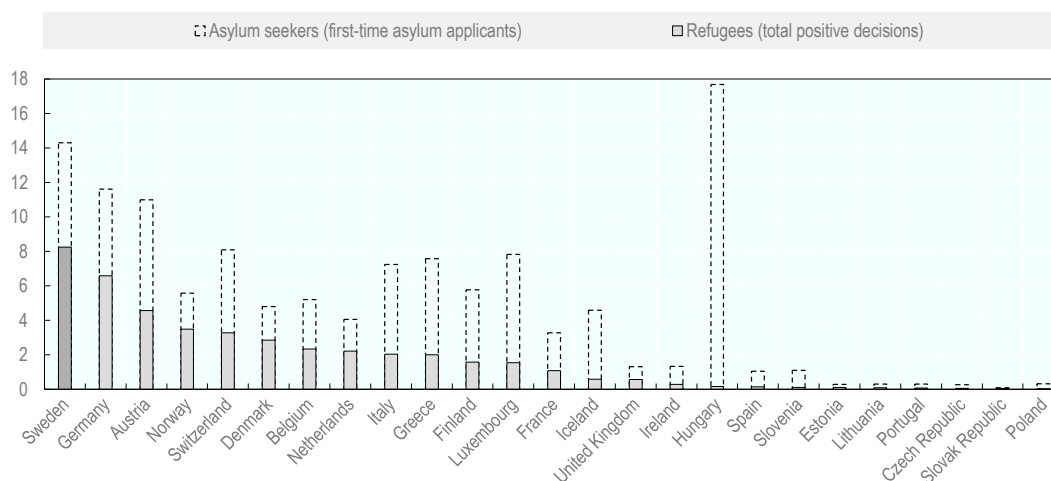
The skills shortage in the health and social care sector, in particular, is expected to worsen (Statistics Sweden, 2017_[1]). This in part reflects an ageing population in Sweden which includes the seventh highest rate of ageing among OECD countries (OECD, 2017_[3]). It is estimated that the old-age dependency ratio (the ratio of citizens over the age of 65 to the working age population) will reach almost 40% by 2035 if current trends continue. (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017_[4]). If migration were to be halted, this ratio could be expected to rise to 47%. Migrant skills are consequently a key means of tackling this challenge.

In this context, the recent increase in humanitarian migrants presents a set of both opportunities and challenges

Historically, Sweden has been one of Europe's top recipients of humanitarian migrants, both in terms of total number and as a share of population (OECD, 2016_[5]).¹ Estimates suggest that refugees make up about half of the current foreign-born population or come from a family of refugees (OECD, 2017_[6]). This trend has been more pronounced in recent years, in particular in terms of young people. Sweden received about 125 000 asylum seekers aged 18-34 between 2014 and 2017. In this period, the number of migrants in this age group who were accepted as refugees is equivalent to 0.8% of the total population aged 18-34 in 2017 – the highest rate among EU countries (Figure 6.1). About a quarter of upper-secondary entrants in 2016-17 were considered to be newly arrived migrants.

Figure 6.1. Sweden received a large share of young refugees and asylum seekers in recent years

Share of first-time asylum applicants and total positive decisions per 1 000 people aged 18-34, 2014-17



Note: Only countries with cumulative asylum applicants more than 30 000 for 2014-2017 were included. Annual aggregated data (rounded) on population by age [demo_pjan], asylum applicants [migr_asyappctza], first instance positive decisions on applications [migr_asydcfst] and final positive decisions on applications [migr_asydcfina] by citizenship and age as of April 2018.

Source: Author's own work based on Eurostat (2018^[7]), *Eurostat Database*, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>.

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As noted earlier, in the context of severe skills shortages, the significant number of humanitarian migrants who arrived in Sweden between 2014 and 2017 presents an opportunity. However, this opportunity cannot be fully realised without addressing a series of challenges.

For example, in comparison to migrants who arrive with the specific aim of studying, working, or reuniting with family, humanitarian migrants (Box 6.1) do not usually arrive with any links to the host country. Consequently, it cannot be assumed that humanitarian migrants will have researched economic opportunities or travelled with a specific occupational ambition in mind, appropriate documents to prove their skills and qualifications, or with existing networks linking them to prospective employers.

Further, foreign-born employment rates are about 13 percentage points lower than native-born both for upper secondary and tertiary graduates – the third largest gap among OECD (OECD, 2018^[2])². Humanitarian migrants also tend to have lower education attainments and lower labour market outcomes compared to other migrants (Irastorza and Bevelander, 2017^[8]). Many newly arrived students who passed the compulsory school age experience difficulty in entering and completing upper secondary VET programmes. For example, only about 15% of young migrants who attended the Language Introductory Programme completed upper-secondary education with a diploma (8% in VET and 7% in the academic track) within five years (Skolverket, 2017^[9]).

The opportunities presented by an influx of humanitarian migrants can only be fully realised if Sweden can address associated challenges. These challenges exist from the

beginning – informing migrants of their opportunities – all the way to the end – ensuring a smooth and successful transition into the labour market.

Therefore it is important to first address the barriers that prevent humanitarian migrants from engaging in, and benefitting from, VET

In order to ensure that the VET system is well placed to take advantage of the opportunities presented by humanitarian migrants and that migrants themselves are in a position to take advantage of attractive opportunities presented by the VET system in Sweden, it is important to address the barriers preventing access to VET programmes and their completion.

Given the number and potential role of young humanitarian migrants in Sweden,³ it is to be expected that the VET system will benefit from adapting to both labour market demand for⁴ (Policy Area 6.1), and the unique characteristics and needs of, migrants (Policy Area 6.2). Indeed, like other OECD countries, Sweden has already implemented a range of relevant supporting measures.

Box 6.1. Unlocking the potential of migrants through vocational education and training (VET)

An OECD project that connects humanitarian migrants and VET

This chapter was prepared in parallel with the ongoing project Unlocking the Potential of Migrants through VET. The project aims to produce new insights into how vocational education and training (VET) systems can best respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by recent migrants, so as to achieve better outcomes for both migrants and for economies as a whole. The project includes a focused VET review of Germany, as well as a cross-country component focusing primarily on Germany, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland. Within the scope of the cross-country study and this VET review of Sweden, the OECD review team visited Sweden to gain an understanding of the dynamics of the VET system with a particular focus on recent humanitarian migrants. The findings of these visits will feed into the cross-country report to be published in mid-2019. Some of the findings from this project are presented in this chapter for the purpose of peer-learning.

Definition of humanitarian migrants

The key demographic discussed in the project described above and this chapter is refugees and asylum seekers aged 16-35, although youth with an immigrant background – native-born youth with both parents who are foreign-born and foreign-born youth – are also considered. In Sweden, a student is considered to be newly arrived for up to four years after their arrival at a Swedish school (Skolverket, 2018_[10]).

“Humanitarian migrants” (often referred to as refugees) denote people who have successfully applied for asylum and have been granted some sort of protection – refugee or other status. “Asylum seekers” are people who have formally applied for asylum, but whose claim is pending (OECD, 2016_[11]). For more detailed definition within the Swedish context, see (OECD, 2018, pp. 16-17_[12]).

Measures supporting entry of young humanitarian migrants into vocational programmes and the labour market

Two relevant measures that are already in place in Sweden are: the Introductory Programmes, in particular the Language Introductory Programme; and Vocational Packages, a recently introduced measure designed to facilitate the transition into the labour market of individuals who are far from obtaining a full VET qualification. These specific measures are explored below, while other measures are presented in Chapter 1.

Introductory Programmes are aimed at facilitating the transition to upper-secondary VET as well as the labour market

Preparatory or transitional programmes can be very successful in assisting youth-at-risk to make a successful entry or transition into regular upper-secondary VET (Kis, 2016_[13]). They help youth-at-risk to overcome multiple barriers related to human, social and cultural capital that may otherwise prevent them from thriving in education. Such Introductory Programmes (*introduktionsprogram*) are hosted within upper-secondary schools in Sweden.

Introductory Programmes are intended to facilitate transitions from compulsory into regular upper-secondary schools as well as other forms of education including adult education. These programmes also aim to smooth transition of young people to the labour market.⁵ Other countries also provide programmes with similar aims (Box 6.2).

Unsurprisingly, students with migrant backgrounds are overrepresented in these programmes due to a lack of language skills and basic competencies. A lower share of foreign-born students in Sweden (39%) attain basic academic proficiency in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) – level 2 in all three PISA core subjects (maths, reading and science) – compared to the OECD average (49%) while a higher share of native students attain the proficiency (76%, compared to the OECD 72%) (OECD, 2018_[14]).

There are four Introductory Programmes that offer students an education that can be adapted individually to their educational needs (see Chapter 1 for a more complete description). This adaptive aspect of the programme is important, as there is no diploma goals or programme structure (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]). Upon completion of the Introductory Programme, students receive an upper-secondary school certificate (not diploma) specifying the education the student has received. Work-based learning is compulsory in two of the Introductory Programmes and three of the programmes have the option of offering an apprenticeship (see Chapter 3).

The Language Introduction Programme is designed for newly arrived students

Introductory programmes are designed for young people who have not met the qualification for a National upper-secondary Programme. In particular, the Language Introduction Programme prepares newly arrived students to learn the Swedish language up to the level required for the next steps. This programme teaches Swedish or Swedish as a Second Language at the compulsory school level and may be combined with Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) or other initiatives that would be helpful for the student's knowledge development. A recent change (July 2018) strengthened its tie with other subjects, which should be added soon after the language teaching began, based on the student's aspirations or skills (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]).

For example, students in the programme are eligible to attend any other Introductory Programme, including the Vocational Introduction Programme or Individual Alternative Programme, depending on the student needs and the focus of education. However, they can progress onto a National Programme only if they meet a set of criteria: mastery of Swedish as a Second Language at a compulsory school level, plus passing grades in English, mathematics and five other subjects (for VET) before the year they turn 20 (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]).

There has been an increase of migrants in the Introductory Programmes, in particular the Language Introduction Programme

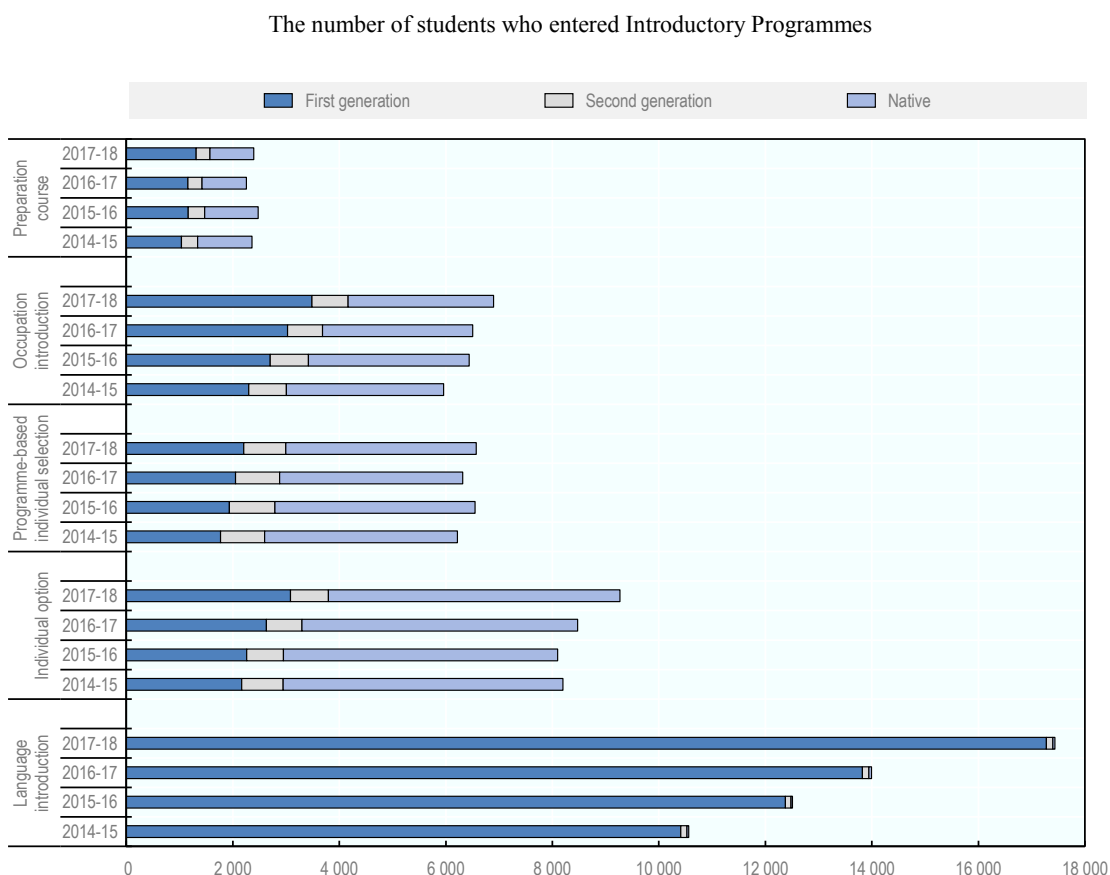
The significant increase in the number of new arrivals at upper-secondary schools was most pronounced in the Introductory Programmes (Figure 6.2), in particular the Language Introduction Programme (Skolverket, 2017_[16]; Skolverket, 2018_[10]). This programme admitted over 90% more students in 2016-17 than 2015-16. As a result, with more than 35 900 students enrolled in 2016-17, it became the fourth-largest programme out of all upper-secondary programmes, making up about 10% of all enrolments. Although precise data are not available, it is clear that this increase directly mirrors the increase of humanitarian refugees and asylum seekers in the student population. In principle, all students who began the programme in autumn 2016 were newly arrived and the majority had only been in the country for one year (Skolverket, 2018_[10]).

Similarly, the share of foreign-born students in transitional programmes has increased significantly in some other OECD countries. For example in Germany, the number of foreign-born in the pre-vocational year – the major transitional programme in Germany – increased from 18 000 in 2014-15 to 81 000 in 2016-17. Around 70% of this group (55 000) was born in one of the main asylum countries (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2018_[17]).⁶

Many newly arrived students in the Language Introduction Programme experience difficulty in transitioning to a National Programme

While many young migrants, in particular newly arrived, attend the Language Introduction Programme, a significant number experience difficulty transitioning to further educational or labour market options. For example, according to the Swedish National Agency of Education,⁷ 36% of students in this programme transferred to a National Programme within five years⁸ and 15% obtained an upper-secondary diploma⁹ and 14% proceeded with secondary level adult education. More specifically, more students proceed to a National Vocational Programme (in particular in health and social care), mainly because its admission requires passing grades in fewer subjects than for National Programmes preparing for Higher Education. Out of those newly arrived students who advanced rapidly from Language Introduction to a National Programme, the majority entered an academic track. In comparison, entry onto VET programmes is more common for students who spend more time in the Language Programme (Skolverket, 2016_[18]). In sum, 21 % of students who started in the Language Programme in 2011 transitioned to a Vocational Programme within five years, but only 8% received a VET diploma (Skolverket, 2017_[9]).

Figure 6.2. The entry of foreign-born students has increased sharply in Language Introduction Programmes



Source: Adapted from the National Agency of Education (2018_[19]), *Statistics*, www.skolverket.se/statistik-och-utvardering/statistik-i-tabeller/gymnasieskola/skolor-och-elever.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933927628>

Other Introductory Programmes have higher transition rates

For comparison, the transition rate of all Introductory Programmes combined is 48% within five years. Yet, whole other Introductory Programmes have higher transition rates, those who entered a National Programme from the Language Introduction Programme were more likely to obtain an upper-secondary diploma than those who entered from all other Introductory Programmes (except for programme-oriented Individual Options).

Other countries exhibit higher transition rates from their Introductory Programmes

Direct comparison with other OECD countries regarding transition rates is not feasible because of different programme lengths, objectives, content, quality, entry requirements, etc. Nevertheless, transitions from preparatory programmes to regular VET programmes appear to be higher in some other countries. In the Netherlands, for example, out of students in the level 1 programme in upper-secondary school-based VET (MBO 1), 60% transit to level 2 (Fazekas and Litjens, 2014_[20]). This level 1 programme can be seen as

roughly equivalent to the Swedish Introductory Programme in the sense that it focuses particularly on young people with an immigrant background but without a prior qualification at a lower secondary level or sufficient Dutch language skills (Cedefop, 2016_[21]).¹⁰

Under the German dual system in Bavaria in 2016, about 40% transitioned from a two-year preparatory programme [Vocational Integration Classes (*BerufsinTEGRATIONSklassen*)] to a dual or school-based VET (Schiffhauer and Magister, 2016_[22]). The results are better three years after completing the transitional programmes: 70% enter into VET (BMBF, 2016_[23]). In Switzerland, 78% of those in the transition system proceed into VET while 7% proceed into general education (Babel, Laganà and Gaillard, 2016_[24]).

Vocational Packages: A measure that changes the composition of VET qualifications as a means to address barriers preventing the success of learners at risk

Adjusting the duration and scope of qualifications can help learners at risk of poor outcomes achieve the qualifications necessary for employment and progression in the education (Kis, 2016_[13]). In this regard, Vocational Packages (*yrkespaket*)¹¹ may enable those who are not being qualified for a National Programme (in particular, newly arrived) to be able to work with a partial qualification rather than no qualification at all (State Public Investigations, 2018_[25]).

Vocational Packages were introduced in December 2017 in both adult education and Introductory Programmes although similar forms existed previously. The Packages are nationally or regionally defined, and provide targeted training, leading to a partial qualification. The Packages may decrease time spent at school or training through modularising skills and by delivering qualifications that are in high demand in the labour market (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]).

The courses in a Vocational Package should meet requirements for employment, leading to a partial qualification, developed with employers, industry experts, local authorities and schools, and flexible in terms of skills, requirements, curricula and duration. In addition to courses that are included in a particular Vocational Package, the Package can be combined with different levels of courses if necessary, for example courses from compulsory or upper secondary levels. The Vocational Introduction Programme is particularly relevant for Vocational Packages. Different packages can be combined based on a student's career goal or employer needs (Skolverkets, 2017_[26]).

Vocational Packages are an attractive option for newly arrived students

In comparison to native learners, newly arrived humanitarian migrants often have greater needs for income (for example, to support family members and pay off debts). This can prevent them from engaging in regular VET or other types of regular – and typically long duration – education and training programmes (Kis, 2016_[13]). Swedish law permits full-time employment at age 16 under the supervision of local authorities, so some newly arrived (regardless of age) may choose to work as soon as possible. Instead of leaving these newly arrived in the labour market as unqualified workers, or leaving them in education programmes that they are unlikely to complete, partial qualifications are an attractive solution.

For adults, Vocational Packages have already been in practice in some sectors, such as health and social care. As the nationally defined packages (October 2016) standardise the

already existing arrangements that were defined locally and regionally, the packages can also facilitate the process of skills and qualification recognition. Employers are therefore strongly supportive for the use of the packages among adults.

For young people aged between 16 and 20, the packages have been offered in the Introductory Programmes. In April 2017, the National Agency was tasked to further develop the packages as a tool to accumulate partial qualifications step by step towards an upper secondary vocational diploma not only in adult education but also in the Introductory Programmes. They might allow some students to enter the labour market with a partial qualification after the training for example, through the Vocational Introduction Programme. Or, they can lead to further educational pathways. If successful, Vocational Packages for young people could result in a larger potential skills pool for the labour market, as the size of the student body in the Introductory Programme is quite large. However, this raises several concerns.

Challenge 6.1: Vocational Packages are a promising but potentially risky means of facilitating the transition of young migrants to the labour market and their progression through education.

Vocational Packages offer an alternative way for young people to obtain qualifications...

Vocational Packages offer an alternative way for young people to take steps towards obtaining an upper-secondary qualification or to transition to the world of work as a qualified worker. It is expected that they will be especially attractive to young people with disadvantaged backgrounds, including newly arrived students, who may learn more effectively while working, being motivated and self-sufficient – and as Vocational Packages can be combined with an apprenticeship. The packages, allow different combinations of existing courses delivered at different educational levels, can be an efficient and attractive tool for education and career development.

...however, there are potential risks in introducing the possibility of obtaining partial qualifications within Introductory Programmes

The introduction of Vocational Packages within the Introductory Programmes may unintendedly provide an early exit from the initial education system for young people who otherwise show significant potential. Social partners in some sectors have expressed concern that young people may move into the labour force with limited work experience and academic proficiency.

In addition, Vocational Packages may prevent young people from considering occupations that are difficult to be modularised into shorter training programmes. They may also result in young people ultimately foregoing the opportunities of building long-term employability, instead focusing on the short-term.

Policy option 6.1

Policy option 6.1: Ensure that partial qualifications are well integrated into the qualifications system and that partial qualifications are recognised as part of full upper-secondary qualifications. This means that those with partial qualifications should be encouraged to complete upper-secondary education when possible by taking missing courses.

1. The policy priority should continue to be that young people, including humanitarian migrants, attain full upper-secondary qualifications. Actively provide feasible and attractive opportunities to continue in VET after Vocational Packages by:
 - a. Building seamless pathways between programmes preparing for partial qualifications and upper-secondary or higher VET programmes.
 - b. Strengthening the co-operation between upper-secondary schools and municipal adult education.
2. Ensure youth who opt for Vocational Packages do not rule out the option of obtaining a full upper-secondary VET qualification by:
 - a. Ensuring individual assessment functions well in terms of deciding whether a student in an Introductory Programme undertakes a Vocational Package.
 - b. Implementing measures to facilitate the transition from Introductory to National Programmes, such as developing recently adapted measures that aim to strengthen Introductory Programmes and in other provision targeting young migrants, and strengthening career guidance to help migrant students to better transition to National VET Programmes (Box 6.3 for the measures tackling teacher shortages in order to increase learning intensity).

Policy arguments and implementation 6.1

Policy argument 1. Vocational programmes for young people that are lower than upper-secondary levels usually aim at transitioning them into upper-secondary vocational programmes

Most upper-secondary VET programmes last three to four years and lead to full qualifications. In general, vocational programmes that are lower than upper-secondary levels, typically lasting one to two years, act very clearly as stepping stones to upper-secondary vocational programmes (Kis, 2016^[13]; Kuczera and Field, 2018^[27]). These VET programmes are mostly pre-vocational or other transitional programmes and rarely lead to any qualification as they are outside of the regular VET system.

In regular VET, two-year VET programmes in Switzerland and Norway lead to a partial qualification (Kuczera and Field, 2018^[27]). Both of these programmes usually aim at transitioning to a regular upper-secondary VET programme. Sometimes they also aim at preparation for entry to the labour market, but in this case, are mostly aimed at adults with work experience.

There are no exactly equivalent approaches in other countries to Vocational Packages – the uniqueness is that the packages for young people lead to a partial qualification outside of regular VET programmes. But implications can still be drawn from programmes that play a similar role. For example, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Switzerland offer

shorter, pre-vocational programmes for young people outside of regular VET (Box 6.2) – some of these programmes specifically target humanitarian migrants. These programmes offer strong work-based components and encourage young people to enter a regular VET programme. They can prepare students for entry to the labour market but do not lead to any qualification. These programmes cover a broader age group than the packages in the Introductory Programme but a narrower age group than the packages as a whole.

The health care sector in some Länders in Germany such as Bavaria offers a one-year school-based VET programme leading to a partial qualification but this typically encourages and leads to a three-year apprenticeship rather than entry to the labour market (Bergseng, Degler and Lüthi, forthcoming^[28]). The Netherlands also discourages students completing MBO 1 (level 1 programme in the upper-secondary VET) from entering the labour market and encourages them to continue onto higher level VET (Fazekas and Litjens, 2014^[20]).

Switzerland has taken a more systematic approach to awarding partial qualifications for young people who have difficulty in transitioning to full VET. Compared to the regular three-four year VET (the Federal VET *Diploma* programme, EFZ or *Eidgenössisches Fähigkeitszeugnis*), two-year apprenticeships in the regular VET system lead to a partial qualification (the Federal VET *Certificate* programme, EBA or *Eidgenössisches Berufsattest*). Upon completion, EBA graduates may enter the labour market directly, or transfer to EFZ (typically, EBA apprentices can join the second year of EFZ). Evaluations show that 41% of EBA graduates progress onto EFZ within two years of completion. Among those who do not pursue further training, 75% find employment within six months of completion (Kis, 2016^[13]). Within about four years, one in four EBA graduates obtained a VET diploma through EFZ (Swiss: 27%, foreign nationals: 20%), while a further 8% had enrolled on a VET diploma programme (FSO, 2018^[29]). Together with the Norway's two-year apprenticeship, available evidence points to positive outcomes from these programmes (Kuczera and Field, 2018^[27]).

Box 6.2. Short vocational programmes for young humanitarian migrants outside of regular VET

Denmark's basic integration education (IGU)

Denmark offers a basic integration education (*Integrationsgrunduddannelsen*, IGU) programme that aims to a smooth labour market transition. It was initiated as a three-year trial scheme by a tripartite agreement in 2016. It lasts two years and is offered for a clear target group: newly-arrived refugees aged 18-40 with a focus on adults with work experience. This programme leads to a certificate of completion but not a formal qualification. It has strong work-based components with financial incentives for both participants and their employers. The training positions that IGU offers are equivalent to regular basic VET programmes (EGU), i.e. same wage rates and labour rights including unemployment benefits, paid holiday leave and pension (Sammen om Integration, 2017^[30]). This programme is highly flexible: it can be linked with other programmes and there is also possibility for already-employed people to start IGU with their current employer to get appropriate qualifications (Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2018^[31]; Ramboll, 2018^[32]).

Finland's pre-vocational programme for immigrants (VALMA)

This programme (*ammattilliseen peruskoulutukseen valmentava koulutus* or VALMA) aims to help newly arrived learners to move on to programmes leading to upper-secondary vocational qualifications. It lasts between 6 and 12 months. Migrants are provided with information and guidance on different occupations and vocational studies. When migrants later apply for an upper-secondary vocational programme through a joint application system, they can receive extra points for completed preparatory education (OECD, 2017^[33]).

Germany's preparatory traineeships (EQ)

Preparatory traineeships (*Einstiegsqualifizierung*, EQ) support young people who did not secure an apprenticeship and is designed to increase their opportunities to enter regular VET following the programme. It includes both school-based and work-based provision. The Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs designed the measure in 2004 in co-operation with key stakeholders from industry and trade. This measure does not necessarily target migrants but around 40% of students had migrant parents. 70% of EQ participants found an apprenticeship within half a year following completion and 40% undertook their apprenticeship in a company where they had interned (Popp et al., 2012^[34]). Generally employers view this measure positively (Degler and Liebig, 2017^[35]). A more supportive scheme called “EQ plus” has been introduced, which combines EQ with other vocational or socio-pedagogical support measures such as ‘abH’ training related assistance or ‘VerA’ – prevention of dropout from training (Bergseng, Degler and Lüthi, forthcoming^[28]).

Switzerland's Pre-apprenticeship for humanitarian migrants (INVOL)

Integration Apprenticeships (*Integrationsvorlehre*) is a form of pre-apprenticeship. The programme is a one year long preparatory training courses designed to facilitate enrolment in a dual-track VET programme. It combines on-the-job training or traineeships lasting at least eight weeks with the goal of acquiring basic competences in an occupational field and language training to achieve A2 level of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It is a pilot programme (800-1 000 positions per year for 2018-21) designed to help the transition of refugees and temporarily admitted persons (aged 18-35) with work experience or training, into VET and then the labour market. Through this programme, the Federal Council collaborates with the cantons, professional organisations and VET institutes.

Source: Jeon, S. (forthcoming^[36]), *Unlocking the Potential of Migrants through Vocational Education and Training: A Cross-country Review*.

Policy argument 2. The success of Vocational Packages can be measured through how well they encourage and support young people to obtain a full VET qualification.

Vocational Packages should be primarily regarded as an entry point to full VET

Vocational Packages may need to be revised frequently based on changing labour market needs as the packages focus on lower and narrower qualifications, meaning that the skills earned from the packages can quickly become obsolete. In those cases, Vocational Package graduates would need to continue VET to upskill or renew skills.

Therefore, Vocational Packages should emphasise that this partial qualification is not an end or exit from education but is in fact a starting point. Sweden should look to build seamless pathways from Vocational Packages to both National VET Programmes and adult VET.

Sweden should monitor Vocational Packages over the long term

There is not yet sufficient evidence to support the hypothesis that measures such as Vocational Packages would be an effective step for young people towards obtaining full qualifications later in life, particularly those with a humanitarian migrant background, nor that those measures would provide them with opportunities for skilled employment at a later phase of their career. It would be helpful to conduct a longitudinal follow-up study, in addition to an overall evaluation, in order to monitor the success and the effectiveness of these measures. Such a study should involve longer-term evaluation among those who completed Vocational Packages and their employers, as to whether: 1) Vocational Packages contribute to building resilient learners; and 2) the measures have contributed to easing skills shortages in their sectors and businesses in the long term.

Policy argument 3. Sweden could attract more migrant as well as native students into National VET programmes

Migrants are not familiar with the VET system

The health and social care sector has the country's most severe skills shortages and already attracts the largest number of foreign-born adult trainees.¹² It also exhibits the highest share of students with migrant backgrounds among upper-secondary VET programmes (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]). This is an example of why Sweden can benefit from attracting even more migrant students into National VET.

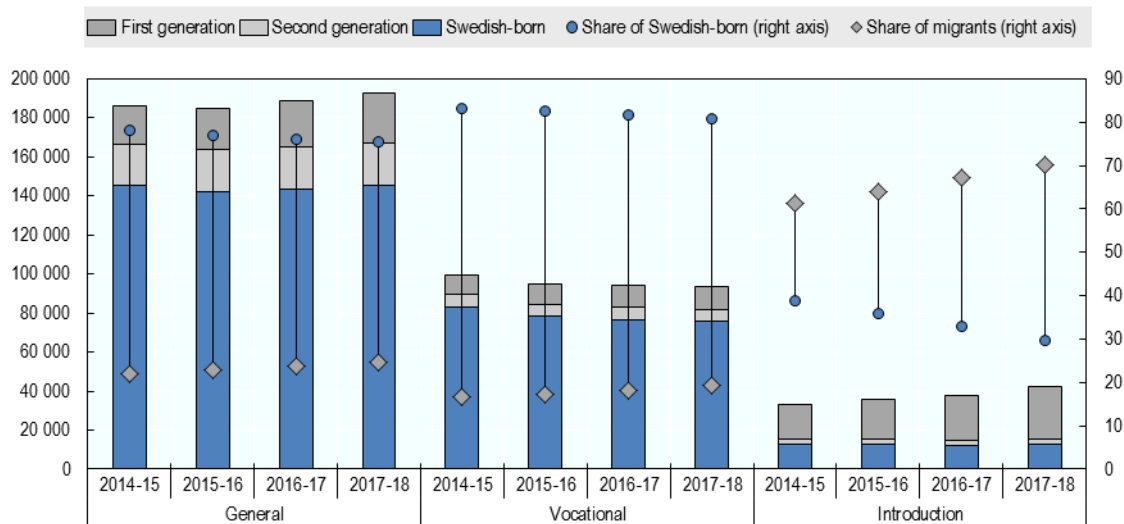
However, in general few young migrants appear to be interested in VET (Figure 6.3). The number and share of students with an immigrant background in VET programmes has increased slightly in recent years, but this is only because VET has experienced a general decline in attractiveness.¹³ This is unfortunate, as VET often results in good employment outcomes (OECD, 2018_[2]), reflecting both employer demand for skills and the likelihood of better integration overall.

Among newly arrived, students are increasingly moving into general upper-secondary education, which contributes to a labour surplus in some fields such as social sciences (Statistics Sweden, 2017_[1]). VET could be an attractive option for many of these students, even if they have strong academic potential, particularly if they are made aware of labour market trends. In 2013-14, 17.8% of newly arrived students attended general education, increasing to 19.3% in 2016-17. In the same period, the share of these students in VET

decreased from 10.7% to 9.5%. For comparison, the share in the Introductory Programme has been relatively stable at about 72% over this time period. This trend can also be observed in many OECD countries through Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data analysis: young people increasingly want to pursue higher education and work in high-skilled jobs (Musset and Mytna Kurekova, 2018_[37]).

Figure 6.3. VET Programmes attract fewer students with migrant backgrounds compared to Academic Programmes

Number and share of Swedish-born students and students with a migrant background, by programme and year



Note: Academic and vocational upper secondary education are national programmes.

Source: Author's own work based on National Agency of Education (2018_[19]) *Statistics*, <https://www.skolverket.se/statistik-och-utvardering/statistik-i-tabeller/gymnasieskola/skolor-och-elever>.

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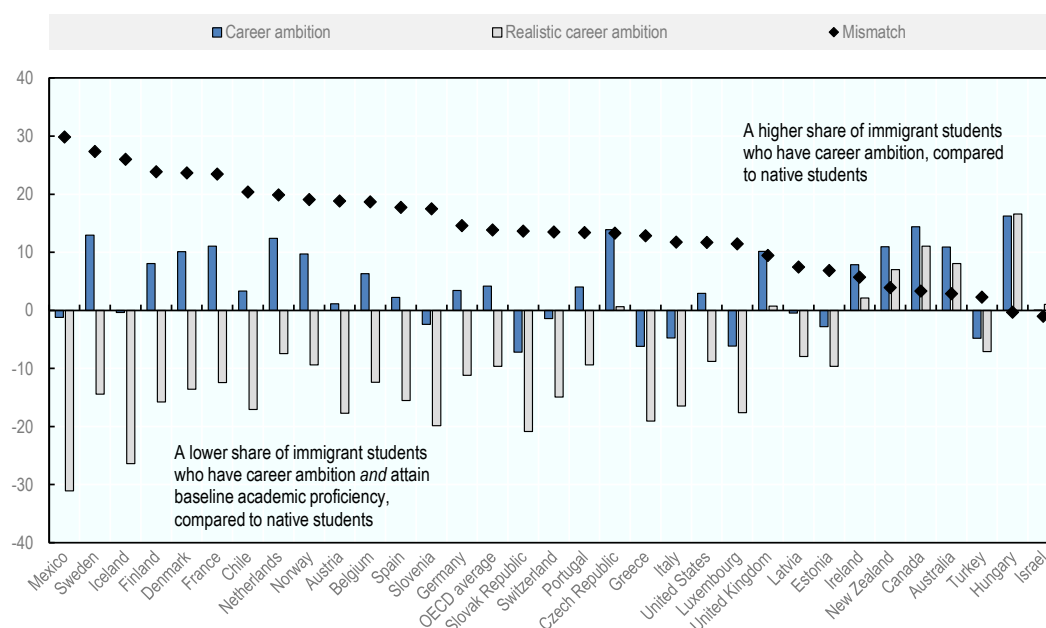
Choice of upper-secondary education by migrants is influenced by diverse factors

For migrant students, these choices are often influenced by a preference formed by their country or culture of origin or the ambitions of aspiration of parents and families. In fact, and confirmed by analysis based on PISA data (OECD, 2018_[14]), compared to native students, students with a migrant background tend to have higher, but less realistic career ambitions (Figure 6.4) and primarily choose an academic track in upper-secondary education (The Upper Secondary Education Inquiry, 2016_[38]).

Compounding this issue, regard for VET in the country of origin of a young migrant can be low, in some cases as the result of a weak VET system. For example, in Syria from which the highest number of recent arrivals came to Sweden (Statistics Sweden, 2017_[39]), the VET system has not been sufficiently geared towards the needs of the labour market and has been considered to be a second-best option with only tenuous links to more promising streams. In addition, the absence of a lifelong learning facility makes it almost impossible to re-enter the school system as an adult (European Training Foundation, 2003_[40]).

Figure 6.4. Students with a migrant background tend to have higher but less realistic career ambitions

Differences in the percentage of students who expect to become high-skilled professional between immigrant students and native students



Note: Students with ambitious career expectations are those who expect to work as a manager, a professional or an associate professional by the age of 30 (the control is whether one of the parents is high-skilled professional). Students with ambitious but realistic career expectations are those who expect to become managers, professionals or associate professionals and technicians by the age of 30 and who achieved at least PISA proficiency level 2 in all three PISA core subjects – science, reading and mathematics.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the gap between these two differences.

Source: Adapted from tables 8.6-8.11 in OECD (2018^[14]), *The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background: Factors that Shape Well-being*, OECD Reviews of Migrant Education, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264292093-en>.

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Increasing the attractiveness of VET and active career guidance can help young migrants

For high performing migrants with high aspirations, increasing the attractiveness of VET could benefit both students and the labour market (see Chapter 5). Increasing attractiveness could be accomplished by providing clearer pathways toward higher VET and higher education, more active career guidance, extensive reach-out, and attractive information on vocational training and occupations.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including migrants, tend to have narrower and weaker understanding of career opportunities than their native-born peers. They require, consequently, greater help from state agencies in accessing information. Research also highlights that career guidance should not be limited to the provision of information, but include opportunities for migrants to explore for themselves from an early age, through career events, job shadowing and work placements. This is particularly important for young people whose families lack first hand insights into careers of interest.

Compulsory, proactive provision of such information from a young age can address the gap in knowledge (Musset and Mytna Kurekova, 2018^[37]).

Additional support for learning is necessary for the transition to VET

Evidence shows that 52% of students who migrated to Sweden after the age of seven qualified for a National Programme at the upper-secondary level. The share drops to 28% of students among those who arrived between the ages of 12 and 15 (in their last four years of compulsory schooling), compared to the national average of close to 90% (OECD, 2017^[41]). For these lower performing migrants, additional support that help them enhance their academic skills would be necessary, in part through improving the quality of teaching through increased hours of tuition, including extracurricular activities. In order to do so, Sweden first needs to tackle teacher shortages (Box 6.3).

Box 6.3. Maximising the use of migrant skills to tackle teacher shortages in Sweden

Severe teacher shortages in Sweden

Sweden is experiencing severe teacher shortages and this is expected to continue. The demand for teachers sharply increased partly due to the recent increase of migrants. 8 500 (or 55%) more entrants per year are required in teacher education programmes to reach the goal for qualified teachers that the National Agency for Education believes is optimal (Swedish Higher Education Authority, 2018^[42]).

In view of this shortage, the Education Act allows for employing uncertified teachers of VET subjects without a time limit, whereas in regard to other teachers, there are limitations. However, if there is a certified VET applicant available, the provider of education should employ her or him over the uncertified teacher. 45% of active VET teachers have no educational college degree (*yrkeslärarutbildning*) – a prerequisite for obtaining teaching certification. Exemption from teaching certification may help meet the quantity needs but may undermine the teaching quality in VET schools. This VET teacher deficit concerns not only upper-secondary education but the entire labour market supply (Statistics Sweden, 2017^[1]; Skolverket, 2018^[43]).

Migrant skills can help tackle teacher shortages

A report by National Agency for Education concludes that teacher education programmes would have to be significantly larger than today in order to meet the future needs of qualified teachers (Skolverket, 2017^[44]). Clearly, Sweden has put efforts into addressing teacher shortages, however as this problem persists, migrant skills could be an additional means of tackling the teacher shortages.

The demand for migrant teachers has increased in part due to the increase in number of migrant students with diverse background. For example, such teachers can be called upon to help address issues related to the tendency for students from migrant backgrounds to be concentrated particularly in schools facing greater challenges (Berglund, 2017^[45]).

The 16-18 year old demographic in Sweden is expected to increase more than 30% between 2016 and 2035. Overall, a 15% deficit is expected in all teaching professions by 2035, which will create a more competitive environment for VET teacher recruitment in addition to skills shortages in some VET sectors (Statistics Sweden, 2017^[1]).¹⁴

Sweden's mechanisms to encourage migrants who have teacher qualifications to continue their teaching career in Sweden

Several authorities and bodies work together to assess and validate skills and qualifications. The Swedish Council for Higher Education (*Universitets- och högskolerådet*) is responsible for assessments of university degrees from other countries. Universities themselves assess whether an applicant to a particular course or programme is eligible (Bunar, 2017_[46]). According to the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the number of applications for assessment of foreign education grew from 18 001 in 2014 to 29 187 in 2017 for all levels of education, with the largest number being Syrian nationals).¹⁵ The average processing time for an assessment is about 5-8 months for academic education, 6-10 months for post-secondary vocational education and 2-4 months for upper secondary education, as of September 2018.

For newly arrived teachers, three major initiatives at the national level offer alternative paths to resuming their profession in Sweden.

- **Bridging programmes for people with foreign degrees in teaching** was introduced in 2007 and provides those with foreign degrees in teaching with a maximum two-year university programme, including in-service practical training. The programme can encompass an additional equivalent of half a year of language studies in Swedish or English if that is deemed necessary. Advanced knowledge in Swedish language is the most critical part of requirement (Bunar, 2017_[46]).
- **Boost for Teachers programme (*Lärarlyftet*)** was introduced in 2007, further developed in a second phase until 2018, and has been prolonged until 2019. This programme focuses on enhancing the qualifications of teachers who are not qualified for all subjects or age groups they teach, with the goal of increasing the number of fully certified teachers in the education system. The government also supports continuous professional development for teachers (OECD, 2017_[41]).
- **Fast track (*Snabbspår*) programme for teachers** was introduced in 2016 partly as a response to the teacher shortages and partly to the enormous need for native-language teachers and bilingual teachers to support newly arrived students. The programme's operation and effectiveness have been featured in several international reports (OECD, 2016_[5]; OECD, 2017_[41]). Under this programme, validation, further education, in-service training and work placement are reconnected in an efficient way, shortening the newly arrived teacher's path to becoming a certified teacher and becoming employed (Bunar, 2017_[46]). From 2016 to February 2018, 985 people participated in the training of which 510 people completed the training, 390 people were still in training and 85 people had dropped out (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018_[47]).

Individualised approaches and quality insurance also help

International evidence suggests that individual coaching or case management may help ensure the development of the skills migrants commonly need to prosper in the labour market and so enable better transitions. This is an area where Sweden has strengths, but these should also be applied to Vocational Packages. Sweden already has desirable instruments including native-language tuition and individual study plans, but quality

varies across municipalities (Skolverket, 2018_[10]). Sweden should also take into account organisational variations of Introductory Programmes across municipalities, which may affect student motivation and opportunities to access to National Programmes (Skolverket, 2018_[10]), and should ensure quality and co-ordination nationally.

The government recently allocated SEK 300 million (approximately EUR 29 million) per year for 2018–20 to reinforce Introductory Programmes in order to enhance the transition to National Programmes or other educational programmes (Government Offices of Sweden, 2018_[47]). The National Agency of Education is currently working with Introductory Programme developers to better support municipalities in terms of provision of these programmes. This is an appropriate direction and can strengthen National VET Programmes and encourage and support the transition of newly arrived to these programmes.

Challenge 6.2: Recent humanitarian migrants are a diverse group with different needs

Newly arrived learners, in particular those who arrive in Sweden when they are in their late-teens, face extra barriers when entering into a National Vocational Programme

Young humanitarian migrants arrive in Sweden facing multiple difficulties and challenges. This is even more the case for groups such as young refugee women (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018_[48]) and unaccompanied minors (Aycan and Wadensjö, 2017_[49]; OECD, 2018_[2]). These groups require additional care and support, and evidence suggests that Sweden exhibits relatively effective and good practices for these groups despite room for improvement (Liebig and Tronstad, 2018_[48]).

Difficulties facing late-arrival migrants regarding the National Programme entry

The success rates of migrant students getting into VET is much lower compared to native Swedish students. Admission rates for upper-secondary VET applications in 2016-17 were 32% for foreign-born individuals, 59% for second generation, and 75% for native Swedish.¹⁶ Despite the overall paucity of data, available evidence from other OECD countries show similar patterns. Several reasons may explain this gap, including generally lower levels of educational achievements among migrants compared to native students – mainly due to language barriers – or effectiveness of preparatory programmes targeting migrant students.

In addition to academic requirements, all residents, regardless of whether they are migrants or otherwise, are only entitled to begin their upper-secondary National Programme up to the end of the spring term in the year they turn 20 years of age. This puts additional pressure on new and late arrivals. Entitlement to adult education starts from age 20 and its entry requirements differ from the National Programmes, being often less demanding. For asylum seekers, this limit is the year they turn 18 and they do not have right to adult education.

Late-arrivals often face extra challenges as the older a migrant is on arrival, the less chance he or she has to succeed in economic life (OECD, 2018_[14]). In fact, the average age of refugee children in Sweden has gone up: in 2000, the average age of arrival was 8.4 while in 2010, it was 9.7 (Grönqvist and Niknami, 2017_[50]). One obvious reason why there are more challenges for older children is linguistic, as a child can learn a language

faster when he or she is younger and to fully master a language for school requirements in Sweden usually takes between six and eight years (Skolverket, 2011^[51]).

Policy option 6.2

Policy option 6.2: Address barriers preventing newly-arrived young migrants from accessing vocational education and training (VET).

1. Provide alternative strategies to ease the difficulties facing students in entering National VET Programmes.
2. Develop and adjust a range of adult VET provision and support measures to better suit those students who have not attained upper secondary qualification.

Policy arguments and implementation 6.2

Policy argument 1. With more flexible entry requirements, more young people would enter into and complete National VET Programmes

Flexible arrangements may facilitate transition to national upper-secondary programmes

Compared to other OECD countries, the requirements to pursue VET at upper-secondary level in Sweden are relatively restricted, as the country requires passing grades in eight compulsory subjects. While requirements for upper-secondary VET entry slightly vary across countries (Table 6.1), in general, completion of lower secondary level is required. In work-based VET systems where students need to find an employer to continue their studies, academic competencies (study record, grades or ranking) are not mandatory but may be an advantage – similarly for work experience. This is sometimes the case for school-based VET system when providers have autonomy to organise a tailored test.

In this regard, adjusting entry requirements or allowing additional time to enter a National VET Programme from Introductory Programmes (for example, introducing flexible entry age limits for National VET, or more specifically apprenticeship) may encourage entry into a National VET Programme and completion at an earlier age (than later in their adult life) and result in a higher transition rate to a National VET Programme among migrants. In fact, the issue regarding the age limit was discussed in the 2016 Upper Secondary Education Inquiry (2016^[38]), which did not result in any change. Opportunity exists to build more evidence to see whether some flexibility may be beneficial to increase the uptake of upper-secondary qualifications. For example, allowing students to study in an Introductory Programme to enter a National Programme within 3-5 years can be one option.

Table 6.1. Upper-secondary VET requirements/student admissions criteria in selected countries

Country	Legal requirements	Academic and other requirements/criteria
Austria	Entry at 15 onwards	Completion of nine years of compulsory schooling. No specific school qualification is required.
Denmark	Entry at 15 up to 24	Danish 9th grade leaving exams or exam grade average equivalent to 2 or higher in maths and Danish (level G). ¹⁷
Finland	Entry at 15 up to 25 (minimum 15 – no maximum age for apprenticeship)	Completed the basic education syllabus. Admission can be based on academic performance and work experience. Providers decide to organise an entrance exam or an aptitude test.
Germany	Varies by regions, sectors	No formal requirements but lower-secondary qualifications or language skills are generally required (vary across Länders).
Italy	Entry at 15 up to 18	First-cycle leaving certificate (eight years of education). Schools establish their own criteria when excessive applications.
Netherlands	At least 16	No specific requirements for entry level 1. Admission requirements apply for courses from level 2 upwards: e.g. a school-leaving certificate or completion of a basic VET for level 2 entry.
Norway	Entry at 15 up to 24	Completion of compulsory education (not pass grade but participation).
Sweden	Entry at 15 up to 20	Pass grade (A-E) in Swedish, English and mathematics and in at least five other subjects (total eight subjects).
Switzerland	15 - varies by cantons	Completion of lower secondary level. Various training companies also require applicants to sit an aptitude test; entrance examination for full-time vocational schools

Note: Age requirements may differ depending on sector. Academic criteria include equivalents. Denmark and Finland offer VET in English or other languages, in which case an equivalent level of language of instruction is required instead.

Source: Eurydice (2018^[52]), *Organisation of Vocational and Technical Upper Secondary Education (various countries)*, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice> for Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Euroguidance Austria (2014^[53]), “The Austrian education system”, <https://www.bildungssystem.at/en/> for Austria. The Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science (2017^[54]), “Admission to vocational education and training (VET)”, <https://ufm.dk/en/education/recognition-and-transparency/recognition-guide/admission-vet> for Denmark. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2018^[55]), “Qualifications and studies in vocational education and training”, https://minedu.fi/en/qualifications-and-studies_vet for Finland. The European Migration Network (2016^[56]), *Synthesis Report – Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection/Humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market: Policies and Good Practices*, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00_integration_of_beneficiaries_of_international_protection_eu_2015_en_final.pdf. For France, Forum Réfugiés-Cosi (2018^[57]), “France: Access to the labour market”, www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-labour-marke. For the age of compulsory schooling, see OECD (2018^[58]), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>.

Migrant students need more time to succeed

The benefits of a more flexible age limit may be small but still larger than the apparent drawbacks. Evidence from the Swedish National Agency of Education shows that 36% of students who started the Language Introduction Programme in 2011-12 enrolled on a National Programme within five years, but the share increases to 47% within six years (Skolverket, 2018^[10]). Researchers show that newly arrived migrants perceive Introductory Programmes as transition programmes and want to proceed to mainstream

upper-secondary schools before they feel pressure of “getting too old” to start a National Programme (Sharif, 2017_[59]; Nilsson Folke, 2017_[60]).

Considering that newly-arrived migrant students require more time to learn language, cultural norms and other skills, Bavaria (Germany) started a 1+3 model within its regular VET, allowing migrants one additional year for intensive language training, if necessary, before continuing to the usual 3-year apprenticeship. This is in addition to the existing transitional programmes. The previously mentioned EBA in Switzerland was implemented with the same goal. For some students, this kind of additional time allowance could make a huge difference in their educational and career paths.

Flexible age limits are somewhat typical for VET systems that are mainly work-based, allowing wider access to apprenticeships. It might be argued that this flexibility in terms of age eligibility for entry into upper-secondary VET may be related to weaknesses in adult education provision. However, this does not appear to be the case. In Switzerland, the adult participation rate in education and training is as high as in Sweden: in 2016, 69% of adults aged 25-64 in Switzerland and 64% in Sweden.¹⁸ In Norway, the statutory right to upper secondary education and training is valid until the academic year a student turns 24 (Eurydice, 2018_[52]).

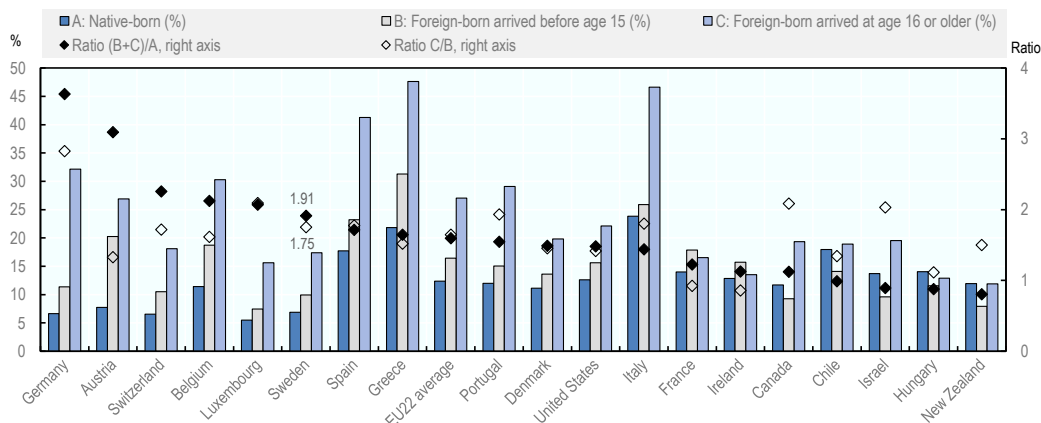
Late arrivals are overrepresented among NEETs in Sweden

Late arrivals among migrant students are particularly penalised in Sweden. For migrants who were aged 15 or under when they arrived, the rates of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) are much lower in Sweden compared to other OECD countries. However, for those who were 16 or older when they arrived, NEET rates are almost double (1.75) those who arrived before age 15 (Figure 6.5) – a gap higher than most EU countries (e.g. in Denmark the ratio is 1.46).

Ensuring that late arrivals also benefit from VET in Sweden would help them to acquire necessary qualifications for work and to more quickly integrate into society, in addition to the long-term benefits. The transition of students who began the Language Introduction Programme clearly shows the impact of the age of arrival in terms of next steps. Four years after the entry to the programme at age 16 or younger, 48% had entered or completed a National Programme. This compares to 38% of those who entered the programme at age 17, or only 10% of students who were 17 or over (Skolverket, 2018_[10]).

Figure 6.5. NEET rates are lower in Sweden but there is room for improvement among foreign-born youth who arrived at age 16 and over

Shares and ratios of native- and foreign-born 15-29 year-old NEETs, by age at arrival in the country (2017)



Note: Ratio by place of birth $[(B+C)/A]$ is the ratio of foreign-born (%) to native-born (%). Ratio by age of arrival (C/B) is the ratio of migrants who arrived at age 16 and older (%) to those who arrived at age 15 and younger (%).

Source: Adapted from Table A2.3 in OECD (2018_[2]), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>.

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Policy argument 2. Transitions between educational institutions or programmes unfortunately present opportunities to leave the system

For young people without an upper-secondary qualification, the transition to upper-secondary adult education is not automatic

Because of the risk of dropout, unnecessary transitions should be avoided if possible – the ideal situation is a student completes an intended qualification level in one educational institution. Students who have not entered or completed a National Programme may face difficulties in transitioning to education as adults – whether in municipal adult education or otherwise – compared to adults who completed an upper secondary qualification. Generally, participation rates in adult education tend to be lower among low-educated (OECD, 2016_[61]).

There are two possible reasons for this. First, newly arrived young people and other youth at risk may not have sufficient information, guidance or understanding on how to proceed with adult education after leaving an Introductory Programme, including Vocational Packages. Second, they may be discouraged from continuing any form of education because they feel a sense of failure (Sharif, 2017_[59]; Nilsson Folke, 2017_[60]). Instead, they may prefer to work in a temporary or seasonal job out of economic need rather than continuing upskilling to seek higher qualifications. Some might have opted for Vocational Packages from the Introductory Programmes; but if they decided to work for some time, choosing Vocational Packages means opting out of a transition to a National Programme – only because of age limits – unless they continue in VET through adult education.

Issues to overcome for the smoother transition to upper-secondary adult education

For those who are not able to transfer to a National Programme, there are issues to overcome in order to facilitate the transition from the Introductory Programme to adult education. The follow-up study on the Language Introduction Programme by the Swedish National Agency of Education highlights the challenges faced by students in the transition from the programme to adult education (Skolverket, 2018_[10]). Almost half of those students who started the programme began adult education within four years, while around one-fifth of these students experienced an interruption or did not fully complete the adult education programme.¹⁹ The results of the study also suggest that adult education providers and upper-secondary schools should collaborate and co-ordinate in order to provide greater support in this transition into, continuation through, and completion of upper-secondary adult education. For many migrant students, adult education – a system Sweden is rightfully proud of – may still be a new concept.

Information transfer for humanitarian migrants is another challenge. Newly arrived are often moved around due to their insecure legal status and housing issue.²⁰ For this reason, some migrant students have to restart at new schools several times, with new teachers, students and curriculum. The Swedish National Agency of Education has noted that administrative and academic information is not passed smoothly between schools and education institutions when newly arrived students change schools or municipalities. This is partly due to a lack of an established system of transfer and the fact that Introductory Programmes as well as adult education programmes are designed differently across municipalities (Skolverket, 2018_[10]).

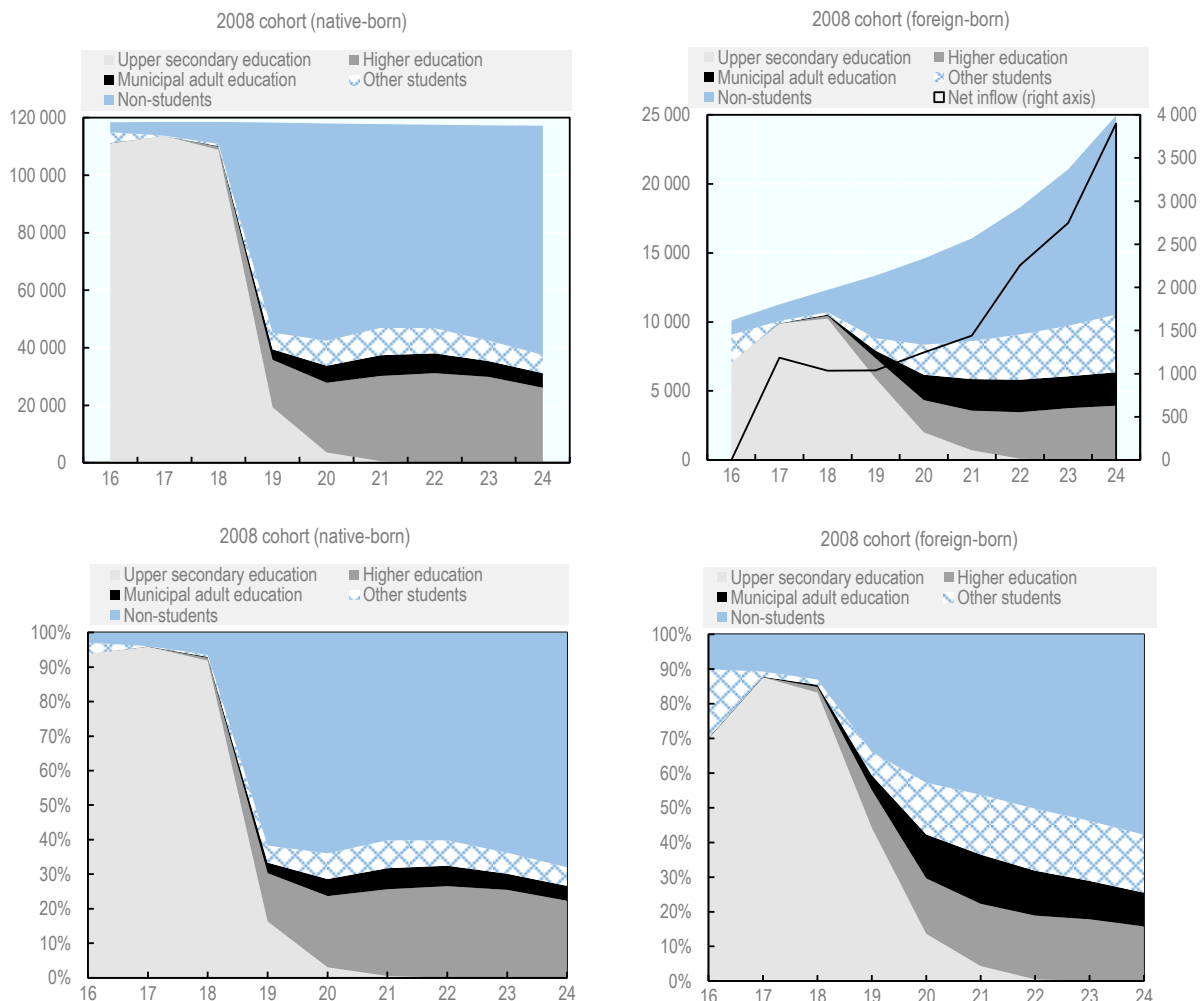
Similarly, for those young humanitarian migrants who might already have been through several different municipalities and educational institutions, attending yet another new institution – such as an adult education provider – with the hope of obtaining a higher qualification that is not guaranteed to lead to secure employment requires significant commitment and time and resource investment.

Adult education is essential for young migrants in particular

Foreign-born youth rely on adult education relatively more than native-born youth while they stay longer or lag behind in upper-secondary education, simply because they need more time to build their skills and knowledge (Figure 6.6). This suggests that adult education presents a good opportunity for migrant learners, but many of them need more time to succeed in the upper-secondary education system rather than, or prior to transitioning to adult education. Extra guidance and counselling mechanisms in the transition to adult education would be helpful for those who have not made their way into a National Programme, those who have dropped out, or those who are not yet in employment or are in a job with little promise.

Figure 6.6. Foreign-born students tend to stay longer or lag behind in upper-secondary education yet rely relatively more on adult education

Number and share of students (16-24) who were 16 years old in 2008 (2008-16), by type of education and place of birth



Note: This graph is based on cross-sectional data, but follows the corresponding age-year data of the cohort who was 16 years old in 2008 until 2016. Other students include advanced vocational education (KY), Folk High Schools students in long courses, students in the preparatory year of science and technology in universities and university colleges, post-graduate students with an activity rate more than 1%. From 2015 Arts- and culture courses are included in Supplementary education programmes and from 2016 Supplementary education programmes have been replaced by Arts- and culture courses.

Source: Author's own work based on Statistics Sweden (2018_[62]), "Population 16-74 years of age by sex, age, types studies the autumn term, level of educational attainment of the parent(s) and national background. Year 1999-2017", Statistics Sweden (database) www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/en/ssd/START_UF_UF0507/StudiedeltagandeF/?rxid=9dd6b114-cafe-4a1d-ae87-33817431d20f.

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Notes

¹ Between 2004 and 2013, over 20% of permanent migrant inflows into Sweden were made up of humanitarian migrants – by far the largest share of all OECD countries (OECD, 2016^[5]). The country has had the fourth largest number of asylum applicants in 2015 at about 163 000 among OECD countries after Germany, Hungary and the United States (OECD, 2017^[6]), although this number has drastically gone down to fewer than 30 000 in 2016 and 2017. In 2018, the number was 3 824 as of March 2018.

² Finland, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Norway, Turkey and the United Kingdom have no available data on this.

³ The share of this age group out of all asylum seekers has been consistently greater than 40% despite a slight decrease in 2015-16 (data before 2017 from Eurostat (46.4% in 2014, 39.7 % in 2015, 38.5 in 2016, and 41.3% in 2017) and 2018 data (43%) from the Swedish Migration Agency). This share has grown closer to the higher EU average over recent years. Recognition rates – representing the share of asylum seekers whose applications have been approved – among this age group are relatively high in Sweden, though lower in 2017 than 2014.

⁴ While asylum seekers have relatively high chances of gaining permanent residency in Sweden in comparison to other EU countries, their prospects for finding employment are less promising than in other refugee-receiving countries (Irastorza and Bevelander, 2017^[8]).

⁵ This additional aim was added when Introductory Programmes replaced Individual Programmes as part of the 2011 reform, in an attempt to reduce dropout rates from upper secondary education (Arreman and Dovemark, 2018^[63]).

⁶ Data does not distinguish by legal status and citizenship is therefore taken as a proxy for asylum seeker or refugee status. The definition of ‘main asylum countries’ follows the definition used by the PES and includes the main eight countries of origin of asylum seekers in the past years: Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria and Somalia.

⁷ Results from following 7 213 students who began Language Introduction Programme in 2011 and 2012 (Skolverket, 2017^[9]; Skolverket, 2018^[10]).

⁸ This is the lowest compared to other Introductory Programmes in the cohort started in 2011, followed in 2016.

⁹ It is worth noting that students whose asylum cases were pending have no social security number that have not been able to follow up for this result (e.g. 60% of students who started Language Introduction Programme in 2016 had no identity information and 46% in 2017) (Skolverket, 2018^[10]).

¹⁰ However, the size is much smaller and apprenticeships are much more common in MBO 1 (the transition rate to level 2 is 21% for apprentices due to higher employment rates) (Fazekas and Litjens, 2014^[20]), compared to the Introductory Programmes in Sweden.

¹¹ See (Skolverket, 2017^[64]) and (Skolverket, 2017^[65]).

¹² See Table 3 (learners completing upper-secondary VET-courses in adult municipal education in 2013) in Skolverket (2017^[66]).

¹³ Among upper-secondary VET programmes, the foreign-born students tend to be over-represented in the care sector (37%) compared to Swedish students despite the fact that this sector only attracts 10.5% of all VET students (Ministry of Education, 2018^[15]).

¹⁴ The forecast of teacher shortages is due to the expected increase of the student number. For example the demand in the primary schools is expected to increase by about 25% and in secondary

schools about 35% by 2035. Another reason of the increased teacher demand is that currently active teachers without a teaching degree will eventually be replaced by teachers with a teaching degree (Ministry of Education, 2018_[15]).

¹⁵ A person may have applied for assessment of several courses (Swedish Council for Higher Education, 2018_[67]).

¹⁶ Sweden's admission rates are the number of students admitted to their first choice divided by the number of applicants who sought their respective programmes in the first place. Applicants include non-eligible persons. Statistics Gymnasieskolan – Elever – Riksnivå for Sweden.

¹⁷ For example, FVU (Preparatory Adult Education) level 4, AVU (General Adult Education) Danish as a second language, Danish 3 Exam or the Study Test in Danish as a Second Language (Higher Education Exam).

¹⁸ Analysis based on (Eurostat, 2018_[7]) using [trng_aes_101].

¹⁹ For example, 18% experienced interruption and 14% have not fully completed during their first fall semester in adult education at the primary and secondary level (Skolverket, 2018, p. 47_[10]).

²⁰ For those under the age 18, they can start schooling even if the settlement is not confirmed – this is understandable, but it can cause a complication for tracking in the education system if the students have to move for a permanent accommodation after having started a school already. This is a challenge for schools and municipalities in providing education for them sustainably.

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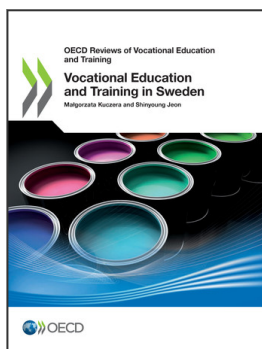
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