

# What can the Finnish VET system learn from the other Nordic countries?

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# Introduction

- ✧ Considerations points for comparing and transferring reforms from other countries:
- ✧ The VET systems are closely interrelated with the historical, cultural and socio-economic contexts.
- ✧ It is not possible to put any strategy into effect in any country as such.
- ✧ The history of VET in each country affects present development (e.g. Denmark (work-based) and Finland (school-based))
- ✧ However, each country can learn good practices from the other countries.
- ✧ In addition, it is good to remember that every system has its strengths and weaknesses.

## *Attractiveness of VET in the Nordic countries*

	<b>Finland</b>	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Norway</b>	<b>Denmark</b>
<b>Immediate continuation of studies in VET</b>	41,5 %	36,0 %	32,8 %	19,0 %
<b>Population</b>	5,400 Million	9,482 Million	4,985 Million	5,580 Million

## Characteristics of the Finnish VET

- ✧ *The popularity of vocational education and training has increased since the early 2000s. The year of 2009 was the first year when the majority of applicants listed a VET programme as their primary choice.*
- ✧ *The Finnish VET is not the second choice for young people.*
- ✧ *The Finnish school-based VET includes work-related learning (on-the-job learning and vocational skills demonstrations). It could be seen as also a 'hybrid' system.*
- ✧ *A vocational qualification gives general eligibility for higher education studies.*
- ✧ *The establishment of polytechnics guarantees the systematic route to HE. One of the key educational principle is lifelong learning.*
- ✧ *Apprenticeship is mainly for adults.*

## *Challenges of the Finnish VET*

- ✧ To improve the links between VET institutions and the world of work
- ✧ To develop the Finnish apprenticeship system
- ✧ To decrease the dropping out, although it has gone down in recent years.
- ✧ To develop the VET system to be more responsive to heterogeneous student population (ability, social, ethnic and gender background).
- ✧ To meet new demands of the changing working life and competence requirements (e.g. globalisation, digitalisation).

## What to learn from the Danish VET

- ✧ In Denmark, the highest priority is *achievement of vocational qualifications and employability of apprentices* .
- ✧ Dual system has a *strong connection to labour market and smooth access to labour market*.
- ✧ The system provides qualifications that prepare for a high degree of flexibility and mobility on the labour market.
- ✧ *Employer organisations take more responsibility for the administration and search of the apprenticeship training places.*
- ✧ The idea of *the Practicum model* is that the student, the company and the school jointly define a developmental project or a work task which involves both the company and the school.
- ✧ > Danish VET is work-based system, a long tradition in apprenticeship, taking account the context

## What to learn from the Norwegian VET?

- ✧ *2+2 system: Apprenticeship system integrated part of the formal education system. Challenge is connections between apprenticeship system and HE.*
- ✧ *Apprenticeship system has been funded by the state and private enterprises.*
- ✧ *A high level trust among stakeholders, a strong cooperation between VET and the world of work*
- ✧ *Local Training Agencies (LTAs) was launched as an important policy instrument for apprentice training reform.*
- ✧ *Special track in "technical general studies" (TAF) integrates the full VET programme with a full general education and practical experience.*
  - *A comprehensive 4 year track ends with both a Journeyman's Certificate and university and college admissions certification. Cf. In Finland, the double qualification combines a general upper secondary education certificate and VET qualification.*

## What to learn from the Swedish VET?

- ✧ The 2011-reform (GY-11) of upper secondary school can be seen as part of a broader policy-trend toward the world of work. > establishment of apprenticeship programmes
  - ✧ The main problem is that there are lacking well-established traditions of apprenticeship in the gymnasium.
  - ✧ In addition, the apprenticeship programmes lack a fix structure between school-based VET and workplace-based learning and a long-term perspective on future demands in the labour market and economy.
  - ✧ The development of *Technical College*. This case represents innovative ways of organizing cooperation between three central parties in the field of initial VET, employers, unions and schools.
- > Post-secondary VET is almost lacking in Finland, e.g. technician



# Challenges of VET in the Nordic countries

The Nordic countries have different VET systems, but the same challenges to meet.

- ✧ Attractiveness of VET
- ✧ Cooperation between education and working life
- ✧ Access to labour market, graduates' skills, knowledge, competences to labour market
- ✧ Drop-outs
- ✧ Changes in labour market (e.g. globalisation, digitalisation) > changes in learning environments
- ✧ Individual learning pathways and learning environments

# Similarities and differences between the Nordic countries

Similarities/ differences	Denmark	Norway	Finland	Sweden
<b>School-/work-based learning</b>	Work-based learning Apprenticeship	Mixed Both school- and work-based learning (apprenticeship)	School-based learning including work-based period	School-based learning + Apprenticeship
<b>Links with employers</b>	Strong links; apprenticeship	Improving links with employers	Improving links with employers	Weak links with employers
<b>Links with HE</b>	Weak connection, dead end	Temporary basis	Eligibility to HE	Eligibility to HE, but not automatic

## *What kind of VET is needed in the future?*

- ✧ What kind of skills, knowledge, competence are needed in the future work?
- ✧ How are skills developed? In what context?
- ✧ How can education and employment complete each other in lifelong learning?

*Thank you for your attention!*

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