



Reference framework

Shaping excellent inclusion and integration in the context of Vocational Education and Training Sustainable Development VESD

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1. Objective of the framework and match to existing concepts

This reference framework is not designed according to the classical pattern of reference frameworks for school quality. These orientation frameworks for learning place development are written with indicators from operational quality management and classically composed according to three major fields - framework conditions, processes, results.

The reference framework developed by the members of the Network of Excellence on Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (VESD) in European dialogue and discourse is a valuable addition to the DunE-BB-EU Guide. It is compatible with national reference frameworks on school quality and thus contributes to further thematic national excellence discussions.

The number of young, but also adult refugees remains a challenge for Europe and also on other continents for all vocational learning places and supporting institutions. More refugees will come, also due to wars and climate change.

Focusing on the UN Sustainable Development Goals 17, 4, 3, 10, 5, 11, 12, 13 and 16 and in the context of the other UN Sustainable Development Goals, a constructive and insightful discourse on the design of excellent inclusion and integration took place at the second hybrid conference organized by the Italian host, the vocational school centre in Borgo San Lorenzo. The members of the Network of Excellence on Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (VESD) discussed there, but also subsequently, an expanded sustainability-oriented concept of inclusion whereby the **three dimensions of sustainability** - social, economic and ecological - were debated.

The final demands for European vocational learning sites describe the discourse results in order to be able **to realise excellent inclusion and integration, especially in the transition from school to work, in Europe.**

According to the members of the Network of Excellence on Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (VESD), the **UN Sustainable Development Goal 17 "Partnerships to achieve the Goals"** is closely linked to the future competence "communication", which must be designed in a non-violent way. It is the basic prerequisite both for **excellent inclusion and integration**

- Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (VESD) (UN Sustainable Development Goal 4) and for the implementation of the other UN Sustainable Development Goals. The "UN Sustainable Development Goal 1 No Poverty" and the "UN Sustainable Development Goal 2 No Hunger" benefit from the success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 17 and 4 as well as 5, 10 and 3.

2. Structure of the frame of reference

The discourse was based on the "**three-pillar model of sustainability**" and was also aligned with the **17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations**. Since for the members of the Network of Excellence for Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (VESD) the human being must be at the centre of consideration, contrary to the usual structure of the three-pillar model of sustainability, it is not started with the ecological dimension, but the social dimension is placed in front. The model is reversed:

The **social, economic and ecological dimension** are discussed and reflected upon one after the other and in the context of the 17 sustainability goals.



Source: [17 sustainability goals - \(un.org\)](https://un.org)

In the sustainability dimensions, the formulated "excellence indicators" are related to the respective UN Sustainable Development Goals.



3. Social dimension of sustainability

The social dimension of sustainability (**assigned sustainability goals 17, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16**) includes the following points:

- Students and trainees (learners) with disabilities who are employed in workshops for handicapped people should be given improved opportunities to obtain vocational qualifications in **cooperation with all places of learning** in vocational education and training, including vocational schools. The same applies to learners with social impairments and migrants for **excellent integration**. (Sustainable Development Goals 17, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16)
- Individual support and training plans, also using digital possibilities (for example: metaverse technology, digital, barrier-free learning portals in simple language) can be drawn up jointly. Participation and sharing is already practised, for example, at a "Round Table Inclusion" and provides the basis for the diverse decisions of learners with impairments or disabilities after joint consultation. (Sustainability Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- Training staff, including teachers and support staff, should cooperate intensively with learners and their families. They have to organise themselves as a multi-professional learning support team and organise the joint task in the context of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on UN Sustainable Development Goal 17.
- **Excellent language support** is a basic prerequisite. The language integration classes at the vocational schools must therefore be supported in a needs-based and reliable manner to enable them to enter dual vocational training. The trainees and their companies must receive support - both at vocational schools and outside of school - with intensive language support until the end of the vocational training. Close and binding cooperation, e.g. on digital working and cooperation platforms, with delivering schools, integration offices, chambers, the national employment agency, training companies in the region and other supporting institutions such as the district adult education centres and the Goethe Institute - whose language learning portals for independent language learning should be made more widely known and used at all European learning locations - is urgently needed. Tried and tested practice should be successively posted on the portal of the Network of Excellence for Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development and shared internationally. (Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- Common climate-friendly healthy food and drink affordable for everyone, including free drinking water, should be made possible in a canteen at the place of learning (sustainability goals 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17).
- Sustainability and the new roles of teachers, support staff and management staff should be identified in national school laws. (Sustainability Goals 4, 16 and further 1-3, 5-15 and 17).

4. Economic dimension of sustainability

The economic dimension of sustainability (**assigned sustainability goals 17, 4, 8, 9, 10, 16**) also means investing **in improved framework conditions - positions, training and further training and in analogue or digital assistance systems**:

- Additional teaching staff or "teaching hours" and additional posts for school social work as well as support staff must be allocated to vocational schools. Furthermore, additional working time quotas must be made available for more information exchange and communication between all education



and VET stakeholders in order to be able to guarantee **excellent cooperation** (sustainability goals 4, 8, 10, 16, 17).

- In particular, financial subsidies should be granted for further training. Interested teachers and socio-educational specialists are to be found for these training courses. Multi-professional teams must be formed at the vocational schools and cooperation with supporting institutions must be initiated and the corresponding personnel and financial resources must be made available. A school sustainability management must be introduced and annual school inclusion and integration action plans must be drawn up and integrated into regional ESD action plans. Inclusion and integration achievements should be presented in annual sustainability reports in line with data protection (Sustainability Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- Every vocational school with up to 1000 pupils should have at least four permanent posts for social work in order to be able to reliably carry out the very extensive activities according to the deputy principle (sustainability goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- In the case of even larger VET schools, one additional post for social work or support staff is required for each additional 500 pupils (Sustainability Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- Cooperation between places of learning must be improved and joint research promoted. The material facilities and equipment of the VET schools are to be made usable in coordination with other public educational institutions as well as supporting institutions, e.g. with colleges, universities, chambers for initial and continuing VET. In this way, underutilised parallel capacities can also be avoided and resources can be shared, also in a cost-saving manner (Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- In order to design excellent VET, there is a need for stronger interlinking (cooperation) of all VET stakeholders and joint research. VET schools must be research partners and receive better personnel and financial support for research projects (Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).
- Training and support staff need further training in their working hours. The constant adaptation of training to the rapidly changing professional and living environments increases the need for further training of training staff, also in matters of inclusion and integration. Here, in addition to theory, the exchange of experience in expert circles is also required. Cooperative - multiprofessional - further training events must be made possible for them and the support staff at the necessary intervals, within the framework of their company and vocational school working hours (sustainability goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17).

5. Ecological dimension of sustainability

The ecological dimension of sustainability means investing in improved framework conditions - climate-neutral or climate-positive and barrier-free buildings (Sustainability Goals 17, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16).

- The buildings and learning spaces/labs, workshops are to be designed barrier-free, with very high structural climate-friendly engineering standards and according to sustainability goal 3 "Health and Well-being", with the best functional acoustics and air quality as well as ergonomic equipment. In line with Sustainability Goals 11 and 13, the school authorities must also equip the rooms with energy-efficient digital systems, e.g. energy monitors and energy-saving technical equipment (sound technology, PCs, LED lighting systems and powerless lighting technology etc.).

- The structural investments in renewable energy systems (e.g. PV systems, geothermal energy, biogas and house wind power systems) and rainwater utilisation or smart irrigation technology have a multi-value effect, as these systems, if planned and built barrier-free, can also be used as learning arrangements (strong focus on sustainability goals 4 and 13) and as a "3rd educator" in the context of sustainability goals 17, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 16.
- When procuring ergonomic equipment (chairs, tables, furniture, ...), climate-neutral, fairly produced products supply chain law-compliant should be selected in C2C design or equipped with a sustainability certificate. Further procurement measures, for example for technical equipment, building materials and consumables, should also be sustainability-oriented (strong focus on sustainability goals 12 and 13).

6. Outlook

The above-mentioned sustainability-oriented features of excellence and design requirements offer transformation-ready learning venues for VET for Sustainable Development and national and European policy-makers (among others school authorities/municipalities, public authorities and ministries, companies, vocational schools and VET institutions, parents and the student body) a valuable orientation aid to **jointly design excellent inclusion and integration in the context of VET for Sustainable Development**.

The members of the VET Excellence Network on Sustainable Development will continue the European dialogue and discourse on a global level with learning sites in Africa, Asia, Australia, South and North America and further share their knowledge/experiences. The reference framework will be made available in English as a valuable complement to the DunE-BB-EU Guide on the website: www.ex-n-bbne.com worldwide, thus contributing to the wider thematic global discussion on excellence in **VET for Sustainable Development**.

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