



Postsecondary Vocational Education and Training in South Africa Strengths and Challenges

STRENGTHS

- In the face of major challenges, South Africa displays an open and committed approach.
- The creation of DHET in 2009 represents a major step forward in integrating vocational education and training policy.
- South Africa's well established qualifications framework provides a helpful structure.
- There has been a valuable consolidation of the TVET college sector.
- In response to the challenge of young people outside the labour market, there are bold plans to expand the college system.
- A 'turnaround strategy' addresses quality in the college sector.
- South Africa has a strong capacity for analysis.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SIMPLIFYING VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

Recommendation: Building on the proposals set out in the White Paper:

- Upper secondary vocational programmes should be merged into two main tracks - a school-based track and a work-based track.
- To meet the needs of adult learners, develop second chance vocational programmes and ensure flexible forms of provision.
- At post-matriculation level the development of diplomas and certificates should be promoted.
- Improve pathways from initial vocational to academic programmes.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND THE ECONOMY

Recommendation: To link vocational provision more closely with the needs of industry:

- Make workplace learning mandatory for vocational programmes.
- Co-ordinate vocational provision through a strategic body that would also involve industry stakeholders.
- While maintaining a national curriculum, establish flexibility in a proportion of the curriculum that can be adapted by training providers to meet local needs.
- Invest in better data, particularly on labour market outcomes linked to career guidance.

REFORMING FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 1: THE LEVY GRANT SYSTEM

Recommendation: Reform funding flowing from the Skills Levy so as to shift responsibility for discretionary funding to the National Skills Fund and simplify the administration of the mandatory grant.

REFORMING FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS 2: THE TVET COLLEGE FUNDING FORMULA

Recommendation: Reform the funding formula for TVET colleges to reflect (i) the extra costs of provision in rural areas; (ii) the extra costs of provision for disadvantaged students; and (iii) incentives for colleges to improve completion rates.

STRENGTHENING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR VOCATIONAL TEACHERS AND COLLEGE LEADERS

Recommendation: Strengthen the professional preparation of TVET college lecturers with attention to the balance between pedagogical skills and workplace experience. Promote effective college leadership by ensuring more systematic training for prospective and current college leaders.

SUPPORTING COMPLETION AND TRANSITION

Recommendation: Implement a sequence of measures to tackle low completion rates:

- Provide targeted support to ensure adequate levels of literacy and numeracy among those pursuing vocational programmes.
- Ensure adequate incentives for completion for both institutions and students.
- Underpin pathways of progression with high-quality career guidance and information before and during vocational programmes.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Increasingly countries look beyond secondary school to more advanced qualifications to provide the skills needed in many of the fastest growing technical and professional jobs in OECD economies. The OECD study, *Skills beyond School*, is addressing the range of policy questions arising, including funding and governance, matching supply and demand, quality assurance and equity and access. The study will build on the success of the previous OECD study of vocational education and training *Learning for Jobs* which examined policy through 17 country reviews and a comparative report. The study also forms part of the horizontal OECD Skills Strategy.

Full country policy reviews are being conducted in Austria, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Israel, Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (England), and the United States (with case studies of Florida, Maryland and Washington State). Shorter exercises leading to an OECD country commentary will be undertaken in Belgium (Flanders), Canada, Iceland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and in Northern Ireland and Scotland in the United Kingdom. Background reports will be prepared in all these countries, and in France and Hungary.

[A Skills beyond School Review of South Africa, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training](#) (Field S., P. Musset, J. Álvarez-Galván) was published on 18 November 2014.

Further information about the policy review and reports on VET systems in other countries is available on the OECD website: www.oecd.org/education/vet