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Reflections from the Swedish pilots

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Swedish VET Course and Micro badge

The micro badge *Knowledgeable Problem Articulator*, part of the Sustainability Literacy Milestone Badge, was piloted at the University of Gothenburg during the 2023-2024 academic year. The chosen course for the pilot Development Work and Action Research for Vocational Teachers (LYK80G) featured a module on sustainable development (SD) that aligned well with the objectives of the micro badge, helping VET student teachers integrate sustainability into their teaching practices.

Course Structure and Pilot Objectives

The course featured lectures on sustainable development delivered by university professors, followed by group discussions. The course included a digital group exam where VET student teachers presented designed teaching activities linked to SDGs within their respective fields. The goal of the pilot was to boost their confidence in using digital tools and integrating SDG knowledge into their work, while also evaluating the effectiveness of the micro badge.

Pilot Results and Challenges

A total of 20 out of 81 VET student teachers successfully completed the badge application across two pilot phases (2023 and 2024). While there was interest in the micro badge, the uptake was slow due to lack of information about the pilot, the benefits of micro badges and incentives to apply for the badge e.g., provision towards ECT credits. Technical issues, such as students using workplace accounts for submissions, created initial hurdles but were resolved through support from the Finnish Open Badge Factory team.

Reflections and Next Steps

Despite a slow initial uptake, the pilot's findings were largely positive. The pilots confirmed that the micro badge aligned well with the course objectives, the application process was manageable, and, importantly, it did not increase the students' workload—an issue that had been a key concern for the Swedish team, given that many VET student teachers were employed full- or part-time during their studies.

In conclusion, the pilot provided valuable insights into both the advantages and practical application of micro badges. However, further work is needed to ensure that the micro badge offers real, tangible value to the applicants in their professional roles and doesn't remain a purely theoretical exercise. We're not quite there yet.

EduSTA Swedish team:

Liisa Uusimaki (Project Manager) liisa.uusimaki@gu.se

Helena Hellgren (Course Coordinator and PhD student) Helena.hellgren@gu.se



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