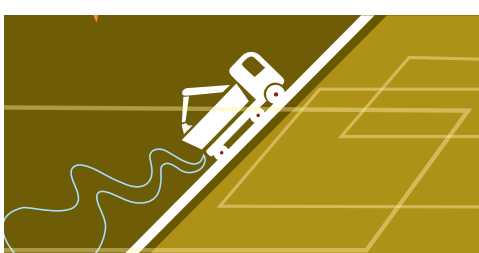
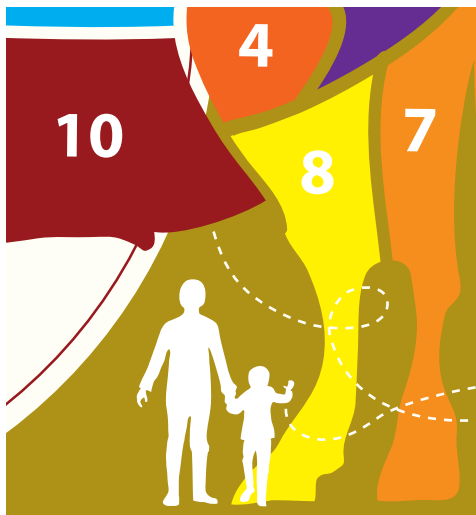
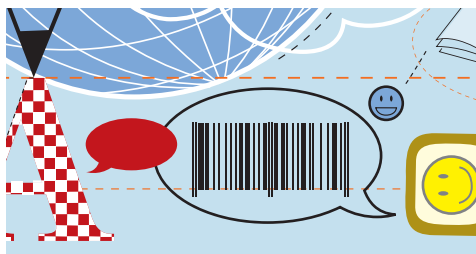
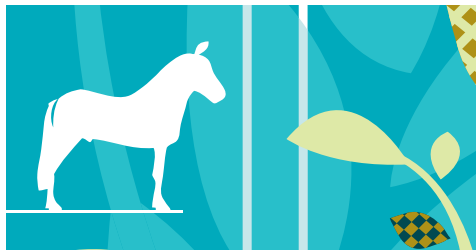
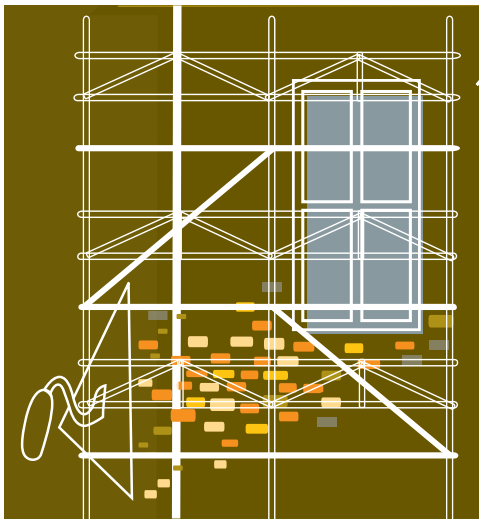




VET in Europe

Country Report 2010 NORWAY



This country report is part of a series of reports on vocational education and training produced for each EU Member State plus Norway and Iceland by members of ReferNet, a network established by Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training).

The opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily those of Cedefop.

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Author: ReferNet Norway

Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Norway. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General context – framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development – objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. VET in times of crisis
4. Historical background, Legislative and Institutional framework
5. Initial vocational education and training
6. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
7. Training VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. National VET statistics – allocation of programmes

This overview has been prepared in 2010 and its reference year is 2009. Similar overviews of previous years can be viewed at:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

More detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found at:
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Information-services/browse-national-vet-systems.aspx>

Keywords:

vocational education and training (VET) systems; initial vocational training; continuing vocational training; lifelong learning; VET policy development; financial crisis and VET policies; VET legislative and institutional frameworks; validation of non-formal and informal education; teachers and trainers; anticipation of skill needs; vocational guidance and counselling; VET financing mechanisms; allocation of national VET programmes; national and international qualification systems.

Geographic term:

Norway

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1: General context – framework for the knowledge society

1.1 Political and socio-economic context

Norway is a unitary state, monarchy and parliamentary democracy. It is a member of NATO and EFTA. In a referendum in 1994, 52 percent of the population decided against full EU membership. However, through the EEA Agreement, Norway is a member of the Single Market and participates in several EU programmes and institutional arrangements, such as Cedefop, the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Youth programme.

The Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*) decides upon major political principles and goals, as well as budgets and legal frameworks for activities under each ministry. Education and training are considered a public responsibility. Equal access to and quality of education regardless of social or geographical factors is a fundamental political principle. There are no school fees at any level, including higher education, in the public education system. Only a small fraction of pupils and students attend private schools.

Norway has three administrative levels: it is divided into 19 counties and 430 municipalities. Each of these units has a locally elected decision-making body and an executive body appointed by the relevant assembly. Local autonomy is a strong principle.

The Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) has overall responsibility for national policy development and administration of mainstream education and vocational training at all levels. Operational responsibilities for the development of subject curricula, delivery of training, examinations and quality control are mandated to other public bodies.

Individual municipalities own and run the public primary and lower secondary schools, while county authorities are responsible for all aspects of public upper secondary education and training. To this end, local authorities receive financial support from the central government.

Norway has a well developed and regulated system of cooperation between social partners and government. They negotiate through a process of collective bargaining to control wage levels and influence prices. The main principles for both initial and continuing vocational training are also settled through collective bargaining.

1.2 Population and Demographics

Norway has a population of 4.86 million and a total area of 385000 sq. km. (including islands of Svalbard and Jan Mayen). Population density is low at 16 per sq.km, the annual population increase has augmented from 0.6 percent in 2005 to 1.3 percent in 2008. 36 percent of the population is located in the five counties surrounding the Oslo fjord.

In the short run, from 2010 to 2013, there will be an increased number of young people (15-24 years) in the population. After 2014, growth in the number of young people will be lower than the average population growth. In the long run, demographic projections indicate that the age group 60+ will see a slightly stronger increase than other age groups in the years to come.

Table 1.2.1: : age-specific demographic projection 2008 – 2025(*). Absolute figures and (%)					
	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	4 737 171 (100.0)	4 858 199 (100.0)	5 104 442 (100.0)	5 334 399 (100.0)	5 571 882 (100.0)
0-24	1 507 521 (31.8)	1 545 271 (31.8)	1 603 108 (31.4)	1 637 929 (30.7)	1 685 876 (30.3)
25-64	2 536 342 (53.5)	2 590 255 (53.3)	2 670 109 (52.3)	2 765 108 (51.8)	2 842 797 (51.0)
65 +	693 308 (14.6)	722 673 (14.9)	831 225 (16.3)	931 362 (17.5)	1 043 209 (18.7)

(*) Based on 2010 population data. Scenario: Medium national growth. Source: Statistics Norway 2010, a.

In 2010 (on the 1st of January) the immigrants and those born in Norway to immigrant parents comprised over 552 000 persons (11.4 percent of the total population). 341 588 (62 percent) originated from non-western countries. Immigrants reside in all 430 municipalities. 34 percent of non-western immigrants live in the Oslo area and they constitute some 20 percent of the total population in the capital (a: SSB 2010).

The level of education in the immigrant population varies according to country background. For example, among immigrants from the Philippines and India the proportion of highly educated is larger than the Norwegian average, it is much lower among immigrants from e.g. Pakistan and Somalia. Many women from non-western countries have little or no schooling at all. This represents a challenge to the CVET system. Among persons born in Norway of two foreign-born parents, enrolment in higher education is higher than the country average for the age group 25–29. Unemployment is higher than the country average for all immigrant groups (b: SSB 2010).

1.3 Economy and Labour Market Indicators

Norway is a small and open economy. The GDP pr. capita is the second highest in the OECD-area (a: OECD 2010). A large oil and gas sector together with power-intensive manufacturing sectors, such as metals production, industrial chemicals and paper industries, makes the export sector a large part of the economy.

2005	2008
47 318	58 717

Source: OECD 2010, a.

Norway's great access to energy resources has been instrumental in the development of energy-based business sectors, wealth and growth. Hydropower was important for industrial development already in the 19th century. The oil and gas sector has since the 1970s represented a large share of the Norwegian wealth creation in trade and industry. Shipping and process industry have also been important export industries for Norway. Unlike many other countries, the main part of Norwegian industry is located outside of the metropolitan areas. Production was often established either close to an energy source or at a location offering good transport links.

Over the years, the primary sector's importance for employment and wealth creation in the Norwegian economy has decreased significantly. This is mainly because of efficiency improvement and enlarged productivity. Today approximately 2.7 percent work in the primary sector (a: SSB 2010).

Despite the dependency on natural resources, Norway must be considered a modern industrial nation. A high level of investment ensures a continuing modernisation of machinery and production equipment. The use of ICT is part of everyday family life and work for the majority of the population.

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) constitute more than 99 percent of all enterprises. 79 percent of them have less than 5 employees. SME employees constitute approximately 70 percent of the total labour force. Only about 2 900 enterprises have 100 or more employees (a: SSB 2010).

In manufacturing, the number of employees in the traditional industries like metal production and the mining industry has decreased and now amounts to about 10.7 percent of the workforce (a: SSB 2010). The main reason for this is the reduction in labour intensive production, i.e. the production methods have become more mechanical and technical than before. This has resulted in an increase in the number of employees in the new technology industry. One of the main reasons for this is the supply of qualified personnel in Norwegian companies

The importance of the service sector for employment and wealth creation has also increased in Norway. Today the majority of Norway's workforce is employed in the service sector. Among

other things, this is a result of growth in the economy and increased public spending power and a restructuring and efficiency improvement caused by new technology. The service sector is mainly located in the cities where it is easy to access a highly educated workforce.

Norway's striking nature has also contributed to a growth in the tourism sector in many regional areas. Nevertheless, most of the employees in the tourism sector work in the cities.

Table 1.3.2: Employment by production sector 2009. Real figures and per cent of total employment		
Sector	Persons	Percent
Primary sector and utilities	143 600	5.7
Manufacturing	248 400	9.9
Construction	180 400	7.2
Distribution and transport	641 200	25.7
Business and other services	408 600	16.3
Non marketed services	872 600	34.9
Total	2 494 800	100.0

Source: Eurostat 2010

The openness of Norway's economy makes it vulnerable to fluctuations in international markets. After the summer of 2008, the international financial crisis has contributed to lower export demand and lower economic growth. The unemployment rate has increased from about 1.8 percent in the summer 2008 to 2.5 percent in January 2009. Nevertheless, the growth in the unemployment rate in Norway is lower than in many other countries. The financial crisis will be further elaborated in chapter 3.

Table 1.3.2: Unemployment rates, 2009 average. % of labour force	
Total	2.7
Men	3.2
Women	2.2
15-24 years	9.1

Source: Statistics Norway 2010, a

Table 1.3.3: Employment, 15 - 74 years, 2009 average. % of population	
Men	76
Women	70
Total employment rate	73

Source: Statistics Norway 2010, a

During the period from 2001-2006, Norway has experienced a slight increase in the level of expenditure on education at secondary level, as a per cent of GDP. Norway's level is now slightly above the average for the EU (Eurostat 2010).

1.4 Educational Attainment of population

All young people between the ages of 16 and 19 have a right to upper secondary education and training. The pupils can choose between vocational education programmes or programmes for general studies. Upper secondary education and training is available all over the country so as to ensure equal education for all.

Eurostat statistics indicate that the percentage of the population aged 18-24 that leave school early is slightly higher than the EU average (Eurostat 2010). The percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education (69.7 percent) is below the EU average of 78.6 percent (a: Eurostat 2010).

In Norway, the completion rates at upper secondary level increase if measured five years after having started upper secondary level 1 (Vg1). Therefore, there has been a tendency in Norway to define drop-out as non-completion of upper secondary level, measured 5 years after start of upper secondary. Some young people are not motivated to continue education after completing compulsory school and instead look for work. This does not necessarily mean that they have finished their education once and for all. Many of those that are defined as drop-outs are actually on a pathway to competence at upper secondary level or at a lower level (see 4.5). More than half of those who do not complete upper secondary education within the prescribed number of years, complete by the age of 40.

Eurostat statistics indicate that the percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training is above the EU average. In 2009, 24.9 percent of the population aged 25-64 participated in education and training, compared to the EU average of 15.3 percent (Eurostat 2010). One reason for this could be the existing second-chance arrangements for those who drop out of the education system. Another reason could be that adults without completed secondary education have a statutory right to receive secondary education. Dropping out of upper secondary education and training is not necessarily a dead end in Norway considering the well-developed adult education system, as well as opportunities for recognition of prior learning and the experience-based trade certification, which allows adults to sit for the trade and journeyman's examination based on prior learning equivalent to 5 year work experience (see also 6.2.).

1.5 Definitions

	Definition	Original title	Translation in English	National context
General education	Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or group of subjects, especially, but not necessarily, with a view to preparing participants for further (additional) education at the same or a higher level. Successful completion of these programmes may or may not provide the participants with a labour-market relevant qualification at this level. These programmes are typically school-based. Programmes with a general orientation and not focusing on a particular specialization should be classified in this category.	Allmenn- utdanning/ allmenn- oppl�ring	General education	The national definition does not differ from the international definition. General education is provided in all of the 12 upper secondary programmes: 3 programmes for general studies and 9 VET programmes.
Pre-vocational education	Not applicable			This term is not used in Norway.
Vocational education	Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to acquire the practical skills, know-how and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations or trades. Successful completion of such programmes leads to a labour-market relevant vocational qualification recognized by the competent authorities (Ministry of Education and Research).	Yrkesfaglig oppl�ring	Vocational education and training	The Norwegian definition of vocational education is stricter than in many other countries as it relates solely to education and training at upper secondary level through the 2+2 model which includes apprenticeship training in year 13 and 14.

	Definition	Original title	Translation in English	National context
Technical education	Not applicable			This term is not used in Norway in the same way as in some other countries where “vocational and technical education” is put together. Technical education will comprise all education in technical subjects, independent of level of education.
Tertiary education	Programmes with an educational content more advanced than what is offered at ISCED level 3.	Tertiær- utdanning	Post- secondary	The term “tertiær” in Norwegian is (perhaps confusingly) used for education and training offered at ISCED levels 4 and above.
Higher education	Post secondary education offered in universities or university colleges. May comprise largely theoretically based programmes intended to provide sufficient qualifications for gaining entry to advanced research programmes and professions with high skill requirements; and programmes that are generally more practical, technical and/or occupationally specific. The second stage of tertiary education comprises programmes devoted to advanced study and original research, and leading to the award of an advanced research qualification.	Høyere utdanning	Higher education	<p>The term is used for education and training offered at ISCED levels 5 and 6.</p> <p>The main structure of Norwegian higher education follows the 3 (bachelor) + 2 (master) + 3 (PhD.) model of the Bologna Process.</p> <p>In the Norwegian HE system, there are no formal differences between general and vocational programmes.</p>
Further education	Credit-giving continuing education and training	Videreutdanning	Further education and training	



	Definition	Original title	Translation in English	National context
Post-secondary non-tertiary education;	Programmes that lie between the upper secondary and tertiary levels of education from an international point of view, even though they might clearly be considered as upper secondary or tertiary programmes in a national context. The students are usually older than those at level 3. ISCED 4 programmes typically last between six months and two years.	Fagskole- utdanning	Vocational college education	The term is used for vocational education and training of six months' to two years' duration, most commonly based on a vocational qualification from the upper secondary level.
Training	Training, often used in the sense of vocational training.	Oppl�ring	Education and training	The term "training" is not used on its own at upper secondary level. Education and training are provided together. In higher education, too, the sector prefers the term 'education' even for vocational / professional programmes.
Initial vocational education and training	Vocational education and training at upper secondary level, including apprenticeship, provided by public and private institutions.	Yrkesfaglig oppl�ring	Vocational education and training	No significant difference from the international definition.
Continuing vocational education and training	Education or training after initial education and training for the purpose of updating of knowledge and/or skills or acquiring new knowledge and/or skills, including specialization.	Yrkesfaglig etter- og videreutdanning	Continuing vocational education and training, in-service training	No significant difference from the international definition.
School-based programmes	School-based education and training programmes	Skolebasert oppl�ring	Education and training provided at school	At upper secondary level each pupil in VET will follow two years of school-based education and training before commencing an apprenticeship.
Alternance training	Not applicable			

	Definition	Original title	Translation in English	National context
Apprenticeship	Systematic, long-term training at the workplace; the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives wages. The employer assumes responsibility for providing the apprentice with training according to national curricula leading to a specific occupation.	Lærlingeordningen	Apprenticeship scheme	There is no significant difference from the international definition apart from the fact that the apprentice receives wages as opposed to an allowance.
Curriculum	Official document covering the objectives, main subject areas, teaching hours, basic skills, competence aims and provisions for assessment of a said subject.	Læreplan	Curriculum	(LK 06)-National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary, Secondary and Upper Secondary Education and Training comprises: the Core Curriculum (<i>Generell del av læreplanen</i>), the Quality Framework (<i>Læringsplakaten</i>) and the Subject Curricula (<i>Læreplaner for fag</i>).
Qualification	Formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.	Kvalifikasjon	Qualification	
Skills	The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.	Ferdigheter	Skills, learning outcomes	
Competences	The proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situation.	Kompetanse	Competence	

Note: For international definitions, see annex I.



2: Policy development – objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities

2.1 Objectives and priorities of the national policy development areas of VET

2.1.1 National LLL strategy

Norwegian strategy for lifelong learning builds on and incorporates policymaking processes which date back to the nineties, when the Competence Reform (*Kompetansereformen*) put adult education and lifelong learning firmly on the political agenda. The concept of lifelong learning at the beginning of the new millennium was often closely associated with continuing education and training and with competence development in working life. In the subsequent educational reforms - the Quality Reform in higher education (2003) and the Knowledge Promotion Reform (2006) (*Kunnskapsløftet*) in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education and training - the lifelong learning definition has been further developed in a “cradle to grave” perspective. The aspect of lifelong learning is currently covered within several ongoing political initiatives and through other concrete measures, for instance in the White Paper no. 44 to the Storting, *Education Strategy* [St. meld. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*].

2.1.2 Policy development in the main VET policy areas

Governance

Equality and freedom of choice are general political principles which lie at the heart of Norwegian education and vocational training policy. All residents are to be ensured equal rights of access to quality education, irrespective of gender and social, geographical and cultural background. Accordingly, in Norway:

- Education is a public responsibility;
- All education and training in the public domain is supplied free of charge, costs are covered by public budgets;
- Every young person completing compulsory education is entitled by law to upper secondary education;
- The supply of education and training should be of high quality and broad enough to allow for a range of choices irrespective of geographical location and social factors;
- State grants and soft loans are provided for students from disadvantaged families.

The education system, including VET, is viewed as a central mean to achieve national social, economic, employment and regional policy goals. Hence, the education and training policy is shaped in the interface between cultural, economic and social distribution policies. VET, including apprenticeship, is an integral part of the education system and is regulated by the same acts as general education. The employers’ organisations and trade unions play an active role in both the framing and implementation of VET policy (see section 4.3).

The Competence Reform (1999-2004) (*Kompetansereformen*) was a result of the national wage negotiations between the state and the social partners and was based on recognition of the fact that a well-educated population is the most important resource a country can have for the creation of new jobs, ensuring quality of life and preventing new class distinctions. The main objective of the reform was to help meet the needs of individuals, society and the workplace in terms of skills and knowledge and to give adults opportunities to acquire education and training to improve their qualifications. One of the main results of the Competence Reform is that all adults have been given a statutory right to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education.

The 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) focuses on the strengthening of basic skills, a shift to outcome-based learning, new distribution of teaching and training hours per subject, new structure of available choices within education programmes and more freedom at the local level with respect to working methods, teaching materials and the organisation of classroom instruction. A main objective of the reform is also to increase the cooperation between schools and training establishments through the introduction of a separate subject: the In-depth Study Project (*Prosjekt til fordypning*) (see more below).

Institutional changes in support of the many reforms include:

- Reorganisation of the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*, KD) in 1999, including a merger of two former departments into a new Department of Education and Training (*Opplæringsavdelingen*) with responsibility for both general education and VET at primary, lower and upper secondary levels, including adult education;
- Establishment of VOX - Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning in 2001.
- Establishment of NOKUT, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*), in operation since January 2003, with responsibilities to evaluate and accredit all post-secondary education and training - both higher (tertiary) and non-tertiary - institutions, study programmes and quality assurance systems;
- Establishment of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) in June 2004, with responsibility for both general education and VET at pre-tertiary levels. Preparing and implementing the new Quality Reform in basic (i.e. pre-tertiary) education, including the preparation of new subject curricula and establishment of improved quality assurance systems, are major tasks of the body;
- Establishment of Norway Opening Universities (*Norgesuniversitetet*, NOU) in 2004. NOU is a national political initiative for the Ministry of Education and Research in the field of lifelong and flexible ICT-supported learning in higher education. Its main responsibilities are related to information, counselling, evaluation and coordination of distance education within higher education;

Curriculum reform and innovative approaches to teaching and assessment

In the autumn of 2006 the Knowledge Promotion Reform was introduced. The objectives and quality framework for primary and secondary education and training are laid down in the (LK06) National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training and comprises:

- The Core Curriculum;
- Quality Framework;
- Subject Curricula;
- Distribution of teaching hours per subject.

The Curriculum for the Knowledge Promotion Reform encompasses the 10-year compulsory school and upper secondary education and training as a whole. A separate curriculum (LK06-S) has been designed for Sámi Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training to be used in Sámi administrative districts.

Core curriculum

The Core Curriculum is meant to help shape basic values. It constitutes the binding foundation for primary, secondary and upper secondary education and training.

Quality framework

The principles clarify the school owners' (municipalities' and county authorities') responsibility for a comprehensive education in accordance with established regulations and guidelines, adapted to local and individual needs and qualifications. These principles apply to all subjects at all stages of the 10-year compulsory education and to upper secondary education and training. Key competences are integrated into the Quality framework, such as learning strategies (learning to learn), social competences, cultural competences, motivation to learn, and pupil participation. Pupil participation and cooperation with the home are also important educational principles. These skills are not assessed by tests and grades, but through two individual dialogues each year between the teacher/trainer and the pupil/apprentice.

Subject Curricula

New national curricula have been developed for each subject in both school-based and apprenticeship-based education and training. The subject curricula are less detailed than previously and priority is set on central aspects of content. The subject curricula include clear objectives for pupils' and apprentices' competence (learning outcome) after 2nd, 4th and 10th grade, as well as after every stage in upper secondary education and training. Continuity and coherence are emphasised in the learning outcome objectives. Decisions on how to organise and adapt the teaching and learning methods are, however, made locally.

Upper secondary VET ends with a final examination which leads to a trade or journeyman's certificate (*fag- og svennebrev*). The examination is prepared and assessed by a trade specific examination board appointed at the county level. In 2009, 91,5 percent of those who sat for the examination passed.

The adaptation of the education and training to meet the individual's needs is a key principle in Norwegian education and is a professional responsibility at local level. Lifelong learning has played a central part in the development of the (LK06) National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training.

New subjects in VET

In recent years, three different VET-related subjects have been developed. The In-depth-study Project (*Prosjekt til fordypning*) is a subject at upper secondary VET aimed to increase the cooperation with schools and the training establishments. The pupil's are given the opportunity to define the contents of their training. The curriculum is adjusted to each pupils interests and also towards the training establishment's competences. The Elective Programme Subject (*Utdanningsvalg*), at the lower secondary level, seeks to link the lower and upper secondary education closer together. The subject is aimed at giving the pupils insight and experience with the different upper secondary programmes and the relevant vocations. The Introduction to Working Life Subject (*Arbeidslivsfag*) is a pilot project at the lower secondary level (see more in section 2.1.3). The subject is voluntary and pupils may choose a focus based on one of the nine VET-programmes at upper secondary level. The subject is designed to offer a practical based introduction to one of the VET-programmes at upper secondary, so that the pupils may acquire basic competence about the production of goods and services in the society.

Guidance and counselling

Annual statistics on education provided by Statistics Norway (*Statistisk Sentralbyrå*, SSB) is, together with research initiated by the national school authorities an important foundation for improving the guidance services rendered and drop-out rate reduction. Based on research reports from a project on partnership for career guidance, regional partnerships for career guidance are now part of national policy.

White Paper no. 30 to the Storting, *Culture for Learning* [St. meld. 30 (2003 - 2004) *Kultur for læring*] and White Paper no. 16 to the Storting, *Early Intervention for lifelong Learning* [St. meld. nr. 16 (2006 - 2007) *Tidlig innsats for livslang læring*] as well as a national project aiming to test a divided counselling service, all emphasised the importance of students getting career guidance as well as guidance in matters of social or personal character. To ensure this, new regulations under the Education Act (*Opplæringsloven*) were put into effect starting 1st of January 2009 emphasising the individual right of every student to get both sorts of guidance. Further, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) has given recommendations regarding formal qualifications of guidance counsellors in vocational and educational matters and guidance counsellors in social pedagogical matters (see more in theme 9).

Following a pilot period 2005 – 2008 all counties have established regional partnerships for career guidance in order to facilitate career guidance between levels of education, the labour sector and stakeholders in career guidance. Counties thus offer guidance in a lifelong learning perspective.

Most counties have established regional career centres to fulfil the demands of their inhabitants when it comes to career guidance. In the state budget for 2010 the Ministry of Education and Research granted NOK 27 mill. (approx. € 3.4 millions⁴) to the counties for this purpose. A national body for coordination of career guidance will be established by January 1st 2011 at VOX, Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning. Further, since 2008, the County Vocational Boards have had an advisory role as regards issues relating to guidance and counselling (see more in section 4.3).

In order to reduce the number of drop-outs in upper secondary school and give the students a better basis for making decisions about education and work, a pilot project using a digital career plan has been tested in several lower and upper secondary schools in three counties. Whether a digital career plan shall be implemented on a nationwide scale is still being discussed and is expected to be decided upon during 2010.

A nationwide survey and evaluation of the guidance services in lower and upper secondary education as well as the services offered by the County Follow-up Services (*Oppfølgings-tjenesten*) has been initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. During 2009 and 2010 this evaluation will be made by the research institute SINTEF. The final report will be presented in December 2010.

Teacher and trainer training

The state-funded initiative Competence for Development 2005-2008 (*Kompetanse for utvikling*), which also included trainers and training supervisors, came to an end in 2008. In the years to come, new initiatives for teacher and trainer training will be put in place. For 2009-2013 these initiatives will have a total budget of NOK 400 millions (approx. € 50 millions), and will include:

- Further education for school leaders;
- Further education for teachers (*etterutdanningsmaterie*ll);
- Continuing education for teachers and guidance counsellors;
- Continuing education for stakeholders within VET.

In 2009, NOK 72 millions (approx. € 9 millions) was provided for further education of key players in vocational education and training. The target groups of the initiative are vocational teachers, trainers and training supervisors in companies, examination boards and appeals boards for trade and journeyman's examinations. Prioritised areas for further education in 2009 were:

- Understanding the national curricula
- Assessments
- Guidance

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for ensuring that high quality continuing training and teaching material is developed and offered within these areas.

A portion of the funding was used for developing teaching material for continuing education and training. This project was concluded during 2009 (see more in section 2.1.3).

⁴ At August 26th 1 Euro equals approx. 8 NOK

Most of the funds will go to the actual provision of the continuing training. These funds will be allocated to the County Governors (*fylkesmannen*) following an objective model of distribution. The County Authorities (*fylkeskommunen*) shall develop a plan for the continuing training and apply to the County Governor for funding. The plan is to comprise a varied and flexible array of educational offers in order to reach as many as possible within the target groups. Cross-sectored as well as sector-specific initiatives will be considered.

The continuing education and training will be organised so that it focuses on the needs for raising the level of competences in company-based training. The offers must be developed in a way that ensures that all relevant stakeholders in the provision of VET receive a common understanding of a coherent training offer both in school as well as in companies. The continuing education and training shall be adapted to local needs in cooperation between the county authorities, as regional educational authority, the school owners, the social partners through the county vocational training boards (*yrkesopplæringsnemndene*), and other local training stakeholders.

Skills needs strategy (see more in theme 8)

The aforementioned new subject curricula developed in the Knowledge Promotion reform were designed in close collaboration with the social partners, sectoral organisations and other VET stakeholders. This was done through a series of consultations in which stakeholders were invited to express their opinions in order to ensure that the content of the curricula as much as possible reflects the needs of the labour market. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is currently conducting a series of evaluations of the reform.

A system to follow-up on subject curricula in school and in enterprises (*pulsmåling*) has been initiated so as to map out whether the curricula are meeting the labour market's demands for competences. Its purpose is to contribute to understanding of how the curriculum is working and how it is to be used. The social partners are included to secure important knowledge and experience in the different VET areas.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning (see more in section 6.2.2)

Validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes have been on the Norwegian adult learning policy agenda since 1999, as a part of the national life long learning strategy: the Competence Reform. National goals for validation are closely associated to the overall educational aim of offering opportunities for all to participate in the knowledge society. The first step in building up a system for validation and formal recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes was to establish the national Validation Project (1999-2002). The aims of this project were to develop methods and tools for documentation and validation of competences and skills from all learning arenas. The target was all adults, both employed and unemployed.

In 2008, Norway established a rights and opportunities validation framework for individuals. More than 60 000 adults have acquired formal qualifications at upper secondary level which take account of their non-formal and informal learning outcomes and allow for a shortened period of training. More than 10 000 adults lacking formal qualifications have been offered admission to a study programme in higher education, based on documented prior learning.

2.1.3 Current debates

During 2009, the Norwegian government published two white papers to the Storting, *The Education Strategy* and *Internationalisation of Education*. These documents follow-up on several major reports in the field of education, upper secondary VET included. Furthermore, the OECD review of Norwegian upper secondary VET *Learning for Jobs* was published in 2008. Based on these documents, several debates and initiatives have been apparent in the field of VET during 2009 and 2010. In this section the two white papers and the OECD recommendations will first be described. Second, the current debates and initiatives regarding VET will be further outlined.

The Education Strategy

White paper no. 44(2008-2009) to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St.meld.nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], and the following recommendation from the Storting, follows up on several major reports in the field of education. As concerns upper secondary VET, the green paper *Vocational Training for the Future* (The Karlsen Committee), and the OECD Country Report *Learning for Jobs* are two important examples. The white paper focuses on:

- A varied and more practical basic education
The Government recommends inter alia closer follow-up of each individual pupil and apprentice, more varied, practical and relevant education and training. More investment in vocational adaptation of common core subjects is also suggested, as well as intensified, cooperation between school and working life. Apprenticeship placement, quality assessment, international cooperation and research and challenges related to early school leaving are other challenges that are highlighted in the White Paper.
- Competence development and lifelong learning
The government also wishes to give adults with limited education new possibilities to take an education and, lay the foundation for a more flexible adult education, stimulate learning in working life, and strengthen the opportunities of unemployed persons to take an education, improve the system of assessments of formal, informal and non-formal learning and strengthen career guidance.
- Vocational colleges (post- secondary level)
The White Paper recommended strengthening the post-secondary vocational colleges by giving support for 400-450 new available spots in 2009 and it focuses on how to ensure the students' opportunities to take an education anywhere in the country when county municipalities take over responsibility for vocational colleges (mobility). It also recommends establishing a separate national council for vocational colleges; giving students that have completed a two-year vocational college education general university admissions certification; strengthening statistics and knowledge platforms for technical colleges; and studying whether one should introduce a system of credit points in connection with ongoing work with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Internationalisation of education

White paper no. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Internationalisation of Education* [St. meld.nr. 14 *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen* (2008-2009)], is the first to address internationalisation of Norwegian education from an overarching perspective, including all levels of education. This document proposes several measures and at the same time establishes a framework for further development and policy priorities.

Regarding primary and secondary education, the main objectives of the measures are to:

- Help schools and teachers develop solid local curricula in which international perspectives are addressed
- Ensure that Norway seeks active participation in new and existing international cooperation programmes directed at schools and ensure best possible use of the schemes
- Develop a plan for internationalisation work in primary and secondary education and training and disseminate examples of good practice and ideas for better use of how international cooperation in courses
- Develop better cooperation with working life and the business community
- Evaluate different study financing measures to develop fair mobility schemes of high quality for individual pupils and groups of pupils
- Assess how to make it easier for apprentices to receive an apprenticeship place abroad
- Strengthen the role played by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training in the work on international questions and intensify the international cooperation in VET
- Continue to participate actively in international surveys and international cooperation on quality schemes and international cooperation in education and training etc.

OECD review *Learning for Jobs*

Norway participates in the OECD review *Learning for Jobs* which studies how VET can best meet labour market needs. The report on Norway was published in 2008 and an initial comparative report was launched by the OECD in 2009.

In the report on Norwegian upper secondary VET, the OECD concludes that Norway has a well developed upper secondary VET system with apprenticeship, which is inclusive and enjoys a high degree of confidence from stakeholders (through the tripartite cooperation, a high level of trust among stakeholders). A number of challenges are nevertheless identified such as drop-out, quality assurance, student choice, the ageing of VET teachers in schools, qualifications of enterprise-based trainers and career counsellors, data collection and exploitation of available data, and the comparatively weak basic skills of those entering the VET system (Kuczera et al 2008).

The OECD recommendations cover mainly four areas: meeting labour market needs, effective teachers and trainers, taking advantage of workplace training, and policy tools for development and implementation. These were discussed in a comparative context during a Nordic seminar held in Oslo in conjunction with the launching of the OECD's initial comparative report. The seminar was organised by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

in cooperation with the National Council for Vocational Education and Training and gathered Nordic representatives from the social partners and national authorities to discuss the OECD recommendations in a Nordic context. The seminar was seen as a successful working method to address the issues made apparent by the OECD.

Debates

On the basis of these two reports and the OECD review, some of the areas where there have been debates are:

- Development of a Quality assurance system in VET

The national policy context on improving the quality of VET in Norway is characterised by the fact that VET has gradually been integrated into one common system for education and training. Following the 2006 reform, basic education and training includes all education and training at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels.

Improving the quality of VET provision has long been a topic to which much attention is given within the tripartite cooperation on VET policy. Already as part of the 1994 reform process (*Reform 94*), the social partners agreed on a common proposal for a programme for quality assurance in VET. Quality in all basic education, including VET, has been a high national priority, underpinned by the work of a specially appointed national committee that started its work in 2001. However, due to the strong focus on integrating VET and general education, VET has until now not been a very visible part of the Norwegian system for quality assurance in basic education. On the other hand, Norway is actively participating in EQAVET, and the social partners and counties are involved in this work.

The work with developing a Quality assessment system in Norway is embedded in White paper no. 44 to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St.meld.nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], and in an assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research to the Directorate of Education and Training and ongoing international work on the field of VET. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for developing this system, in cooperation with the social partners. This is a time consuming process and is expected to extend over the years to come. The whitepaper no. 44 sketches out the following elements as important for a Norwegian quality assessment system:

- Statistics that indicates successful completion and learning outcomes at upper secondary VET;
- Ensuring knowledge about the learning environment for pupils, apprentices and instructors through a survey;
- Assessment of the quality of the training in the enterprises.
- Assessment of the employment situation for recent VET graduates, and how the enterprises assess their qualifications.

In relation to this, a larger focus on VET research is being initiated by the directorate. The objectives are to allocate information to the ones responsible for developing the quality in VET.

- The drop-out rate in Norway

Statistics show that 60 per cent of the VET learners complete their training successfully or receive a general university and college admissions certification within 6 years. Some studies have identified factors – some of them are interlinked – that influence study progression, success rate and drop-out. Some of these factors are: social background, learning achievement in compulsory education, availability of apprenticeships programmes and enrolment in the education programme which was in top of his/her priority list.

This is an issue of great concern for the educational authorities on all levels, and an issue that has been widely discussed in recent years. Measures have been and are still being developed and implemented, such as the following:

- To strengthen the county's work with pupils at risk of dropping out of school, the Government has granted funds amounting to NOK 35 millions (approx. € 4,4 millions) per year. The funding started in 2009 and is projected to continue a few years onwards.
- Lower secondary education is to a larger extent seen as relevant regarding drop-out at upper secondary education. Measures at this level are being discussed, including increased focus on language teaching and a general follow-up of pupils with weaker results. Possible effects of these measures are not expected until after a few years.
- A new subject at lower secondary level (*arbeidslivsfag*) is being piloted (see more below).
- At regional level, many counties are initiating their own measures against drop-out.
- In the beginning of 2010, The Ministry of Education and Research started a 3-year project in cooperation with the counties regarding drop-out. The objective is to coordinate the measures against drop-out at the national, regional and local level, and also to develop common indicators at the field.
- The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training has since January 2010 established a special unit whose main task is to tackle the completion challenge.

- Teacher competence

As part of the NOK 72 millions (approx. € 9 millions) initiative provided for further education of key players in VET (see section 2.1.2), teacher competence has been strengthened in two ways:

1. Teaching material for continuing training of VET teachers and trainers

Several social scientists have been part of the development of the internet-based teaching material for the continuing training of VET teachers and trainers, which was completed in December 2009. The teaching material was presented online on www.skolenettet.no in the beginning of 2010. The aim is to strengthen the competence of upper secondary VET teachers and trainers, and to contribute to increased understanding regarding their tasks and responsibilities. This is in line with the Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*). Through enterprise-based training, the teaching material should provide apprentices with support in achieving a trade certificate (*fagbrev*) or a vocational training certificate



(*kompetansebevis*). The teaching material applies to all actors involved, and includes all four years of the upper secondary VET pathway. Further, the material is to improve the interaction between the school and the training enterprises, between the teacher and the trainer.

The next step in this project is implementation. In the following year, further progress will comprise the set-up of courses and training for the teachers and trainers regarding how to apply the teaching material successfully. An evaluation of the project is expected to be initiated after the implementation period.

2. Work-based training in enterprises

Work-based training in enterprises as a measure to strengthen VET teachers and trainers competences has been examined in a report published by the research institute FAFO. In-service training involves a study-visit for a VET teacher or trainer in an enterprise. The Norwegian 2+2-model (see more in section 5.3) in VET poses a challenge as regards securing that pupils and apprentices experience a clear connection between the learning outcomes in school and in the enterprise. The objective of in-service training in enterprises is to update teachers' and trainers' competences in the trade, on new technology etc. FAFO has assessed a project directed towards teachers and trainers in the building and construction programme in upper secondary VET. The results show that teachers are especially positive towards work-based training (FAFO 2010).

For 2010, the budget included NOK 2,5 millions (approx. € 300 000) for this project. Until 2012, work-based training in enterprises will continue at a small scale. Four counties are selected to participate. The counties are to engage schools and training companies to ensure a cooperation between teachers and trainers regarding improved competence.

- The Certificate of Practice (*Praksisbrev*) (Formal Competence at a Lower Level)
The Certificate of Practice is a two-year practice-based programme currently being piloted. It targets pupils with poor motivation, awarding them the possibility of obtaining a certificate after two years of practice. This initiative enables the targeted group to complete parts of upper secondary education and training and gain formal competence at a lower level than a trade or journeyman's certificate. The Certificate of Practice is a possible stepping-stone towards full formal competence at upper secondary level. There are diverging views on the need for this programme in upper secondary education and the potential employers' future need for this type of qualification.

The research institute NIFUSTEP is currently evaluating the pilot project. The first result of this work was presented in November 2009. The main findings were the following:

The project can be an alternative entrance to trade and journeyman's certificate for students who have trouble completing their education with the arrangement that exists today. Further, this could also be an option for students who do not aim for full

competence. NIFUSTEP suggests that this project may be a measure for preventing drop-out, since 65% of the pupils that completed the programme show motivation to enrol for two more years in order to obtain the full trade and journeyman certificate. The second part of the evaluation is expected in November 2010, and the final report will be finished during the summer of 2011.

- Documentation of achieved competences and/or skills during education and training
The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training is responsible for developing and completing a pilot regarding a new arrangement for documentation of achieved competences and/or skills during education and training (*gjennomgående dokumentasjon*). The objectives of the pilot are to:
 - Assess the need and utility of this arrangement of documentation in VET;
 - To try out different models of documentation, and assess whether different models are needed in the different subjects;
 - The pilot shall contribute to decide whether this initiative should be introduced as a permanent measure and set in regulation.

The pilot will start in the school year of 2010/2011.

- Introduction to working life subject (*arbeidslivsfag*)
16 schools in 5 different municipalities are currently testing a new VET related subject at lower secondary level. Pupils may choose a practical subject based on one of the 9 programmes in VET, instead of a new foreign language or the in-depth study of a language. The new subject shall contribute to improve the pupils' motivation and develop their basic skills. It is also considered to be a measure against drop-out at upper secondary VET. From the school year of 2010/2011, the pilot is expanding to include several other municipalities. If the pilot is considered to be a success, the Ministry of Education and Research will assess whether the subject should be made permanent at the lower secondary level.
- Review of the curriculum for the common core subjects
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has recently completed a review of the curriculum for the subjects that are common for all programmes at the upper secondary level, including VET. The purpose of the review was to adapt its content to the different programmes in upper secondary education, and thereby increase its relevance and learning outcome for all pupils. The result was minor changes in the curriculum in the following common core subjects: Norwegian, Mathematics, English, Natural sciences and Social sciences.
- Closer collaboration between school and training establishment
In order to obtain higher quality in upper secondary education and training and a more coherent education pathway for, the pupils and apprentices in VET, VET stakeholders are preoccupied with the need for closer collaboration between the school and the training establishment.

- VET pathway to HE (*Y-veien*)
This initiative is a three-year engineering degree at bachelor level specifically adapted to students who hold a trade or journeyman's certificate. Normally, holders of a trade or journeyman's certificate are required to have an additional half year of general studies from upper secondary level in order to be admitted to higher education. The measure was first introduced in 2001 as a three-year bachelor's programme for certified electricians. Since then, there has been an increase in the number of institutions wishing to offer a VET pathway to such adapted or tailor made engineering programmes. Further, the 2009 White Paper *Education Strategy* encouraged the development and strengthening of the VET-pathway as an important measure of recruitment to the engineering studies. Also, the White Paper states that applications to set up similar programmes in other relevant VET fields will be reviewed and considered.

2.2 The latest developments in the field of European tools

Qualifications frameworks

Norway has included EQF in the EEA agreement through EEA committee decision 40/2009 which came into effect on 18 March 2009 and was published in EEA supplement no. 28 to the European Official Journal on 28 May 2009. It has been decided that national qualifications at the secondary level as well as post secondary level (vocational colleges- non tertiary level) shall be related to a qualifications framework (cp EQF). The aim is to coordinate the different QFs being developed into one NQF for lifelong learning as from first semester 2011.

Furthermore, the aim is that different levels of the EQF will be stated on Norwegian national school leaving diplomas by 2012. The general descriptors being developed will indicate the level/levels of the EQF and thus provide quality assurance. In this context ECVET points might be used in order to specify individual qualifications. As the ECVET recommendation is EEA relevant, procedures are underway to include ECVET in the EEA agreement. However, Norway has not yet developed a strategy for implementing a unit-based credit system in VET.

There might be some constraints to the ECVET implementation in Norway. The curriculum does not specify modules or units within a qualification. The competence objectives of the national curricula are coherent and complement each other. The competence objectives state what the pupil/apprentice should be able to master at each level, while decisions regarding the organisation, methods and work methods are left to the education and training institutions. It is the total sum of all competence objectives of a subject that constitutes the learning outcome or competence. It can therefore be argued that it is against the principles of the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform to divide any subject curriculum into smaller units and thus separate the competence objectives. This may be a challenge when applying ECVET to Norwegian VET curricula. On the other hand ECVET may contribute to an easier approval of qualifications and provide a tool for a more accurate level placement of different VET programmes in relation to the EQF. These challenges would have to be addressed in dialogue with the social partners, should Norway decide to implement the ECVET system at national and sectoral level.

A national qualifications framework for higher education was adopted in March 2009, based on the framework for the European Higher Education Area (i.e. Bologna Process) as well as the principles of the EQF of the EU. As there is no separate system for vocational training at tertiary level in Norway it is fully integrated in the overall system of higher education - VET at the level of higher education is included in the framework for higher education. The higher education institutions are now implementing the framework in all study programmes and this is supposed to be done by 2012 so that the self certification process can be finalised by 2013, as required in the Bologna Process. The Diploma Supplement is issued to all pupils in Norway, automatically and free of charge.

The QF for Bachelor to PhD is finished. The QF for higher education short cycle degrees is nearly finished. At upper secondary level, a working group finalised the development of general descriptors for the 186 different VET programmes being offered in Norway in 2009. These are currently being scrutinised by all relevant stakeholders in a public consultation. Learning outcomes-based curricula are already in place. Thus, the next step will be self-referencing of each VET programme to the EQF.

Geographical mobility

If, decades ago, international placements were accessible for some pupils undergoing some types of education, the present policy development is to encourage institutions to provide all pupils, apprentices and students with possibilities for international placements abroad. This rationale is explicit in current political documents (see section 2.1.3). White paper no. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Internationalisation of Education* [St.meld.nr. 14 *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen* (2008-2009)], offers a solid platform for the further development of international cooperation in education in Norway. It offers a holistic approach to this topic and encourages the establishment of a comprehensive supportive structure for international learning mobility at all levels of the educational system in Norway.

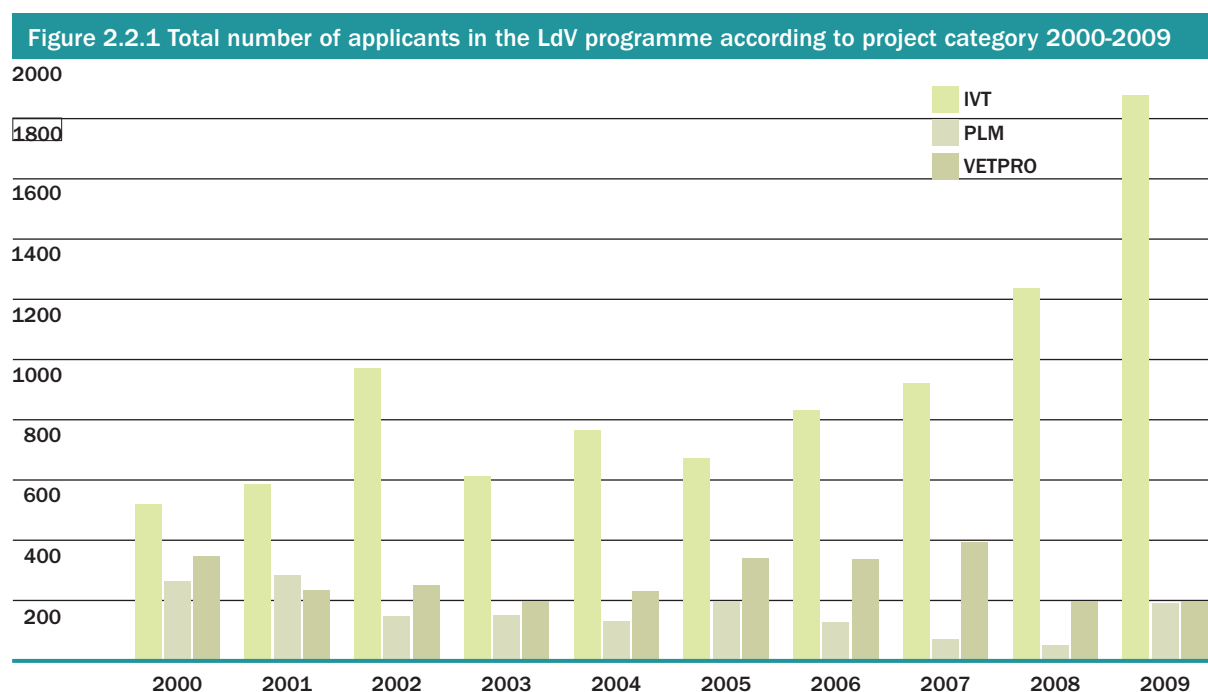
The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) is in charge of coordinating national measures according to official Norwegian policy within the field of internationalisation. SIU is a public administrative agency under the auspices of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*). The centre is Norway's official national agency (NA Norway) for the EU programmes and measures related to education, such as the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). It is commissioned by several national and international public organisations to administer programmes within all levels of education. In addition to programme administration, SIU is responsible for the provision of information, analysis and advisory services within the field of internationalisation in education, as well as the promotion of Norway as an international destination for education and research.

Among other activities, SIU is responsible for collecting data on the participation in and effects of different international programmes, valorisation of project results and dissemination of innovative practices and best examples of implemented projects. SIU annually produces several types of reports analysing the statistical data, trends and tendencies of international mobility and cooperation between Norway and other European countries.

The Mobility Report 2009, which is published by SIU, demonstrates that there is a great interest for grants within the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) mobility schemes among Norwegian institutions and beneficiaries. This interest manifests itself in the number of applications and the need for grants; the mobility budget should be triple to satisfy all the beneficiaries. The statistical data for the LdV mobility programme from 2000 to 2009 makes it evident that the interest for international learning mobility in VET is stable and continuously increasing.

In 2007, Norwegian institutions applied for international placements of 1 388 participants. In 2008, the total number of participants applied for was 1 485. In 2009, the total number of transnational placements applied for was 2205.

Total number of applicants to the LdV programme according to project category



(SIU, 2009)

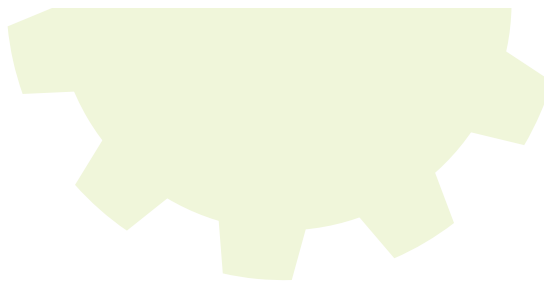
IVT: Initial Vocational Training
 VETPRO: Vocational Education and Training for Professionals
 PLM: People in the Labour Market

With regard to the categories, the statistical data imply several tendencies. It shows an increasing interest in learning mobility in the category IVET (about 70 per cent from 2008-2009). In the categories CVET and VETPRO, the numbers show various tendencies, but the statistical data should be seen in connection with structural changes in the LdV programme.

In 2008, the certification initiative was introduced in the LdV mobility category. County councils (owners and providers of upper secondary VET programmes), which had a long experience in implementing LdV mobility projects with high quality standards, could apply for certification, which gave them the right to submit simplified versions of applications on behalf of the groups of organisations and enterprises in their regions. Six out of 19 county councils of Norway achieved this kind of certification and can now benefit from simplified procedures and routines sending groups of apprentices and trainers for placements in various countries in Europe.

In 2008, the Directorate started up the process of revising the Europass Certificate Supplement (CS) according to the National Curriculum in connection to the Knowledge Promotion Reform. Descriptors for the CS will be published in Norwegian and English in autumn 2010. County authorities (fylkeskommunen) issue the CS document together with the trade or journeyman's certificate to apprentices, who have completed their IVET.

The statistical data imply that the largest group of the users of Europass documents in Norway is people in VET.



3: VET in times of crisis

3.1 Overview

Although the financial crisis has not hit Norway to the same extent as many other countries, it has still set its marks on the Norwegian economy. For the first time in 20 years, the annual gross domestic product (GDP) measured in constant prices fell in 2009. The decrease was equal to 1.5 percent from 2008 to 2009 in both GDP and GDP Mainland Norway (c: SSB 2010). In December 2009, 87.000 people were registered as unemployed, which corresponds to 3.4 percent of the labour force. This is an increase from 2.4 percent in the summer of 2008 (a: SSB 2010).

During 2009, the number of long-term unemployed persons increased (d: SSB 2010). Unemployment is particularly attached to the industrial and the building and construction sector. These sectors, along with business services, are the ones that have contributed to the economic slowdown during 2009. Increased activity in general government contributed positively throughout the year and helped offset the downturn in the Norwegian economy (c: SSB 2010).

The groups most touched by unemployment are men and young persons under 30, especially in the age group 20-24. Young men have been particularly vulnerable, and this pattern is highly related to the increased unemployment within the male dominated industries of construction and manufacturing (d: SSB 2010). Regarding immigrants, the relative growth of the unemployment rate was in total almost the same as in the majority population. Immigrants from the EU countries in Eastern Europe had the strongest increase, together with immigrants from the Nordic countries. African and Asian immigrants were to a lesser degree affected. This tendency is also related to the employment pattern, since different immigrant groups are employed in different sectors (e: SSB 2010).

3.2 Effects of the crisis on VET and corresponding measures

VET in Norway at upper secondary level normally comprises two years' education and training in school followed by two years' apprenticeship in an enterprise (2+2 model). Following a request by the social partners and the approval by authorities regarding the structure of available choices within educational programmes at upper secondary level, most of the VET-programmes follow the 2+2 model (see more in section 5.3).

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has been concerned that the current economic situation may have an impact on pupils' and apprentices' chances for successful completion. In the following section, the effects and corresponding measures of the financial crisis will be described.



3.2.1 Trends in learners' behaviour

During 2009, VET-related statistics related to applicants and apprentices reveal several changes that appear to be a direct consequence of the financial crisis.

There has been a reduction in applicants to vocational education programmes. Application figures for vocational training at upper secondary 1 level (Vg1) in autumn 2009 showed a decline of 2.0 per cent, compared with 2008. The decline was particularly noticeable in applications for building and construction trades (down 24 per cent) and service and transport (down 4 per cent). In addition, there was a marked increase in the number of pupils in vocational education programmes who interrupted their vocational training and applied instead to general studies. In general studies, there has had a steady increase in applicants during the last few years, from 44,2 percent in 2009 to 46,0 percent in 2010.

The number of apprentices in upper secondary education has decreased by approximately 2.000 from 2008 to 2009. A total of 36.000 apprentices participated in upper secondary education as per October 1st 2009, which is a 6 per cent decrease from the previous year².

The decline in the number of apprentices is most apparent in the male dominated vocational programmes, particularly in building and construction, where the number of apprentices has declined by approximately 13 per cent compared with the preceding school year. The number of male apprentices dropped by about 2.500 between 2008 and 2009. In contrast, the number of female apprentices increased slightly. In the field of health and social care, the number of apprentices has increased substantially to 4.700. This represents a 17 per cent increase from the previous year (f: SSB 2010).

The number of completed trade and journeyman's certificates has increased during the last years. Whether this is a direct effect of the financial crisis is difficult to state.

School-year	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
Apprentices	12 868 (93)	14 519 (93)	15 377 (92)
Experience-based trade certification (<i>praksiskandidater</i>)	5 903 (95)	6 300 (94)	6 857 (95)
Pupils ³	509 (74)	469 (79)	308 (76)
Total	19 280 (93)	21 288 (93)	22 542 (93)

Source: SSB 2010, f.

As regards CVET, increased demand for vocational post-secondary education and training has been apparent since 2008. In 2009, the budget to the county technical post-secondary

² Whether these numbers should be seen as a consequence of the economic downturn should only be stated in relation to the entire cohort.

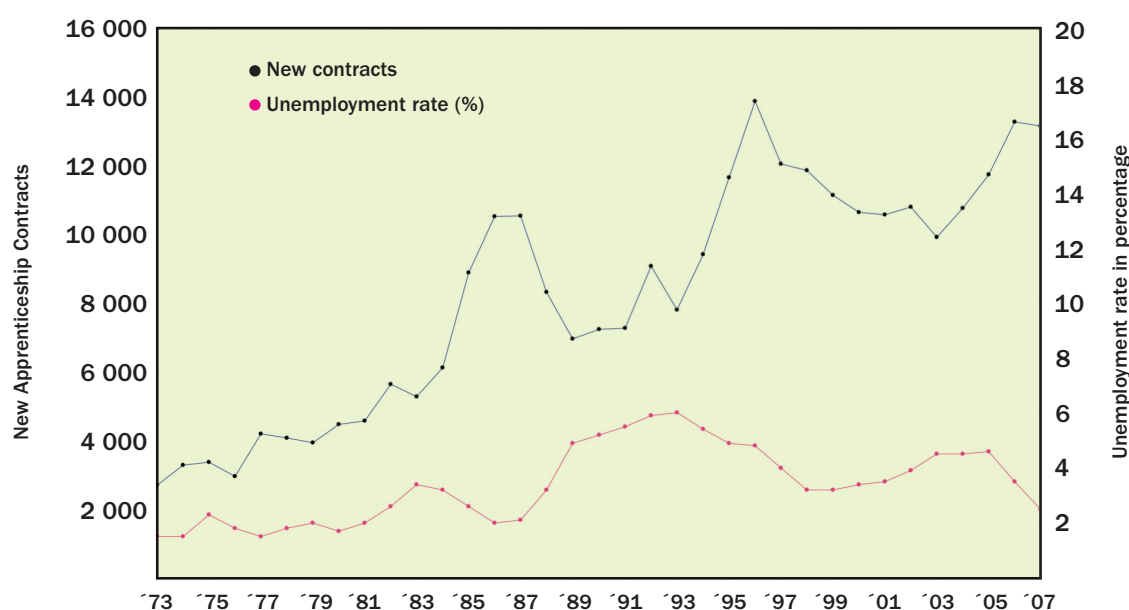
³ Pupils who have completed vocational examination after training in school

vocational colleges was increased by NOK 15.2 millions (approx. € 1.9 millions). In addition, the number of recognised programmes at this level increased significantly, though less in 2009 than in 2008. As the law, and hence the system of recognition of programmes for post-secondary VET is quite recent, it is not possible to distinguish the applications for recognition due to the financial crisis from those due to a certain backlog in the system. As most programmes at this level are offered by private providers that charge tuition fees, the financial crisis might even have slowed down the development of new offers in 2009.

There is no formal distinction between VET and “non-VET” higher education in Norway. Applicants to higher education as a whole increased significantly from 2008 to 2009, by all of 14.5 %, from 630 748 to 722 498 applicants. The number of students increased by 3.5 % from autumn 2008 to autumn 2009, from 209 009 to 216 262, partly due to a budget increase in June 2009.

3.2.2 Trends in enterprises’ behaviour

Whether the financial crisis has caused a reduction in apprenticeship intake will be the topic of this section. Previous experiences show that the apprentice intake in the enterprises follows the general level of employment, as it is shown by the following graph:



Source: Høst, Gitlesen og Michelsen 2008. The figure shows that the number of new apprenticeship contracts and the unemployment rate are moving in a counter phase around a growing trend in new contracts. Through applying a regression model, the authors found that 87 percent of variation in new apprenticeship contracts can be explained by variation in the business cycle.

During the 1980s recession, apprentice recruitment fell by 34 percent (in 1987, 10531 apprenticeships were granted, while in 1989 the number was reduced to 6956 new contracts). This preceded the 1994 education reform that ensured a major rise in the number of apprentices.

There has been concern whether uncertainty in trades and industries exposed to cyclical fluctuations can result in companies refusing to take on new apprentices. The apprenticeship contract commits the enterprise ordinarily to employing an apprentice for two years. In a period with an unstable market situation and sectoral uncertainty, small-sized enterprises in particular would be reluctant to employ new apprentices. Apprentices have special protection against dismissal (cf. the Education Act § 4-6 Amendment and rescission of the apprenticeship contract and training contract). However, training establishments may have to terminate or lay off apprentices if there is no suitable work or enough instructors/trainers to provide training.

For apprentices with a right to training, the county authority will have to provide an alternative programme for apprentices, such as a third year of training in school, or an alternative apprenticeship. This is a costly alternative for the county, while pupils undertaking the “Vg3 option” (see more in Theme 5) achieve poorer results in their trade or journeyman’s examination than the apprentices. A survey among the county authorities conducted by NIFU STEP (2009) showed that the number of apprentices laid off or dismissed is very small.

The portion of applicants that was granted an apprenticeship contract fell from 73,8 per cent in 2008 to 69,9 per cent in 2009 (KOSTRA 2010). The corresponding figure from 2010 has not been completed, but provisional figures indicates that the situation has improved. At the same time, the total number of applicants for apprenticeships has increased from 15 958 in 2008 to 16 609 in 2010⁴. On the other hand the unemployment rate has not increased in the same period to any large extent, and is still relatively low (see section 1.3).

3.2.3. Measures taken at governance levels (national, regional, local)

During 2009, Norway has taken action across a broad spectrum of policy areas to improve the economic situation, including initiatives regarding VET. The measures are taken at both the central and the local level.

The central level

The Central Bank Norway (*Norges Bank*) has repeatedly reduced the interest rate. Since October 2008 to February 2010 the interest rate has in sum been reduced by 3.25 percentage points to 2.5 per cent.

The budget policy is now being used actively in order to reduce the backlash in Norwegian economy. The measures presented to the Storting (The Parliament) on 26 January 2009 and the changes made during the Storting’s treatment of these measures, led to an increase in

⁴These numbers should only be studied in relation to the entire cohort.

the use of petroleum income by around NOK 45 billions (approx. € 5.6 billions) from 2008 to 2009. This is equivalent to a demand impulse of 2.4 per cent of the GNP for mainland Norway.

In a proposition to the Storting the Norwegian Government proposed amendments to the 2009 Fiscal Budget. The stimulus package amounted to NOK 20 billions (approx. € 2,5 billions), of which NOK 16.75 billions (approx. € 2 billions) was an increase in budget expenditures and NOK 3.25 billions (approx. € 400 millions) was targeted tax relief for the business sector. The Government and the Central Bank (*Norges Bank*) implemented several measures aimed at maintaining an appropriate level of lending to the business and household sectors.

Strong demand impetus from both fiscal and monetary policy measures is expected to limit the economic downturn. The fiscal stimulus package is expected to mitigate the effects of weaker export and private sector demand, and thus dampen the decline in employment, especially in the building and construction sectors.

The local level

In Norway, the local government sector (counties and municipalities) were brought in to plan the country's counter-recessionary policy at an early stage. Out of the already mentioned total package worth approximately NOK 20 billions (approx. € 2,5 billions), NOK 6.4 billions (approx. € 800 millions) was channelled through the local government sector (KS, 2009). The bulk of these funds were earmarked for support for exceptional maintenance, but some money was also freely allocated. One reason why maintenance initiatives in the local government sector became such a central part of the package was because the economic downturn in Norway initially triggered a fall-off in home building in particular and thus a decline in production in the construction industry. Another is that the government at the time wished to signal a general political prioritisation of the local government sector. The sector itself was also well prepared for the task.

Measures directed towards VET

Almost 43 per cent of apprenticeship training contracts are linked to building and construction trades and trades within technical and industrial production. The stimulus package was particularly directed at the building and construction sector (contributed to a realisation of several building and construction projects). Since this is a sector where the situation for apprentices is particularly difficult, there is reason to assume that the measures implemented contributed to maintaining a large number of apprenticeships.

Funds were also earmarked for enterprises that employed apprentices in 2009. This amounted to NOK 185 millions (approx € 23 millions), something which gave approximately NOK 4 800 (approx. € 600) to enterprises per apprenticeship. This is in addition to the ordinary apprenticeship grant designed to advance an apprentice with training rights to his or her qualifying examination (NOK 99,577 per apprentice in 2009, approx. € 12 44). The Norwegian Government has proposed to sustain the temporary increase of the apprenticeship subsidy in the amendments to the 2009 Fiscal Budget in the 2010 Fiscal Budget. The increase of the apprenticeship subsidy (NOK 190 millions in 2010, approx.

€ 23,7 millions) can be used flexibly by the counties to stimulate businesses or training establishments that have particular difficulties due to the economic situation to retain the apprentices and to sign new apprenticeship contracts.

As regards CVET, the Revised National Budget presented on 15 May 2009 proposed an increase in the allocations to technical (and maritime) vocational training (ISCED 4) by NOK 20 millions (approx. € 2.5 millions). Of this, NOK 4.8 millions (approx. € 600 000) was earmarked for student grants and NOK 15.2 millions (approx. € 1,9 millions) (between 400 and 450 places) to the counties offering such training. In addition, 3000 new study places have been proposed for higher education, to a large extent concentrated on vocationally-oriented fields like teacher training, medical and paramedical studies, and engineering.

3.3 Longer term consequences and future responses

It is difficult to conclude regarding the financial crisis' effects and longer term consequences. The government's measures have been mainly directed towards the industrial and the building and construction sectors, which have been particularly affected by the crisis. The initiatives may be regarded as successful as the intake of apprentices has only fallen marginally. Provisional figures indicate that the situation has improved in 2010.

4: Historical background, Legislative and Institutional Framework

4.1 Historical Background

VET, including apprenticeship, is an integral part of the education system and is regulated by the same acts as general education. Nevertheless, Skule et al (2002) describe a historic divide between general schooling and VET in Norway, the former growing out of the eighteenth century Latin boys' schools and the latter growing out of the guilds-based apprenticeship system. The history of Norwegian upper secondary education, they claim, is littered with attempts to bridge the general and vocational divide and particularly the gap between the vocational schools and the apprenticeship system, the most important reform in this regard being Reform 94, undertaken in 1994, which encompasses rights, structure and content.

Since 1976, Norway has had a unified upper secondary structure that coordinates general studies and vocational studies. VET is available all over the country so as to ensure an equal education for all and has since the mid 1990's, been organised in a "2+2 model", meaning two years in school followed by two years apprenticeship training in an enterprise. If it is impossible to provide enough training places, the county authorities are obliged to offer a third year in school leading up to the same final craft or journeyman's examination. In addition, specific groups are targeted, such as students with disabilities, adults, or pupils in remote areas.

The post-secondary non-tertiary level has a more recent history. Today's institutions have developed through one of the following three main paths:

- state or county technical colleges building on vocational secondary education, often leading to qualifications as master craftsmen or certificates for seamen
- private provision originally recognised as "secondary education without parallel to public provision", several of which are in art, culture or Bible studies
- other private provisions, generally developed through training needs resulting from new and emerging demands in the labour market since the 1980s in technologies, media, design, communication, administration, logistics, ICT, health and social studies

4.2 Legislative framework for IVET

Initial vocational education and training (IVET), including apprenticeship is an integral part of the education system and is regulated by the same acts as general education. IVET is directly and indirectly affected by a variety of legal regulations. Some are general and regulate all types of public institutions and activities, division of responsibilities between the different administrative levels etc. and will not be considered here. The legal framework directly targeting VET comprises laws and administrative regulations affecting:

- public and private providers of VET;
- upper secondary, post-secondary non-academic and tertiary levels;

- initial (IVET) as well as continuous vocational training (CVET);
- young people and adults;
- professional and administrative and financial issues.

Act of 17 July 1998 no. 61 relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act, with the latest amendments in force as of 1 August 2010.) covers primary, lower and upper secondary general education and VET, including apprenticeship, for young people and adults, delivered by public and private institutions. Objectives and scope, organisation and division of responsibilities, financing and content of education and training are regulated by the act.

The Act states that the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) is responsible for the development of national plans and financing arrangements, whereas counties (*fylkeskommuner*) and municipalities (*kommuner*) are responsible for developing comprehensive plans, organising delivery and financing in their respective geographical areas.

As regards the right to education and training, § 3-1 in the Education Act states that:
“Young people who have completed primary and lower secondary education or the equivalent have, on application, the right to three years’ full-time upper secondary education and training. In subjects where the curriculum requires a period of instruction that is longer than three years, such young people have the right to education in accordance with the period of instruction determined in the subject curriculum. Young people who have reached the age of 15 years submit their own applications for entrance to upper secondary education and training.”

Pupils, apprentices and training candidates have the right to education and training in accordance with this Act and regulations issued pursuant to the Act.”

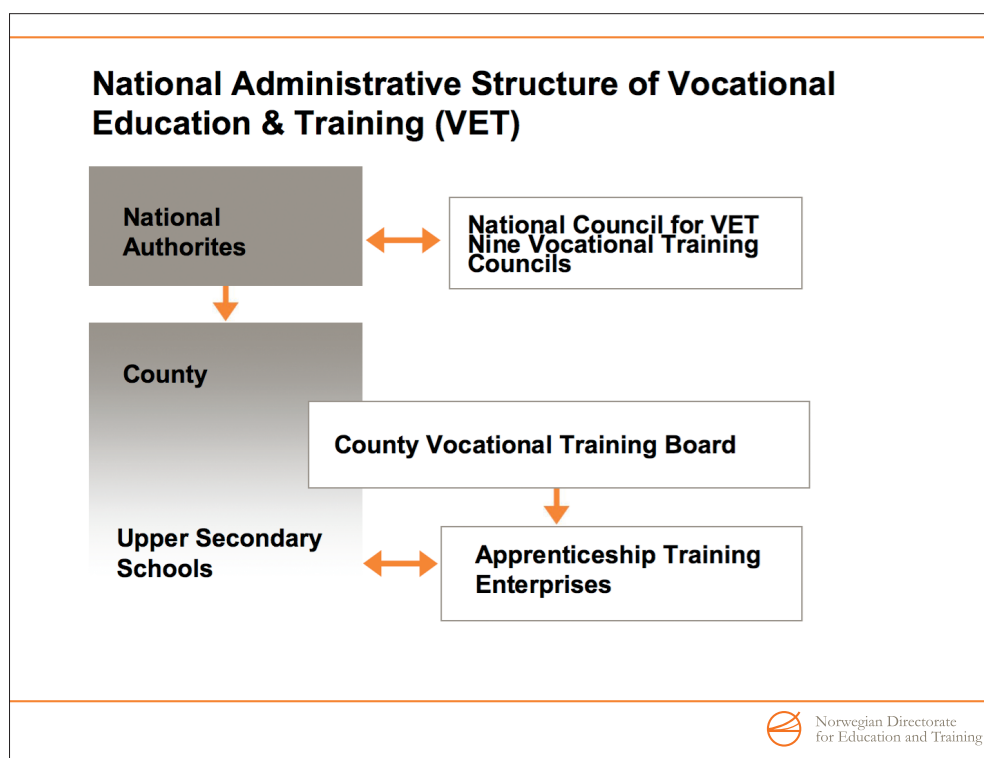
Chapter 4 in the Education Act regulates upper secondary apprenticeship.

The role of social partners

Formally, the role of the social partners in upper secondary VET is based on the ILO convention 142, ratified by Norway in 1976, which establishes that employers’ organisations and trade unions shall influence and participate in laying the framework for and development of vocational guidance and training. The institutionalised participation is further legitimised in the Education Act (see above). Procedures for representation in central bodies are formalised.

Apart from the legal framework, the active involvement and cooperation on VET is institutionalised through the formal agreements between the social partners that set the “rules of the game” for working life. Both the quadrennial national collective labour agreements (*Hovedavtalene*) and the 2-year wage agreements (*tariffavtalene*) include sections on objectives, rights, obligations and procedures regarding cooperation on training of staff in member enterprises, including apprentices.

4.3 Institutional framework for IVET and organigram



Whereas legislative power lies with the Norwegian Parliament (*Stortinget*), the Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for national policy development and administration of mainstream education and vocational training at all levels, including adult education. Operational responsibilities for the development of curricula, examinations and quality control are mandated to other public bodies at national and county levels.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) is responsible for the development of subject curricula and development, supervision and quality control of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary general and vocational education and training. Norway enjoys a high degree of decentralisation, and in the most recent education reform (Knowledge Promotion 2006) the central government delegated more responsibility to the local level. The 430 municipalities own and run the public primary and lower secondary schools, while the 19 counties are responsible for all aspects of public upper secondary general education and VET, including apprenticeship training. Municipalities and counties receive financial support from the central government.

Norway has a long standing tradition of close cooperation, both formal and informal, between education and training authorities and the social partners at all levels. Because vocational training is of major importance to the working community as far as working conditions, productivity and profitability are concerned; employers' and employees' organisations have considerable influence on national vocational training at upper secondary level.

According to the legal framework (see 4.2) the social partners have representatives, most often the majority in all important advisory bodies at national and county level:

- The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring –SRY*); gives advice on an overarching level;
- Nine Vocational Training Councils (*Faglige råd*), give advice on training in specific groups of trades;
- The County Vocational Training Board (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnda*) for each county; give advice on quality, dimensioning, counselling and regional development;
- The trade-specific Examination Boards (*Prøvenemnder*) are situated in each county;
- National Appeals Boards (*Klagenemnder*) cater for candidates who fail the trade and journeyman's final examination at county level.

Through this representation, the social partners are directly involved in advising on the framework of the national structure of recognised trades, the development of national curricula, the regional structure and volume of VET provision, and the framework of examinations leading to trade or journeyman's certificate.

A central part of the institutional structures of VET in Norway is the system with VET offices. Due to the Norwegian 2+2 model for vocational training, many enterprises enter contractual agreements with VET offices (*fagopplæringskontor*) at the regional county councils about the provision of practical training for apprentices. It is VET offices at regional county councils which often offer transnational placements for apprentices on behalf of SMEs. In addition, groups of SMEs often establish umbrella organisations – training offices (*opplæringskontor*) - which have responsibility for the training of apprentices for different branches and activity sectors. They aim to identify possible new training companies and establish new apprenticeship places, to supervise companies with apprentices, and to train staff involved in the tutoring of apprentices (b: OECD 2010).

4.4 Legislative framework for CVET

Act relating to Post-secondary Vocational Education and Training (*Lov om fagskoler 2003, latest amendments 2008*)

This act regulates public and private post-secondary vocational education and training at ISCED 4 level, with courses and programmes of 6 months' to 2 years' duration. Education and training under this law is not part of higher education. The main purpose of the Act relating to post-secondary vocational education and training is to ensure and promote quality provision, and to ensure student rights.

Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (*Lov om universiteter og høyskoler 2005, latest amendment 2007*)

Higher education is in Norway defined as research-based education and training provided at universities, specialized university institutions, and university colleges.

Through a higher education reform in 2003, the Quality Reform, Norway completely changed its degree structure and implemented the Bologna Process 3+2+3 model: three-year bachelor's degrees, two-year master's degrees and three-year PhD. degrees. However, there are study programmes of two years' duration, some integrated five-year master's degrees and some professional study programmes that last 6 years⁵.

The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges applies to all higher education institutions that deliver accredited study programmes, both public and private. It regulates organisational and management aspects, provides for the recognition of study programmes, examination and certification, for quality assurance as well as for the learning environment of students. The act is relevant for both IVET and CVET, as the higher education institutions offer both through regular study programmes. It should be noted that there are no separate institutions for mature students. Flexible provision is an integrated part of the activity at Norwegian higher education institutions (HEI) and most public HEIs offer some flexible courses and programmes (distance education, decentralised, part time). There are no differences between qualifications earned through traditional and flexible modes of learning. Though all higher education institutions provide some part time and/or decentralised programmes specifically aimed at mature students, most mature students are registered as ordinary students. The 'third mission', understood as outreach activities, knowledge transfer and cooperation with public administration, culture, business and enterprise is an inherent part of the activities of the higher education institutions, laid down in the Act relating to universities and university colleges.

Adult Education Act (*Lov om voksenopplæring - 1976, latest amendments 2003*)

This act regulates different types of adult training not covered by the Education Act. Education and training for adults is provided by a variety of public and private institutions. Among the most important are private adult learning study associations (*studieforbund*) that offer primary and secondary education, but also IVET and CVET. Labour market training, work-based training and distance education. It places significant responsibilities on private adult education associations for the delivery of CVET courses not regulated by national curricula and certification. Recognised IVET courses for adults with work experience are also to be developed. These may be organised by higher training institutions or accredited study associations and financed by the Ministry.

Folk High School Act (*Lov om folkehøgskoler - 2002, latest amendments 2006*)

This act regulates the organisation and activities at public and private institutions and defines the terms for receiving state financial support. The folk high schools provide education and training for (young) adults. These folk high schools neither use centrally recognised curricula nor have examinations, the general purpose being to provide education based on clearly defined values and norms. Some schools offer vocational courses.

⁵ In medicine, veterinary medicine, psychology and theology

The Act relating to Master Craftsman Certificates in Craft and other Industries (*Lov om mesterbrev - 1986*)

This act establishes the framework for the master craftsman certificate. It stipulates that only a person awarded the master craftsman certificate (*mesterbrev*) is entitled to call himself “a master craftsman” (*mester*). The Ministry of Trade and Industry (*Nærings- og handelsdepartementet*) appoints the Master Craftsman Committee (*mesterbrevnemnda*), which develops policy and legislation, and administrates the scheme. The Master Craftsman Committee determines the requirements that shall be made to training and practice for obtaining a master craftsman certificate, and awards the certificate. The Master Craftsman Committee decides which subjects shall be included in the scheme. Several programmes at the post-secondary (ISCED 4) vocational colleges satisfy the requirements for Master Craftsman Certificates.

Financial Support to Students and Pupils Act (*Lov om utdanningsstøtte til elever og studenter - 1985, latest amendment 2005*)

The act states that all registered students on formally recognised study programmes, at both public and private higher education institutions may receive grants and subsidised loans from the State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*) for subsistence costs. Support is also provided to Norwegian students abroad, who may receive additional support for travel, entrance and tuition fees. The same rights are given to students in upper secondary education and VET, including apprentices, who can document specific financial needs, as well as to apprentices who spend at least 3 months of their practical training abroad. The main purposes of the act are to: improve equality of access to education and training regardless of geography, gender, age and financial situation; improve working conditions and study efficiency of the students; and to ensure access to qualified labour for society.

4.5 Institutional framework for CVET

There are two main types of CVET in Norwegian educational institutions, education offered in higher education institutions and education offered in post-secondary vocational colleges. The former type is research based. The latter is an alternative to higher education and offers practical, vocationally oriented programmes of between half a year to two years' duration.

Higher education institutions are organised directly under the Ministry and have a high degree of administrative and budgetary autonomy. In addition, academic freedom is an important and inherent characteristic of higher education. The Act of universities and university colleges in fact specifies that HEIs cannot be instructed on the content of their teaching or research, or on appointments of staff. It should be noted that there are no specific provisions regarding CVET in higher education, as the system is comprehensive and unified and without formal distinctions between VET and 'non-VET' programmes. The only exception to this rule is that for a limited number of study programmes of three (or four) years' duration qualifying for work as teachers, engineers, or in the health sector, requirements have been laid down in national curriculum regulations. The National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen* — NOKUT) is responsible for the recognition of post-secondary vocational education and training as well as for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education

According to the regulative frameworks, the social partners are actively involved in decision making, organisation and provision of both national IVET and CVET at the secondary level, including sector level and in individual enterprises. At the post-secondary level, the tripartite Master Craftsman Committee has the full responsibility for both decision-making and implementation of the Master Craftsman Scheme (see also 6.1.2).

Vox – Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning is a national institute whose main purposes are to initiate, co-ordinate and document research and development projects about different aspects of adult education, to facilitate contact and collaboration among national actors to establish networks for adult education, and to disseminate results (see also 6.2.2).

In addition to the bodies described above, employers/enterprises and trade unions are organised by sector which provide various services and support to their enterprises and employees including for CVET. In post-secondary VET (ISCED 4), professional relevance is a necessary criterion for the recognition of courses, but it is up to the provider to document this relevance. At this level, a newly-established (September 2010) national councils with tripartite plus public-private and student representation might lead to more structured cooperation between providers and the social partners. (The programmes in health, maritime and technical studies already have a tradition of tripartite cooperation.) In higher education, cooperation with social partners is less structured, but growing.

5: Initial vocational education and training

5.1 Background to the initial vocational education and training system and diagram of the education and training system

Norwegian public mainstream education and training has several levels: primary (*Barneskole*), lower secondary (*Ungdomsskole*), upper secondary (*Videregående skole*), and post-secondary and tertiary (*Fagskole and Høgre utdanning*).

Compulsory education lasts for 10 years (7 years at primary from the age of 6, and 3 years in lower secondary). Primary, lower and upper secondary general education and VET collectively form basic education (*grunnopplæring*).

All young people leaving compulsory school have a statutory right to receive 3 years of upper secondary education. Each county has a follow-up service (*oppfølgingstjeneste*), which is responsible for contacting pupils who do not enter, or drop out of, upper secondary education and training, and make an effort to get them “back on track”.

Adults have a statutory right to receive public primary and secondary education, and the responsibility for provision is similar to that for young people. Adults may also study at tertiary institutions on similar terms as those for young people. Many different education and training courses for adults are offered by adult education associations (*studieforbund*), distant training organisations and public and private training centres, consultancy companies and sector organisations. Modes of delivery cover most approaches from traditional classes to open and distant learning and e-learning.

Labour market training for unemployed people and language and vocational training for immigrants also constitute important parts of the Norwegian education and training system. All education and training provided by public institutions is free of charge for all levels.

Students in private institutions have to pay a tuition fee, but may receive financial support from the state that covers most of these expenses. At primary and lower secondary levels, slightly more than 5 percent of pupils attend private schools in 2009 (g: SSB 2010), whereas private institutions in 2008 cater for around 7 percent and 15 percent of students at upper secondary and tertiary levels, respectively.

Public	75 572
Private	3 916

Source: Statistics Norway 2010, a.

An important ambition of Norwegian education is that: “Teaching shall be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of individual pupils, apprentices and trainees” (Education Act § 1-2, cf. (<http://odin.dep.no/>)). Accordingly pupils and students with special needs are integrated in ordinary schools and classes. All public and private training institutions operating with public support are obliged to mobilise necessary resources and create satisfactory physical and learning conditions for each individual pupil. However, experience shows that the institutions often find it difficult to comply with this requirement.

Upper secondary education in Norway leads to either general university admissions certificate or a trade or journeyman’s certificate depending on whether the pupil has chosen one of the three programmes for general studies or one of the nine programmes for VET.

VET is available at upper secondary level. Initial vocational education and training (IVET) covers the first/lowest level of a specialising education and training path. VET has two main access points:

- 1st year of upper secondary (11th to 13th grade) which includes both general and vocational studies (most upper secondary schools provide both); and
- 1st year of post-secondary education, including tertiary education, i.e. following the finalisation of 13 years of general education.

Higher education is provided by universities and university colleges, most of which are state owned. Most university VET programmes last 5-6 years and lead to a Master degree. University colleges (*høyskoler*) offer shorter VET programmes of 2–4 years duration. Successful completion of programmes of 3 years duration or more is awarded with a Bachelor degree.

5.2 IVET at lower secondary level

No qualifying vocational education and training is provided at lower secondary level. During the three years of lower secondary, pupils choose an Elective Programme Subject (*Utdanningsvalg*) from the different upper secondary programmes, including VET. They may thus “try out” a subject before choosing their upper secondary pathway.

5.3 IVET at Upper Secondary level (school-based and alternance)

Norway has a well-developed upper secondary VET system linked to apprenticeship training, which enjoys a high degree of confidence among stakeholders. There is strong tripartite co-operation at national, county and sectoral levels. The VET system is supported by a high level of trust among stakeholders. By international standards, the system is relatively inclusive and little stigma is attached to VET tracks in upper secondary education (Kuczera *et al* 2008).

Upper secondary IVET normally includes 2 years at school with practical training in school workshops and short work placements in industry, followed by 2 years of formalised apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise or public institution. This is

known as the 2+2 model, but for some trades which deviate from the main model it can also be 3+0, 1+3 and other permutations. There is no formalised alternance training. All young people leaving compulsory school have a statutory right to receive 3 years of upper secondary education. The majority of upper secondary IVET students are in the age group 16-21. There are nine available VET-programmes at upper secondary level (see table below).

Table no. 5.3.1 VET-programmes at upper secondary level			
Type of educational programme	Corresponding ISCED level/ orientation	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Transfer to other pathways
Technical and Industrial Production	ISCED 3	Most of the subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 1 subject follows 3 years in school and 1 year apprenticeship, and 8 subjects follow 1 year in school and 3 years apprenticeship training	All the programmes can transfer to Post-secondary non-tertiary education (<i>fagskoleutdanning</i>) which is placed at ISCED level 4
Electrical Trades	ISCED 3	Most of the subjects follow 2 years in school and 2.5 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. Subject in Aviation follow 2 years in school and 3 years apprenticeship training.	All the programmes can transfer to Post-secondary non-tertiary education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Building and Construction	ISCED 3	Most subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 4 subjects follow 1 year in school and 3 years of formalized apprenticeship	All the programmes can transfer to Post-secondary non-tertiary education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Restaurant and Food Processing trades	ISCED 3	All subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise.	All the programmes can transfer to Post-secondary non-tertiary education which is placed at ISCED level 4



Type of educational programme	Corresponding ISCED level/ orientation	Balance between school-based and work-based training	Transfer to other pathways
Agriculture, fishing and forestry	ISCED 3	Most subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 2 subjects follow 3 years in school which 1 subject transfer to higher education	All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Health and Social Care	ISCED 3	4 subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 5 subjects follow 3 years in school	All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Design, Arts and Crafts	ISCED 3	Most subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 3 subjects follow 3 years in school. 11 subjects follow 1 year in school and 3 years formalized apprenticeship	All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Media and Communication	ISCED 3	2 subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 2 subjects follow 3 years in school which 1 subject transfer to higher education	All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4
Service and Transport	ISCED 3	All subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise.	All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4

Note: For balance between general and vocational subjects, see table 5.3.2

The first year in upper secondary VET provides general education and introductory knowledge of the vocational area. During the second year, VET students choose specialisations and the courses are more trade-specific. The two-year apprenticeship takes place with an employer (or employers) and follows the national curriculum.

Curriculum development

The Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*), a comprehensive curriculum reform, was introduced in 2006. The reform covers primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, including VET. The reform places increased focus on learning of basic skills and knowledge promotion through outcome-based learning. The (LK 06) National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training clearly states the objectives for the learners' learning outcomes. The Key Competences defined by the Lisbon Strategy were taken into consideration and included where relevant in each part of the new curriculum's three parts: the Core Curriculum, the Quality Framework and the Subject Curricula (see section 2.1).

The (LK 06) National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training has been developed through a broad and open process led by the Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*). Each Subject Curriculum has been developed by a curriculum team and been subject to a broad consultation process (electronic questionnaires, seminars, meetings) that has involved schools, school owners and the social partners.

The division of labour between the national and the local level (school owners and schools) gives more professional freedom to the local level with respect to work methods, teaching materials and the organisation of classroom instruction. Schools and training enterprises themselves have to develop arenas where they can acquire basic knowledge and skills, develop the desire to learn and learning strategies that can constitute the basis for lifelong learning and active participation in society.

The competence aims within the vocational education programmes were themselves developed on the basis of competence platforms defined by the social partners, thus ensuring the relevance of the subjects to the changing nature of the demands of professions in a continuously shifting socio-economic context.

The social partners participate actively in the development of VET policies at all administrative levels. The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (SRY) advises the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) on the general framework of the national vocational education and training system. The Advisory Councils for Vocational Education and Training are linked to the nine vocational education programmes provided in upper secondary education; they advise national authorities on the content of VET programmes and future skills needs. The local County Vocational Training Boards (*yrkesopplæringsnemnd*) advise on quality, provision, career guidance and regional development in VET.

Local curriculum work is essential in order to operationalize the national curriculum; in particular the outcome-based competence aims in the subject curricula. It is the responsibility of the school owners to organise these processes. The Directorate for Education and Training develops web-based guidelines to support the local curriculum work.

Main characteristics/elements of the subject curricula

The subject curricula contain clear output based competence aims defining what the pupil/apprentice shall be able to master after following the education and training at each level, while decisions regarding the organisation, methods and work methods are left to the education and training institutions. As the five basic skills (mentioned above) are decisive for acquiring subject-related knowledge and for the communication and cooperation with others in a wide range of situations, the Knowledge Promotion Reform prioritises basic skills. Their aims are integrated and adapted to each subject according to the relevant level.

Each subject curriculum describes the objective of the subject, its structure and main areas, the competence aims the pupil/apprentice shall develop, and principles for assessment. The objective of each subject is described within a perspective relating to society and to the individual, and describes what the education and training can contribute to (general education, further studies, working life). Thus, it describes in which way the subject can contribute to the pupil's/apprentice's competence development in a lifelong learning perspective. The main areas within each subject curriculum describe the central content or functional area along which lines the subject is structured, and which are the basis of the formulation of the competence aims. These are the cornerstones of the curricula, contain the learning objectives for the pupil/apprentice and are formulated so as to describe what the pupil/apprentice must master with regard to the knowledge and skills they have developed through work with the subject/profession.

Subject	Upper secondary level 1	Upper secondary level 2	Apprenticeship
Common core subjects	336	252	according to collective agreements on working hours
Programme subjects	477	477	
In-depth study project	168	253	

Source: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010

Distribution of teaching hours per subject

The distribution of teaching hours per subject for the 10-year compulsory school is established for primary schooling as a whole (grades 1-7) and for lower secondary schooling (grades 8-10). The school owner (municipality or county authority) is responsible for the distribution of teaching hours at each level. The distribution of teaching hours per subject for upper secondary education and training is established for each specific level.

To improve each pupil's access to differentiated education, municipalities and county authorities may reassign 25 percent of the teaching hours for a given subject. This can be done when it is likely that it will help pupils attain the goals for their subjects as a whole. The subject curricula goals cannot be deviated from, even if classes are reassigned. Any reassignment must take place in cooperation with the home and requires the consent of each pupil or apprentice, as well as their parents or guardians.

Teaching methods and materials

Due to the numerous subjects to choose from within the field of vocational education and training, and the particular nature of some of these fields, a lot of them are attended by a small amount of pupils. This makes it non-profitable for publishers to produce textbooks and teaching materials for all the subjects. Hence the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training administrates a grant scheme enabling publishers to produce the necessary teaching materials (text books and digital resources) for these subjects among others. The needs are far from covered yet, and due to the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform and new subject curricula being developed for all grades, the need for teaching resources has increased. It is especially 2nd and 3rd year subjects that are in need of updated teaching materials. The grant scheme is administrated through a yearly announcement of funding to which publishers are invited to apply.

Assessment

Students' competencies are assessed continuously throughout the 4 (3) years of training. In addition, they have to sit for exams in individual subjects developed at local and county level. Students may also be randomly selected to sit for nationally arranged examinations in common core subjects. In some subjects (such as for instance in some electrical trades and in gunsmithing) there is an obligatory centralised written exam (marked locally) that the apprentices must take prior to the trade- and journeyman's examination.

For the majority of the students there are examinations in vocational subjects after 2 and 3(4) years of training. After 2 years in school there is an interdisciplinary local practical exam of up to 5 hours covering all the vocational subjects, with an up to two days' preparation period in advance. After 2 more years of apprenticeship, upper secondary IVET is completed by a practical-theoretical trade and journeyman's examination (*Fag- og svenneprøve*) lasting several days. Successful candidates are awarded a trade certificate (*Fagbrev*) for industrial and service trades or a journeyman's certificate (*Svennebrev*) for traditional crafts. The two certificates have equal status and are based on similar sets of theoretical knowledge and practical skills and they are awarded by the county-authorities.

The trade and journeyman certificate gives the right to access further studies at a Vocational College (*fagskole*). Candidates can also access higher education after supplementary studies qualifying for higher education.

5.4 Apprenticeship training

The only access requirement to an apprenticeship is that the pupil/student has completed compulsory school and introductory upper secondary schooling. There are no age restrictions; applicants above the age of 21 may take the full IVET training as an apprentice. Younger candidates are prioritised in school intake, but the employers are free to choose older candidates for apprenticeship.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for the curriculum development following the Knowledge Promotion Reform. For this purpose it makes extensive use of expert groups from both school and companies that provide upper secondary education (see also section 5.3). The two-year apprenticeship takes place with an employer (or employers) and follows the national curriculum.

The planning and decision-making for the training content of specific trades are based on inputs from the private sector, coordinated through the National Council for Vocational Training (SRY), where the social partners appoint two-thirds of the members. Industry representatives are always represented in committees appointed by the Directorate for Education and Training for preparing curricula in the various upper secondary IVET training pathways.

Employers' organisations, sector organisations and trade unions give input to curriculum development through the trade-specific Vocational Training Councils.

In the development of the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform, special attention has been given to the definition of basic skills. Basic skills are integrated in all subjects from grade one, and taught across subject-specific curricula. The skills comprise: the ability to express oneself orally; the ability to read; numeracy; the ability to express oneself in writing, and the ability to use digital tools.

The acquisition of basic skills is defined as an essential part of learning outcomes in the curriculum, and is integrated at all levels in all subjects, including VET. Basic skills are cross curricular skills and they are subject/curricula independent. But when integrated in all subject curricula – consequently – they become subject curricula dependent, reflecting the characteristics of each subject. All pupils shall acquire basic skills in order to develop their competences and to take an active part in the knowledge society, including private life, work life, participation in a democratic society and further education and training.

Legally, apprentices are employees of the enterprise and have the rights and duties as such. They are entitled to a salary agreed upon through a centralised system of collective bargaining. The salary corresponds to the productive work conducted. Since the productive work increases throughout the 2-year apprenticeship period, the salary increases accordingly. The apprentice is offered an apprenticeship contract, which is standardised and signed by the apprentice, the manager of the enterprise, the appointed training manager and a representative of the County Authorities.

An enterprise or public institution that wishes to take on an apprentice must be approved by the county authorities as training company. Training companies are regular production units of goods and services that accept apprentices and receive public financial support for the required training part of the apprenticeship period. Formal approval is done on the basis of advice from the secretariat of the county. The county has the right to evoke its status as a training organisation if the training is not provided in accordance with the training agreement and the national curriculum.

In order to obtain the approval, the enterprise or institution must be in a position to meet the training requirements of the curriculum for the relevant trade. A qualified training manager must be appointed with responsibility for the instruction, whereas several employees may provide the actual training. The training is supervised by the employees' representatives and the training manager who make sure that the training facilities are adequate, that the curriculum requirements are met and, thus, that the apprentice receives the training he or she is entitled to.

Should the pupil be unable to find an apprenticeship place, the upper secondary school is obliged to provide a year of practical training within the school premises.

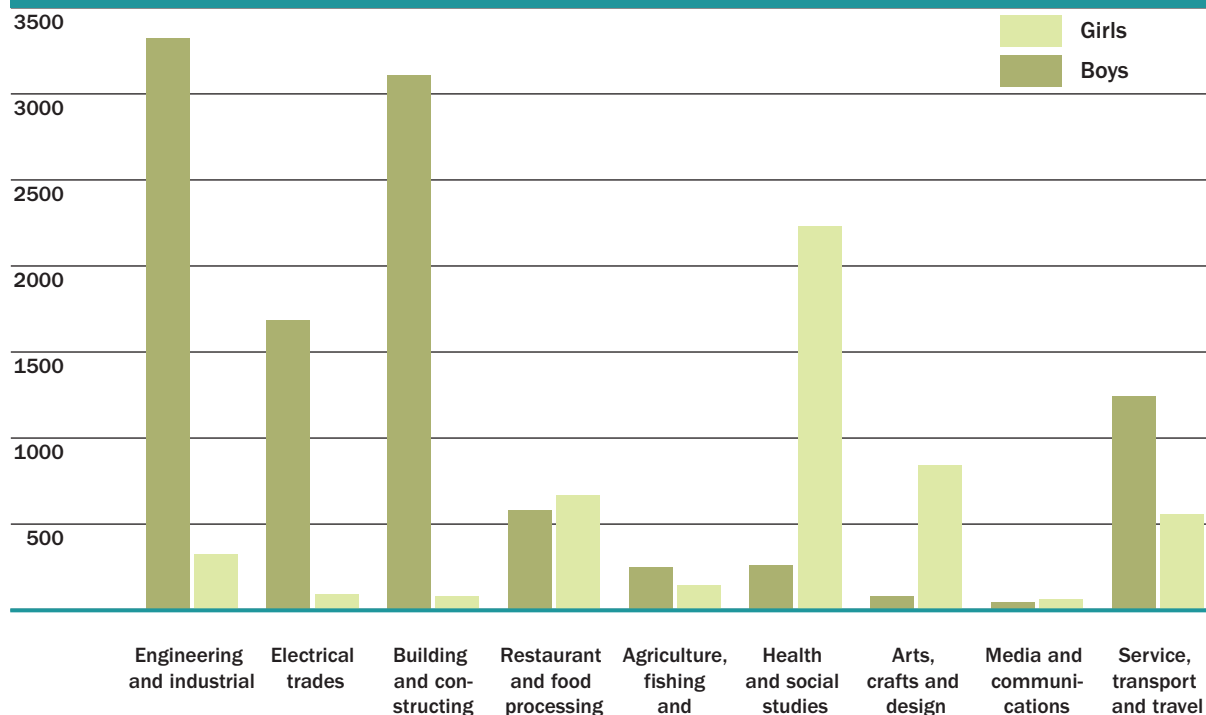
The apprenticeship training is funded over public budgets and the training enterprises receive a state grant for each apprentice (in 2009: € 11347 over two years) (see also section 3.2.3). An apprentice is also a paid employee: salary increases from 30 percent to 80 percent of a skilled worker's salary during the two years of apprenticeship.

Decisions on how to organise and adapt the teaching and learning methods are made locally. There are however some national measures in place to develop manuals in adapted education and vocational adaption of academic subjects.

The final trade or journeyman's examination is a comprehensive realistic, practical examination (max 5 days duration) where students demonstrate their vocational skills and have to give an account for the chosen procedure at the test site. The content of the test can for instance be building a wall, making of an evening dress or refurbishing a bathroom. Training companies are never involved in the final testing of their own apprentices. Candidates failing to pass the examination may appeal to a National Appeals Board for the trade. If necessary, they are allowed to repeat the test.

Training institutions shall have a system that shows how the training is planned, organised and assessed to ensure that apprentices can develop necessary skills and competences. These skills are not assessed by tests and grades, but through individual dialogues twice a year between the trainer (*instruktør*) and the apprentice.

Table 5.4.1: Applicants to apprenticeship training 2009



Source: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010

Table 5.4.2: New apprenticeship contracts per year

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
New contracts as of Oct 1st.	14 540	16 341	18 180	18 699	18 585	15 928

Source: SSB 2010, a

In 2009, out of the 15 900 new contracts signed, 12 300 were apprenticeship placements made by the counties (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2010). About 21 000 (20 876) trade and journeyman's examinations were completed (a: SSB 2010). 6 857 of the candidates to the examination were candidates for experience based trade certification (h: SSB 2010).

5.5 Other youth programmes and alternative pathways

The training candidate

The training candidature scheme (*lære kandidatordningen*), in practice since 2000 awards low-skilled students the possibility of obtaining a specially adapted qualification of a lower degree. As opposed to the apprentice (*lærling*) who signs an apprenticeship agreement (*lærekontrakt*), the training candidate (*lære kandidat*) signs a training contract (*opplæringskontrakt*) which will lead to a competence exam (*kompetanseprøve*) as opposed to the trade or journeyman's certificate (*fag- og svenneprøve*).

While the apprentice aims to reach all the objectives set in the curriculum, the training candidate will aim towards achieving tasks within a limited number of competence aims and a less comprehensive exam. Upon completion of the education and training, the training candidate will be presented with a vocational training certificate (*kompetansebevis*). During the training period, the training contract may be converted into an ordinary apprenticeship agreement should the candidate aim towards the trade or journeyman's certificate.

5.6 Vocational education and training at post-secondary (non tertiary) level

Vocational training provided at this level is CVET for holders of trade and journeyman's certificate. Programmes at this level have duration of between six months and two years, and the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education is responsible for accreditation of study programmes. See also section 4.4, Legislative framework for CVET (*fagskole*, ISCED 4), and 6.1.2 and 6.2.2 for major characteristics of formal and non-formal CVET.

5.7 Vocational education and training at tertiary level

There is no separate system for IVET at tertiary level in Norway, as it is fully integrated in the overall system of higher education. The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for all types of higher education, except military training and the training of police. Even for the latter, however, it is the 2005 Act on Universities and University Colleges (see section 3.3) which is applicable as for the academic aspects of their activities. In this report, IVET at tertiary level is classified as CVET. Please see chapters 6.1.2 and 6.2.2.



6: Continuing vocational education and training

6.1 Formal education

6.1.1 General background (administrative structure and financing)

Since the 1980s, there has been an increasing awareness of the general importance of having a highly educated population and of updating training in order to meet changing labour market needs. CVET provisions have been developed accordingly. More than 70 percent of the population aged 16-74 participate in some form of learning activity. 54 percent of the economically active population aged 22-66 participate in some form of education and training each year. Organised non-formal learning at the workplace and learning through daily work are considered the most important types of CVET by respondents.

There is a tendency that those with higher educational attainment seek and attend more continuing vocational education and training (CVET) than those with low educational attainment, resulting in an increasing education gap. Thus, the government and the social partners have given high priority to the improvement of framework conditions — educational leave, financing — and access to adapted training opportunities for adults with weaker educational backgrounds. All adults have been given a statutory right to primary (since 2002) and secondary (since 2000) education and training similar to the one provided to regular pupils and students. Municipalities and counties, respectively, are obliged to organise appropriate schooling, free of charge.

All sorts of CVET and personally oriented courses are available through flexible modes of delivery, e.g. part-time and evening courses, and distance education including e-learning. Training is frequently used by the various public authorities in policies regarding national employment, regional development and gender equality, as well as more sector-specific initiatives. This also applies to the work with integration of migrants and other minority groups.

CVET for all within the national education system

A basic principle of Norwegian educational policy is equality of educational opportunities, irrespective of social, geographic, and cultural background and possible special needs. In principle, all public education in Norway is free of charge, i.e. there are no tuition fees. (The master craftsman scheme in part represents an exception, see 9.2.1).

Vocational post-secondary colleges (*fagskole*) offer training for students who hold a qualification from the upper secondary level, whether vocational or academic, or similar level of qualification through recognition of prior learning. Training as a Master Craftsman (*Håndverksmester*) is CVET for holders of a trade or journeyman's certificate with several years of relevant work experience that wish to set up their own business or qualify for a managerial position in a craft enterprise. For many trades, such training is offered at post-secondary technical vocational colleges (ISCED 4).

In the White Paper no. 44 to the Storting, *Education Strategy* [St. meld. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], the importance of improved flexible provision of further higher education is underlined. As a result, Norway Opening Universities has been awarded more funding (plus 3 million NOK, approx. € 375 000) in 2010 to improve university-enterprise cooperation on flexible provision of higher education for professionals. Norway Opening Universities is an agency under the Ministry of Education and Research mandated to stimulate Norwegian higher education institutions to develop and offer flexible programmes and courses based on ICT, and to coordinate activities within the field of lifelong and flexible ICT-supported or multimedia learning in higher education.

As a rule, most programmes and institutions in higher education are open to part time studies - according to the needs of the students.

Training for employment and integration (see more in section 6.3)

Training is embedded in several of the public measures targeted at unemployed people and other vulnerable groups in the labour market. The measures vary according to fluctuations in the labour market and the number of people with specific needs of support. Vocational training and work practice are organised for people with various vocational disabilities by 100 labour market enterprises (*Arbeidsmarkedsbedrifter*). Ordinary labour market measures with training elements comprise rehabilitation training (*Rehabilitering*) and labour market training (*Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring* – AMO).

Rehabilitation training supports retraining within a regular education programme lasting 1–3 years. AMO courses last between 1 week and 10 months and are delivered by different local public and private suppliers.

Since 2004, refugees and other immigrants from 3rd world countries are entitled and obliged to follow a 2-year, full-time “introduction course” to Norwegian society, comprising language training, social studies and training for work. The participants receive a salary during the 2 years, paid by the government.

CVET at the initiative of the employers and the social partners

A study from the research institute FAFO (2003) indicates that more than 210 000 employees in the private and public sectors annually attend in-service courses organised by the workplace or relevant social partners. The training is organised internally or delivered by higher education institutions, upper secondary schools and various private providers. Large enterprises more often than small companies offer CVET to their staff.

Formally, the social partners have no defined role in promoting participation in formal CVET at the post-secondary and higher levels. Cooperation between post-secondary vocational providers and higher education institutions and the world of work is important, however, and encouraged by national authorities. In the 2009 White Paper *Education Strategy* mentioned above, improved university-enterprise cooperation is encouraged through the following measures: specific strategies, new forums, more opportunity for students to include

practice periods in degree programmes, professional relevance included as a criterion in the quality assurance system in higher education, better career guidance, and an action plan for entrepreneurship in education and training for the period 2009-14.

CVET at the initiative of the individual

The rationale and purpose for individuals participating in formally recognised CVET and other types of organised courses and training, is mainly work-related. Training is provided to individuals by 3 major provider structures:

Adult Education Associations (*studieforbundene*) are non-government organisations (NGOs) that deliver a variety of courses at all levels throughout the country. 20 institutions in 2007 reported a total of almost 490 000 attendants in their courses. 51 000 sat for some kind of formal exam, 15 000 at tertiary level.

12 Distance Education Institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) deliver courses to almost 22 000 participants (2007). Courses cover both training according to public, national curricula on secondary, at tertiary vocational and higher levels, and personally oriented courses.

77 Folk High Schools (*folkehøgskoler*), boarding schools owned and run by NGOs and county authorities, offer a variety of non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as some academic studies. Folk high schools offer 1-year courses and short courses. In 2007, more than 54 percent of the 18 588 participants in short courses were above 50 years of age.

In addition, there is informal training taking place at work. Almost half of all new trade and journeyman's certificates are awarded to candidates for experience-based trade certification (*Praksiskandidater*), who sit for examinations on the basis of skills developed through work participation.

In general, CVET opportunities are available to all groups at all levels in all parts of the country. Existing CVET provisions are continuously assessed by the relevant public authorities, social partners and providers themselves. Training is frequently adjusted to identified needs and changes.

Planning and forecasting CVET needs and delivery is a continuous exercise by all training providers. Planning and forecasting training for employment and integration is based on regular needs assessments conducted by labour market authorities and municipalities. Private providers of CVET conduct continuous training needs assessment in the form of market research.

At the post-secondary vocational level (ISCED 4), a growing number of programmes are only offered through flexible provision, part-time being the most common form. In higher education, flexible modes of provision (part-time, distance, decentralised, media- and/or ICT-based) are common, and the distinction between flexible and non-flexible modes of delivery is moreover becoming blurred with the flexibilisation of ordinary on-campus programmes (web-based course provision and information, registration, assignments and feed-back by e-mail, etc).

6.1.2 Major characteristics of formal CVET

In Norway, the term “*tertiær*”, tertiary, is used for all post-secondary education and training, both higher education, and vocational education and training (*fagskoleutdanning*) at ISCED level 4, including master craftsman education. Post-secondary vocational education and training at ISCED 4 (*fagskoleutdanning*) is of between 6 months’ and two years’ duration. Providers are responsible for their own curricula which must be approved by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT — *Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*). Most of the public schools at this level are administered by the counties. Counties are responsible for the delivery of good quality training in their post-secondary vocational colleges (mainly in technical, maritime and health studies) and for the distribution of public funds to providers at this level. NOKUT has national responsibility for accreditation and quality control.

Access is based on an upper secondary qualification. No further work practice is required. There are no age restrictions on participation.

Completing two-year technical post-secondary vocational education and training qualifies for general admission to higher education provided students have a certain level of attainment in Norwegian. Many technical vocational colleges in addition have agreements with higher education institutions so that their graduates are admitted directly to the second year of engineering in the relevant field of study.

Higher education institutions design their own courses and programmes. NOKUT, the quality assurance agency, has developed quality criteria for evaluations and accreditation specified according to level (bachelor’s, master’s, ph.d. degrees) which are laid down in regulations. With the implementation of the national qualifications framework, more attention is given to learning output in programme design.

Training as a Master Craftsman (Mester)

This is CVET for holders of a trade or journeyman’s certificate with several years of relevant work experience that wish to set up their own business or hold a managerial position in a craft enterprise. The training, which combines general business management, marketing and vocational theory is a public certification arrangement under the Ministry of Industry and Trade (*Nærings- og handelsdepartementet*), administered by the publicly appointed Master Craftsman Certificate Committee (*Mesterbrevnemnda* -MCC). The MCC Committee determines training standards and practice requirements and awards the certificate. Successful candidates obtain the title “Master craftsman”. The business and administrative disciplines studied at two-year technical post-secondary vocational colleges satisfy the specialisation requirements in courses leading to master craftsman’s certificates.

The master craftsman certificate is awarded in 72 different crafts covering all traditional trades in which journeyman’s examinations are held and journeyman’s certificates issued, as well as some (newer) trades with craft examinations and certificates (for further information, see <http://www.mesterbrev.no/>).

Curricula are based on input from professional master craftsmen and relevant social partners, and decided upon by the MCC.

One adult education association, *Folkeuniversitetet* –FU, has the exclusive right to deliver training and arrange examinations. There are 80 FU branches around the country. Training comprises common subjects, e.g. organisation and management, marketing and financial control, as well as craft theory. Common subjects are delivered part-time over 2 years (the training is typically combined with fulltime work either as an employee or owner of an SME). The use of ICT is integrated in the whole course. Both common subjects and craft theory are offered as evening and part-time classes. Distance education courses have been developed, making it possible to take the full course on the web, with a personal tutor and possibilities to communicate with other students.

Common subjects are completed with a written examination. In craft theory, a written examination is held for each master craftsman subject. One may also sit for the examination as a private candidate.

Vocational teacher education (see 7.1.1)

To qualify as a teacher in vocational subjects at the upper secondary level, a three-year bachelor's degree programme is normally required. There is one such programme for each of six of the main vocational education programmes at the upper secondary level. The admission requirement is a trade or journeyman's certificate and minimum two years of relevant vocational practice.

Alternatively, it is possible to qualify on the basis of a one-year programme in practical-pedagogical training on top of a bachelor's or master's degree (or similar) in relevant fields. The programme includes pedagogy and periods of supervised teaching practice.

Other CVET delivered by higher education institutions

In Norwegian higher education, all vocationally-oriented courses and programmes are part of the ordinary higher education system. As mentioned earlier, there is no formal or other distinction between vocational and non-vocational higher education.

Access to higher education is facilitated through multiple routes:

1. Upper secondary school leaving certificate based on successful completion of one of the general, or academic, programmes in upper secondary education, or of a programme with both vocational and general subjects which includes specified levels of attainment in six key academic subjects (Norwegian, English, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and History).
2. An upper secondary vocational qualification (a crafts' or a journeyman's certificate), plus successful completion of a one-year 'packaged' course in the six key subjects mentioned above.
3. '23/5': Applicants aged 23 or above who have at least five years of work experience, or a mixture of education and work experience, and who have successfully passed the course in the six key subjects mentioned above, fulfil the general (minimum) requirements for admission to higher education.

4. RPL: Access based on RPL (individual assessment based on formal, informal and non-formal qualifications) is open to applicants aged 25 or more. Applications for admission on the basis of RPL are handled locally at each institution.
5. For certain especially designed courses, particularly in engineering, specific vocational qualifications from the upper secondary level satisfy the admission criteria.

Most higher education institutions deliver commercial, often tailor-made, CVET to private companies and public institutions, both locally and nationally. Other courses are available to the general public. Pedagogical methods and modes of delivery vary and comprise traditional classroom teaching, internal courses, E-learning and blended courses, according to the expressed needs of the customers.

Many adults on an individual basis also follow regular study programmes at higher education institutions as CVET. An estimated 80 000-100 000 individuals attend some form of CVET provided by higher education institutions annually, including full-time, part-time and distance education students. Most of these are registered as regular students. Age was never an impediment to access to higher education in Norway, and it has traditionally always been considered important to welcome mature and young students as equally important. Compared to most other countries, the age profile of Norwegian students is quite high. In spring 2010, for instance, only 54 per cent of all registered students were in the age group 25 and younger, while 11.6 per cent were in the age group 41+.

The general admission requirements for higher education can be exempted for tailor-made courses that do not lead to a degree. Course evaluation by the participants and feedback from the customer institutions represent the only quality control for such courses. In general, the commercial interest of the training establishment in further deliveries of training ensures a close follow-up and adjustments of content and approach in accordance with customer feedback.

Several national arrangements have been established to motivate, facilitate and promote CVET for employees. These comprise legal and financial measures, as well as political and administrative arrangements, and target social partners as well as the enterprises and the individual employee. For many years, enterprises have been granted tax relief for their investment in staff training.

There are no tuition fees at any public education institutions at any level for ordinary programmes, and there are no age limitations for admission or attendance. Financial support is provided to adult education associations (*studieforbund*) and distance education institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) for the provision of training to individuals. Students aged between 18 and 65 may receive financial support from the State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*).

6.2 Non-formal education

6.2.1 General background (administrative structure and financing)

Documenting and recognising qualifications acquired through non-formal and informal learning has been emphasised for decades. Since 1980, adults can document their qualifications obtained through work practice by registering for the trade and journeyman's examination as a candidate for experience-based trade certification (*praksiskandidat*). This arrangement applies also to every individual subject in general primary and secondary education, as well as technical and Master of Crafts training programmes. This allows for knowledge and skills acquired through self-studies and other non-formal and informal settings can be formalised and candidates may complete formal training programmes anywhere and at their own pace. The experience-based trade certification is regulated by the same acts that regulate formal training.

Since December 2004, every county had established a unit that conducts vocational testing (*Yrkesprøving*) according to recognised national training programmes. The candidates receive a document stating their qualifications within a trade, although it does not have the same status as a trade and journeyman's certificate, for instance regarding wage level. However, the vocational testing unit may recommend to the relevant Vocational Training Board that the candidate is allowed to sit for a regular trade and journeyman's examination. Hence, the new system facilitates documentation of prior learning.

Since 2001, adults aged over 25 may be accepted to higher education based on an assessment of formal, non-formal and informal qualifications, meaning that the higher education institution also will consider factors other than certificates and credits when selecting applicants, including relevant work experience, voluntary work etc. If there are specific requirements to enter the study in question, the candidate must meet them. Applicants admitted to higher education according to this procedure, will not automatically be admitted elsewhere, as the qualification assessment is made according to the particular profile of the individual study programme applied for.

6.2.2 Major characteristics of non-formal CVET

Working life in Norway has a long-standing tradition and good experiences with compensating skill needs by lowering the formal criteria upon employment giving the employees the future possibility of gaining formal competences connected to the practise. This has made the Norwegian education and training and VET system available to older youth and adults, with formal and non-formal education and training (Høst 2008).

A number of initiatives have been launched to encourage individual participation in CVET including:

- Adults aged over 25 may be admitted to higher education based on assessment of prior learning;
- Municipalities and counties are obliged to provide free education and training for adults at primary, lower and upper secondary levels;
- The Competence Reform of 1999 introduced several new measures to strengthen the access rights of adults to improve their knowledge and skills throughout life. 400 million NOK (approx. € 50 millions) were allocated to support projects aiming to develop the market for CVET. In addition considerable efforts have been made in recent years to improve educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups through adult education. This particularly applies to adults with especially weak schooling, various groups of physically disabled persons, adults with reading and writing difficulties and adult immigrants;
- From 2001, adult employees were given a legal right to study leave, on certain conditions. Earlier, this was embedded in the agreements between the social partners;
- The Ministry of Education and Research has actively promoted the development of institutions and arrangements for the promotion of CVET distance learning programmes, e.g. SOFF, Norgesuniversitetet and VOX;
- The Knowledge Promotion Reform of 2006 also focuses very strongly on one main element of lifelong learning: the importance of having substantial basic skills. It is the position of the Norwegian government that adults with low basic skills should have the opportunity to get the basic education they need, and thus be able to take an active part in the workplace and society;
- In white paper no. 44(2008-2009) to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St.meld. nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], strengthening work-based learning and career guidance for adults are highlighted.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Validation of Prior Learning (VPL, *realkompetansevurdering*) is an initiative to increase the participation of adults in VET. Adults are given an opportunity to get access to and/or a shorter period in school and the training schedule after they have been given a validation of prior learning. This validation covers both the upper secondary level and the technical college and university college level. VOX - National Centre for Lifelong Learning has the overall responsibility for this initiative.

The legislation that covers the validation of adults' prior learning can be divided into the three following sections:

- Adults without prior upper secondary education (VET included) have a statutory right to upper secondary education provided by the county authorities. The education should be adapted to the individual's needs and life situation. These adults also have a statutory right to have their prior informal and non-formal learning assessed towards the national curricula and their approved competences documented in a certificate of competence submitted by the county authorities. The assessment process may result in an exemption from parts of the training schedule and a shorter training period towards a full exam.
- Adults with more than five years of documented work experience may obtain a trade and journeyman's certificate by validation of their documents (Education Act § 3-5). If their documents are approved; representing the right kind of practice and for the required period of time, they may apply for the final exams. These candidates are not required to go through a formal education and training process, but they take the same final examination as apprentices, including both theoretical and practical elements.
- Adults without a general college and university admissions certification can apply for enrolment in higher education on the basis of documented prior learning. The applicant must be over 25 years of age (NAV 2010).

The benefits of validation have been recognised in a wide range of policy documents. Many adults have worked in a trade for years without much schooling and with no certificate. Experience so far shows that validation is often geared at obtaining a trade certificate.

CVET at the initiative of the individual

Adults wanting CVET outside the workplace and public education have many opportunities. Publicly recognised adult education associations (*studieforbund*), distance education and e-learning institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) and folk high schools (*folkehøgskoler*) throughout the country offer all kinds of courses on a commercial basis: work-related as well as more personally oriented, formal as well as non-formal and untraditional. Full-time, part-time and evening classes are available for most courses, and delivery modes comprise traditional classroom, distance education and e-learning. Many people use distance education to prepare for craft examinations and upper secondary school examinations. Most distance education courses are open to all those who have the initiative and ability to work on their own, but courses that leads to formal university and college-level qualifications have the same entrance requirements as higher education. Courses delivered through the recognised institutions are subsidised by government, as the institutions receive financial support according to the number of courses and participants.

The 21 adult education associations are non-government umbrella organisations for a total of 410 voluntary organisations, including political parties, employers' and sector organisations and trade unions, humanist organisations and other interest groups. 79 percent of courses are delivered by a teacher, but the distance education/e-learning provision is increasing. In 2009, a total of 469 669 students attended courses delivered by adult education institutions. 56.70 percent were women and only 27.4 percent under the age of 30 (see attached table).

Table 6.2.2.1: Participation in courses delivered by Adult Education Association, Distance Education Institutions and Folk High Schools (short courses), October 2007

Adult Education Associations, participation by age, gender and course subject, 2009. N and %						
	TOTAL	14-29	30-49	50 +	Unknown	% of total course participants
TOTAL (% women)	469 669 (56.70)	105 118 (54.53)	151 384 (57.09)	177 321 (57.15)	35 846 (58.72)	100.00
Language courses (% women of these)	15 648 (64.50)	4 857	6 058	4 247	486	3.30
Aesthetic subjects & handcraft (% women of these)	218 159 (61.20)	49 568	59 113	103 436	6 042	46.40
Humanities, philosophy, ethics (% women of these)	20 258 (62.60)	7 777	3 745	8 678	58	4.30
Social studies (% women of these)	19 294 (69.90)	2 288	2 616	4 438	9 952	4.10
Organisation and management (% women of these)	75 298 (49.60)	20 103	26 239	19 140	9 816	16.03
Business and ICT (% women of these)	10 983 (59.60)	584	2 870	5 165	2 364	2.30
Health, social and sports (% women of these)	54 144 (63.90)	6 697	29 234	16 488	1 725	11.50
Transport and communication (% women of these)	7 675 (35.20)	1 549	1 471	4 189	466	1.6
Science, industry, technical subjects (% women of these)	13 110 (19.60)	1 649	4 826	2 660	3 975	2.80
Natural resources management, ecology, environment protection and outdoor recreation (% women of these)	33 546 (38.00)	9 726	14 550	8 371	899	7.10
Goods and Services (% women of these)	1 554 (35.3)	320	662	509	63	0.30

Source: SSB 2010, a.

Enterprise-based CVET

Enterprise-based training is organised as in-service courses, external courses or by means of e-learning for individual employees. Enterprises are responsible for financing training except for training delivered by commercial partners in relation to the introduction of new products and tools, and for staff participating in regular study programmes at public training institutions. There are currently no general, public arrangements for direct financial support of CVET in enterprises. However, there are various forms of indirect financial support available:

- Enterprises are entitled to tax relief for investments in staff training;



- Adult students/employees are, under certain conditions, entitled to financial support from the state education loan fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*);
- Training delivered by publicly recognised distance education institutions (*studieforbund and fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) is subsidised by the Ministry of Education and Research, reducing the participation fee and hence costs for the enterprise;

Distance learning

12 publicly recognised distance education institutions provide needs-based training by using specially adapted training material and distance communication with a teacher. This learning opportunity is of particular interest in Norway and other countries with a sparse population. In 2009, 18 376 participants were registered under these courses: 55.80 percent women, and 34 percent under the age of 30 (see table 6.2.2.2).

Table 6.2.2.2: Distance Education Associations, Participants who completed a course, by age, gender and course subject. N and %, 2009

	TOTAL	14-29	30-49	50 +	Unknown	% of total course participants
TOTAL (% women)	18 376 (55.80)	6 319 (60.30)	9 927 (54.40)	1 864 (45.30)	266 (75.6)	100.00
Language courses (% women of these)	458 (52.80)	196	180	77	5	2.50
Aesthetic subjects & handcraft (% women of these)	560 (96.40)	193	319	47	1	3.00
Humanities, philosophy, ethics (% women of these)	129 (71.30)	45	28	53	3	0.70
Social studies (% women of these)	4 585 (71.40)	1 787	2 328	417	53	25.00
Organisation and management (% women of these)	2 390 (54.20)	504	1 556	233	97	13.00
Business and ICT (% women of these)	3 441 (75.30)	999	2 052	344	46	18.70
Health, social and sports (% women of these)	1 492 (91.40)	655	689	97	51	8.10
Transport and communication (% women of these)	3 181 (8.30)	1 388	1 543	249	1	17.30
Science, industry, technical subjects (% women of these)	1 141 (22.20)	362	634	137	8	6.20
Natural resources management, ecology, environment protection and outdoor recreation (% women of these)	23 (43.30)	5	14	4	0	0.01
Goods and Services (% women of these)	976 (35.1)	185	584	206	1	5.30

Source: SSB 2010, a.

Folk high schools

The 77 folk high schools spread around the country are boarding schools owned and run by religious organisations, independent foundations, NGOs and county authorities. They offer a variety of non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as some academic studies. They do not grant degrees or conduct exams. The schools build on a “holistic view of the students and challenge them to grow individually, socially and academically”. Schools offer both 1-year courses and various short courses lasting 3 days to 16 weeks, many of them with a practical and aesthetic orientation. In 2009, 54 percent of the 18 600 participants in short courses were above between 30-49 years of age and 55.80 percent were women (see table above).

6.3 Measures to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market

Labour market training is embedded in several public measures targeted at unemployed people and other groups in the labour market in danger of exclusion. Target groups are : early school leavers under 20 years of age, youth 20-24 years of age (unemployed 6 months or more), long-term job seekers (2 years, the last 6 months totally unemployed), immigrants and people who are occupationally handicapped are targets groups who have priority for labour market measures. Some labour market measures are reserved by regulations for people who are occupationally handicapped. The measures vary according to fluctuations in the labour market and the number of people with specific needs of support.

Labour market measures with training elements comprise mainly:

- Training (*opplæring*) i) education and training in a regular education programme (*opplæring i form av ordinær utdanning*) lasting 1-3 years, ii) Labour Market Training (*Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring – AMO*), lasting between 1 week and 10 months, and delivered by different local public and private suppliers;
- Training in Sheltered Workshops (*Kvalifisering i arbeidsmarkedsbedrift*), maximum duration is normally 2 years, and delivered by labour market enterprises (*Arbeidsmarkedsbedrifter*).

The participants receive financial support to cover daily living expenses, and expenses related to participating in training (i.e. travel expenses, child care, books, etc).

Since 2004, refugees and other immigrants from 3rd world countries are entitled and obliged to follow a 2-year, full-time “introduction course” to Norwegian society, comprising language training, social studies and training for work. The participants receive a salary during the 2 years, paid by the municipality and financed by the government (see more below).

Training for unemployed and challenged job seekers

Training for the unemployed job seekers is the national responsibility of the Ministry of Labour (*Arbeidsdepartementet*). The operational responsibility for labour market measures lies with the government agency the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (*Arbeids- og velferdsetaten, NAV*), that has offices at national, regional and local level. NAV is the national policy coordinating unit. NAV Management and Development (*NDU*) is the national coordinator of the operational activities, whereas the regional offices coordinate the activities at the local employment offices.

Training elements are embedded in several labour market measures. The types and volume of available programmes vary according to fluctuations in the labour market, and the number of people with specific needs of support. The training programmes within the labour market policies aim to bring people back to work and to fill job openings as quickly as possible. The programmes should not compete with, or replace, education and training in the ordinary education systems. For these reasons, among others, there are set limits for age and duration within the different programmes. Regional and local NAV offices recruit participants and determine the design, location, extent and type of training to be provided, taking into account both the requirements of the labour market and the individual jobseeker's qualifications and training needs.

In 2009, the annual average number of participants (i.e. the average number of participants at any time during the year) in the various labour market measures fully financed by NAV, was 71 868. Of these, 53 600 were vocationally challenged.

Education and training in the ordinary education system (*Opplæring i form av ordinær utdanning*) comprises the greatest number of participants and is directed towards vocationally challenged job seekers. In 2008 the annual average number in the programme was 21 000. The programme aims to supply the vocationally challenged with formal competences in order to obtain ordinary work. The education/training may last up to three years. Since the majority take part at college or university level, the age limit is 26 years of age +. The participant applies and is admitted in the ordinary education system on the same basis as other pupils/students. The participants receive a rehabilitation allowance.

Labour market courses (*Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring – AMO*) aim to supply the unemployed over 19 years of age with vocational skills resulting in (re)employment. Long-term unemployed (26 weeks or more) with weak educational background are given priority. Courses last between one week and 10 months, and may lead to a trade- or journeyman's certificate or other formalised qualifications. Other courses provide specific skills for updating of competences, or supply work preparation and job seeking skills. Courses may combine formal curricula of VET and informal work practise. Labour market courses are a supplement to the ordinary educational system, and a tool to fill vacancies as quickly as possible. For this reason, the main aim is not necessarily to supply the participant with a full-fledged formal education. However, if one or more courses during an unemployment spell do not lead to a full-fledged trade and journeyman's certificate, participants may build on the formal training they have gone through, to reach a complete formalised certificate in a longer perspective.

NAV contracts labour market courses from different suppliers, i.e. upper secondary schools, specialised training centres and private suppliers. Participants receive financial support (a daily cash benefit or unemployment benefit) during training. In 2009 the annual average number in the programme was about 5 800.

Some municipalities and counties have established separate adult training centres to deliver ordinary adult primary and secondary education, as well as labour market courses and introductory training for immigrants. These centres are often co-located with regular upper secondary schools and courses are run by regular teachers.

Training in sheltered workshops (*Kvalifisering i arbeidsmarkedsbedrift*) aims to supply the vocationally challenged with vocational skills in order to obtain ordinary work. Maximum duration is two years, with the possibility of prolonging the period when the aim for the participant is a trade- or journeyman's certificate. The programme takes place in a genuine business environment in a labour market enterprise (*Arbeidsmarkedsbedrift*). The participant receives a rehabilitation allowance. In 2009 the annual average number in the programme was 1 400. There are about 100 labour market enterprises. They have agreements/contracts with and are subsidised by NAV.

In-company training (*Bedriftsintern opplæring*) is a measure which shall help to:

- Prevent employees from being excluded from working life during major reorganisations.
- Maintain and improve the competence of employees in companies which have reorganisation problems that are particularly serious for the labour market.
- Experience gap in business due to trade cycle conditions.

Indirect financial support may be granted to companies that provide training to their own employees. The arrangement is available for SMEs with less than 100 employees. In-house training must take place in accordance with a training plan approved by NAV, which encompasses both theory and any practical training. NAV can contribute a maximum of 50 percent of salary costs for a substitute in a period when a staff member is on necessary training leave.

To counteract drop-out from working life because of poor basic skills, the Government initiated in 2006 the Basic Competence in Working Life (BKA) Programme. The awarded funds are to be spent on giving employees instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and basic use of ICT. VOX, Norwegian Institute for Lifelong Learning has the overall responsibility for administration and monitoring. The funds are mainly allocated towards enterprise-based courses on basic skills, but projects organised outside workplaces can also receive funding, provided the objectives is to prepare people for working life. The overall aim is to give adults the opportunity to get the basic skills they need to keep up with the demands and changes in modern working life and civil society, and encourage them to achieve further educational goals. The programme is a prominent political issue as part of the government's focus on basic skills in the adult population, it has been evaluated twice, and the results have contributed to the development of the programme and a large increase in the national

funding. For 2009, the programme has received a grant amounting to NOK 77.8 millions (approx. € 9.7 millions), and in 2010 the grant was equal to NOK 89.8 millions (approx. € 11.2 millions)

Training of immigrants

After the general election to the Storting in 2009, the responsibility of the immigration and integration policy was divided between three different ministries. The Ministry of Justice and the Police are now responsible for the immigration policy. Labour related immigration is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. Finally, the Ministry for Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is responsible for integration and social inclusion. The operational responsibilities are unchanged, and still placed with the Directorate of Immigration (*Utlendingsdirektoratet – UDI*) and the Directorate of Integration (*Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet – IMDI*).

Since September 2004, newly arrived immigrants (including refugees and persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and family members reunited with them) are legally entitled and obliged to follow a 2-year, full-time introduction programme. The training shall provide participants with basic skills in Norwegian language, fundamental insights of Norwegian social life and prepare for future participation in the labour market. Full participation in the programme entitles the participants to an economic benefit covered by the government. The municipalities are responsible for the programme, in close cooperation with NAV.

In September 2005 it became compulsory for newly arrived adult refugees and immigrants (except persons with EU-citizenship) in Norway to participate in 300 teaching hours of training in Norwegian language and social studies. Those with a need for further training have the opportunity to take more classes (up to 3000 hours). The right and obligation to participate in 300 hours of language training includes all foreign nationals between 16 and 55 years of age who have been granted a work or residence permit that constitutes grounds for a settlement permit, or collective protection in a situation of mass outflow.

Quality assurance arrangements are applied according to the relevant type of training and final examination. For those attending training under publicly recognised programmes, quality assurance of institutions and results follow regular procedures by NAV. The government agencies responsible for labour market and immigrant training in general conduct their own follow-up and assessment of delivery and results. For training not leading to formal examinations, evaluation and feedback from enterprises that receive candidates is used to assess the training. The relevance of training to participant and labour market needs are the primary criteria assessed by resulting employment, further education or/and actual integration of participants.



7: Training VET teachers and trainers

7.1 Types of teacher and trainer occupations in VET

7.1.1 Teaching and training occupations in VET

There are three main groups of VET training staff:

- Formally qualified VET teachers who provide formal school-based IVET and CVET (both theory and practical training);
- Trainers (*instruktører*) are vocationally skilled staff without a teacher certificate involved in the training of apprentices in formally recognised training enterprises. Training supervisors (*faglig ledere*) are responsible for seeing to it that the training meets the demands set by the Education Act;
- VET training personnel involved in non-formal and informal workplace training often have a formal vocational qualification. However, some of these training facilitators have not formalised their vocational skills, but perform solely on the basis of skills developed through work practice.

In principle, there is no difference between teachers in VET and other teachers. Both teacher categories have two sets of formal qualifications: in the relevant subject and in teaching.

The formal requirements for VET teaching personnel are specified in national legal regulations. VET training personnel without formal certificates may teach nationally regulated training schemes only if the training institution does not arrange public exams itself, but is preparing students to sit for the exam as a private candidate (e.g. in adult education associations and distance education associations).

There are no formal qualification requirements for trainers in training enterprises or for training facilitators that deliver training outside formally approved education institutions. Formal regulations simply state that the management of the institution must ensure that training personnel have “the necessary qualifications” (Education Act). However, training supervisors, who are responsible for ensuring that the training provided in their enterprise is in line with the Education Act, must have one of the following qualifications:

- Trade or journeyman’s certificate in the relevant trade or craft;
- Master craftsman’s certificate in the relevant craft;
- Adequate higher education in the trade or craft;
- Adequate educational background in parts of the trade which, according to the curriculum, will be taught in the enterprise;
- 6 years experience in the trade or craft.

Publicly formalised pre-service and in-service education is available only for VET training personnel that according to legal regulations must meet formal qualification requirements, i.e. VET teachers. No publicly formalised, targeted courses are available for trainers and training supervisors. But courses for these groups are offered on a commercial basis by both public and private training providers (see below), and the Directorate for Education and Training has developed and distributed educational resources for all VET actors (www.skolenettet.no/yrkesfag).

Table 7.1.1.1: Categories of VET staff, their work, qualification requirements and training options

VET personnel	Work arena	Formal qualification requirements, vocation/ profession	Formal qualification requirements, teaching	Pre-service pedagogic training provision	In-service pedagogic training provision
VET teacher	Upper secondary schools Post secondary vocational colleges Higher education institutions Adult education associations Distance education associations	Yes	Yes	Available public provision. Compulsory.	Available. Compulsory if organised by employer: Other courses not compulsory.
Trainer/ Training supervisor	Training enterprises (apprenticeship training)	No (individual). Requirements to enterprise for total competencies/ Yes (see 6.1.1)	No	Available commercial courses and web-based resources. Not compulsory.	Available commercial courses and web-based resources. Not compulsory.
Training facilitator	Training enterprises Workplace non-formal and informal training Adult education association Distance education association	No	No	Available commercial courses. Not compulsory.	Available commercial courses. Not compulsory.

In general, teacher education in Norway comprises:

1. Pre-school teacher education (*Førskolelærerutdanning*);
2. General teacher education (*Allmennlærerutdanning*), for teaching at primary and lower secondary schools. From 2010 the programme is divided into two separate programmes “*grunnskolelærerutdanning*”, one for grades 1-7 and one for grades 5-10, as a follow-up of the White Paper no. 11 to the Storting, *The teacher – the role and the education* [St. meld. 11 (2008-2009) *Læreren – rollen og utdanningen*]. The first admissions to the new programmes took place in autumn 2010.
3. Practical-pedagogical teacher training (*Praktisk-pedagogisk utdanning*), teaching qualification on top of a completed degree, either a university degree or a vocational certificate (cf. 7.2.2);
4. Subject-specific teacher education (*Faglærerutdanning*), for teaching of culturally related subjects, e.g. Music and Dance;
5. Vocational teacher education (*Yrkesfaglærerutdanning*); a bachelor degree including both pedagogy and further education within craft-related subjects.
6. Lap/Saami teacher education (*Samisk lærerutdanning*);
7. Integrated master's programmes for teachers (*lektorprogram*).

VET teacher education takes place in categories 3 and 5 and represents consecutive and concurrent training, respectively. There are 3 types of formally certified VET teachers, according to formal education background:

- Vocational teacher;
- *Adjunkt* (with a Bachelor's degree);
- *Lektor* (with a Master's degree).
- The salary in public institutions varies according to the level of qualifications.

Table 7.1.1.2: Roles of VET teachers and trainers in the VET system

Activity	Role of VET teachers and trainers
Policy formulation, upper secondary IVET and CVET	VET teachers take part in preparation of policies, as part of institutionalised tripartite collaboration. Vet teachers are represented in trade specific vocational training councils (Faglig råd)
Development of national curricula, upper secondary IVET and CVET	VET teachers participate in groups appointed by the relevant national agency (upper secondary IVET) on development of curricula in their professional area, including teacher training.
Regional administration of upper secondary IVET	VET teachers are represented in the regional councils appointed by the county authorities with the aim to design and administer upper secondary IVET.
Examination, upper secondary IVET and Technical school	VET teachers and trainers are represented in the sector-based, regional examination boards. They develop exams and evaluate candidates.
Examination, Master craftsman education	VET training personnel take an active part in designing training, developing exams and evaluating candidates.
Examination, Post-secondary and higher CVET	VET training personnel take active part in developing exams and evaluating candidates.

The same VET teachers often provide both IVET and CVET. Trainers and training facilitators are involved in both IVET and CVET, as described above. Hence, there is no clearly logical way to categorise the existing training options for VET training personnel according to IVET and CVET, respectively.

7.1.2 Responsible bodies and organigram

Table 7.1.2.1: Training of VET training personnel and quality assurance.

Type of VET training personnel	Pre-service training provided by:	In-service training provided by:	Quality control by:
VET teacher	Higher education institutions	Higher education institutions	Students Higher education institutions Practice school NOKUT*
Trainer	Higher education institutions Adult education associations School owners (Counties)	Higher education institutions Adult education associations Training offices**	Student Higher education institution Customer/client enterprise
Training facilitator		Adult education associations, Companies and branch organisations	Student Higher education institution Customer/client enterprise

* NOKUT=Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education).

** Training offices (*Opplæringskontorer*) are regional bodies owned by local / regional enterprises operating in specific sectors. They are established to recruit enterprises for apprenticeship training, they supervise and assist the enterprises in training delivery and act as a mediator between training enterprises and regional education authorities.

7.1.3 Recent reforms to VET teacher/trainer training

In January 2006, a new framework plan for VET teacher education was laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research. This plan is of a more general nature than the earlier version that differentiated between different subjects and levels. The new framework plan is national and applies to all specialisations. However, the curricula are developed locally by each higher education institution. The quality of each curriculum is assured through provisions in the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (*lov om universiteter og høyskoler*) and subject to evaluations and reaccreditation procedures by NOKUT.

7.2 Types of teachers and trainers in IVET

7.2.1 Types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET

The table provided in 7.1.1 offers an overview of types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET. There is no distinction between IVET and CVET teachers.

7.2.2 Pre-service and in-service training of IVET teachers and trainers

All school-based IVET and CVET in formally recognised education including theory and practical training in school workshops is provided by formally qualified VET teachers. CVET courses offered by adult education associations (*Studieforbund*) and distance education associations (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) is most often delivered as part-time work by VET school teachers. Hence, it is often the same teachers that deliver IVET and CVET. No VET teacher certificate distinguishes between delivery of IVET and CVET.

Formal teacher education is a requirement for permanent employment as a VET teacher in upper secondary school and in technical schools. Temporary engagement may be agreed on the condition that the formal requirement for permanent employment will be met within a defined time period.

Education programmes for VET teachers are offered by most public universities and university colleges. The institutions develop the detailed training programmes in accordance with national guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education and Research. The guidelines indicate content and structure, didactics relating to the different vocational subjects and regulations for assessment, but leave room for some flexibility. The programmes have to be approved by the Board of the individual higher education institution and by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

VET teacher training programmes follow the general degree system, with a 3-year Bachelor's degree and a 2-year Master's degree. VET teacher training is delivered according to two different models:

Practical–pedagogical education (consecutive model)

The consecutive model is a 1-year programme (or 2-year part-time study) for students who already possess vocational/professional competencies. Many teachers with a preliminary employment contract attend the part-time course in-service training and they are given priority by the teacher training provider. Admission requirements are:

- Qualification as a skilled craftsman/worker, or a bachelor degree in a specific profession, *and*
- 2 years occupational experience; *and*
- 2 years of further studies (technical, vocational, managerial); *and*
- General matriculation qualifications or recognition of non-formal qualifications

Applicants are not required to meet the regular entrance requirement for tertiary studies. The programme covers 60 ECTS. Main fields of study are pedagogical theory, vocational didactics and supervised teaching and training practice (minimum 12-14 weeks).

Vocational teacher education (concurrent model)

The concurrent model is a comprehensive 3-year programme comprising both vocational training and pedagogy. It is also available as a part-time study over 4 and 1/2 years and is often taken as further education (see below). Admission requirements are:

- Recognised vocational qualification and 2 years of relevant vocational work experience; *and*
- General matriculation qualifications; *or*
- Relevant non-formal qualifications, e.g. long work experience (assessment is undertaken by individual institutions for applicants aged over 25).

The programme leads to a Bachelor's degree and qualifies for teaching in specific subjects in upper secondary schools, technical schools and in primary education.

Quality assurance

In general, quality assurance and monitoring of higher education operate at two levels:

- Student level comprising self-evaluation by the student and assessment by teaching staff;
- Institutional level, where there is an internal and external quality assurance of education programmes, and of institutional quality assurance systems. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) approves higher education institutions, study programmes, delivery and internal quality assurance systems.

In-service education and further education

Traditionally, there has been an important distinction between ‘in-service education’ (*etterutdanning*) and ‘further education’ (*videreutdanning*) in Norway.

In-service training is updating teacher competence, e.g. on new curricula and teaching material/computer courseware. It is often compulsory and does not lead to any formal qualifications or salary increase. Content, methodology, organisation and duration vary considerably. In recent years the trend has been to move from external short courses to more school-based development projects- often with external support services. School owners are responsible for its organisation and financing and are obliged to prepare annual training programmes with a budget (supported by the Ministry of Education in certain high priority fields e.g. for special needs education).

Further education is clearly defined in terms of scope and content and leads to formal qualifications, i.e. a degree. Teachers take further education at their own initiative and expenses and receive salary increments upon a completed degree. The schools also use further education to develop new skills in relation to new reforms.

Requirements for VET trainers and training supervisors are developed in 7.3.2.

7.3 Types of teachers and trainers in CVET

7.3.1 Types of teachers, trainers and training facilitators in CVET

As there is no distinction between IVET and CVET teachers, the information on IVET teachers in 6.2 also applies to CVET teachers. The section below focuses on trainers (whether IVET or CVET).

7.3.2 Pre-service and in-service training of CVET teachers and trainers

There are no formal qualification requirements for VET trainers and training supervisors (see 7.1.1), and hence no formal training arrangements for them. One regulation states that for in-company training the trainer’s qualifications: “must be relevant for the training offered and fit the target groups – as assessed by the employer”. Trainers and training supervisors may, on a voluntary basis, attend educational courses - either as pre-service or as in-service training.

Most trainers and training supervisors are offered to participate in in-service courses after they have become trainers or training supervisors (56 percent of VET trainers participated in some form of non-formal education and training during the last year – Nyen et al 2004). Almost 16 000 trainers and training supervisors involved in apprenticeship training participated in an extensive upgrading programme in the second half of the 1990s, after a comprehensive

IVET reform. The training was provided free of charge and travel and accommodation costs were covered by public funds. In accordance with the newest Educational Reform, *The Knowledge Promotion*, new and extensive training material for all stakeholders in IVET and CVET is developed and distributed by the Directorate for Education and Training.

In-service supervision/tutoring courses for company VET training personnel are offered by some university colleges, county vocational training authorities and regional training offices. The duration of these courses vary between 1 week and 1 year. The 1-year courses are recognised as tertiary CVET and participants must meet formal entry requirements for higher education (worth 60 ECTS). No educational courses are specifically offered as pre-service training and any person interested in instructional courses, primarily targeting IVET trainers and supervisors, may attend. Most adult education associations and distance education associations that deliver CVET offer upgrading seminars and conferences for their teaching and tutoring staff.

In-service updating vocational courses are organised by the national sector organisations. The courses are not particularly targeting VET training personnel, but aim to upgrade and enhance the skills of the workforce in general. The short and more comprehensive courses are provided by branch centres or procured at other vocational colleges and training centres. There is no formalised quality assurance of the in-service courses for trainers and other training facilitators. However, the course providers perform internal quality control based on monitoring customer satisfaction.



8: Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)

8.1 Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skill needs (in sectors, occupations, education level)

Education authorities at all levels acknowledge that private sector actors can most effectively identify new labour market needs and demands for specific qualifications and skills. This is reflected in the decision-making system and in the implementation of training, where the social partners hold the majority of seats in all advisory bodies (see 4.3).

A great deal of importance is put on student choice in VET provision. Students are entitled to a place in one out of three preferred programmes in upper secondary. Thus in order to balance VET offer with labour market needs, the social partners participate in decisions concerning training programme structure, curriculum development and quality control at national, county and local levels for upper secondary IVET.

At national level, the planning and decision-making for the training content of specific trades are based on inputs from the private and public sector, coordinated through the National Council for Vocational Training (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring – SRY*), where the social partners appoint two-thirds of the members. Industry representatives are always represented in committees appointed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) for preparing subject curricula in the various upper secondary IVET training areas. Each of the nine VET programmes on offer are closely monitored by the nine trade-specific Vocational Training Councils (*faglige råd*) composed of representatives from the public sector, relevant employers' organisations and trade unions (including the student union as an observer).

At county level, representatives of employers' and employees' organisations hold the majority of seats in the Vocational Training Committee (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnda*) and the trade-specific Examination Boards (*prøvenemnder*). These bodies are appointed by the County Parliament for periods of four years. Important tasks include giving advice on career guidance, quality, regional development, and the provision in the county to meet local labour market needs.

Through this structure, changes in technologies and labour markets and their implications for training needs are rapidly communicated from the market actors to the decision-making bodies.

In higher education, decisions on training programme content and curricula are made by the Boards of the individual institutions which have no formal obligation to recruit members from the private sector. Hence, there is no formalised mechanism for identification and inclusion of new training needs at the individual institutions although many Boards do have

private sector members. For some areas of training, the industries themselves have national boards which give advice to higher education providers.

Education reforms have been accompanied by evaluations conducted by autonomous research institutions assigned by the public bodies responsible for coordinating the evaluation. Findings from these studies, such as the current evaluation of the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform coordinated by the Directorate for Education and Training, contribute to the market information provided through the tripartite political-administrative system.

White Paper no. 44 (2008-2009) *Education Strategy* presented to the Storting [St.meld. nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], aims inter alia to strengthen the links between the education system, including higher education institutions, and working life. It proposes that each higher education institution should elaborate a strategy for cooperation with working life in collaboration with relevant actors and partners within the framework of a “partner council”, to be established as a permanent body at each higher education institution or for a group of institutions.

There is no institutional framework for anticipation of skill needs in Norway. Skills needs are primarily identified by the employers, but also by employees and schools. When suggestions for new qualifications are forwarded, the organisations are asked to document the need among their stakeholders. The Ministry of Education and Research then decides whether to start curriculum development work.

Within the health sector, sectoral studies on skills needs have been conducted since the late 1990s. Upon request from the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Education and Research, Statistics Norway developed HELSEMOD, a tool for forecasting the employment needs within the sector (White Paper no. 36 (1998-1999)). The most recent report forecasts demands until 2030 (Stølen and Texmon 2009). Demographic developments in Norway, Europe and in most of the world will result in major challenges in the next decades. The growing number of elderly people reduces occupational activities, and increases the need for nursing and care services. Recent calculations from Statistics Norway shows that in Norway there will be a total deficit of health and social personnel of about 43,000 full-time positions in 20 years time.

This sectoral study led to the creation of the Health-Care Subject offered at upper secondary level. The subject was created in 2005 and began to be taught in 2006, and is a combination of two former subjects within the health and social care sector at upper secondary level: Auxiliary Nursing and Care Worker. To improve the recruitment to the new subject a four year campaign (2005-2010) called Project Health-Care Worker were initiated by employers' federations. The project is a collaborative effort between the Federation of Norwegian Commercial and Service Enterprises (HSH), the Employers' Association Spekter and the Norwegian Association of Regional Authorities (KS), by whom it is lead. The financing, consisting of 2.5 million NOK each year, is provided by the Directorate for Education and Training and the Directorate for Health. Nine employees, consisting of young health care workers, initiate measures at the local level to improve the recruitment to the subject.

They represent the counties, and travel both to primary, secondary and upper secondary schools in order to inform about the trade and their positive experiences from the sector. The recruitment patrols have been set up in 13 of the 19 counties. Although the number of applicants to the subject is continuing to decrease at national level, a positive trend has been observed in the areas visited by the recruitment patrols.

8.2 Practices to match VET provision (skills) with skill needs (jobs)

When the need for a new qualification is identified through the process described above, a tripartite group is set down to write a description of competence (*kompetanseplattform*). This will make the basis for developing the subject curricula. The Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for publicly recognised education and training at all levels. The Ministry gives instructions and guidelines for the curricula and their development, but the operational responsibility for the curriculum development process is with the Directorate for Education and Training. The Directorate appoints teams for curricula development consisting of professionals (most often suggested by the employer and employee organisations) and VET teachers.

The participatory principle is vital in Norwegian education, as in other policy areas. Development and change of training programmes, content and modes of delivery may be advocated by the Ministry, parents, students, employers, trade unions and others. Employers' organisations, sector organisations and trade unions give input to curriculum development through the trade-specific Vocational Training Councils and the National Council for Vocational Training, where social partners appoint two-thirds of the members.

All subject curricula contain basic skills: being able to express oneself orally and in writing, being able to read, numeracy and being able to use digital tools. These skills are all integrated in the learning process in different ways.

New subject curricula are distributed in electronic format only, through the website of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. The same applies to rules and regulations, changes and news, guidelines for teachers, school management information and information for students and parents. A database has been established under the Directorate for Education and training, containing all subject curricula within upper secondary education and training (cf. <http://www.udir.no/>).

The identified labour market needs will have no direct influence on the teacher training and assessment, but the training of teachers and assessment of pupils/students and apprentices will be dependent on the subject curricula.



9: Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment

9.1 Strategy and provision

The Education Act (*Opplæringsloven*) states that pupils in primary and secondary education have the right to “necessary guidance on education, careers and social matters”. The provision is organised by the individual schools. All pupils/students are entitled to guidance according to their needs.

Partnership for career guidance is an important part of the strategy for lifelong learning. In 2005 – 2008 regional partnerships for career guidance were established as a project in order to improve career guidance in lower and upper secondary schools and to facilitate career guidance between levels of education, the labour sector and stakeholders in career guidance.

Since 2008 all counties have been given funding through the state budget to establish partnerships for career guidance, and most of the counties have established partnerships. Local and regional school authorities, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the business sector, and social partners are vital partners in this work. As a result of the cooperation in the partnerships a number of counties have established career centres to provide guidance to all people, both in school and for adults. The career centres also have a role in helping to improve the guidance competency of guidance counsellors in schools.

In order to decide on which steps to take to improve the guidance services offered to pupils/students, it is necessary to know what the services are like today. To get to know something about the contents and quality of guidance services a national survey and evaluation of guidance services provided by lower and upper secondary schools as well as the County Follow-up Services will be carried out in 2009 – 2010. A final report will be presented December 2010.

Guidance and guidance services are provided by different institutions according to level of education and relation to the labour market. Guidance counsellors in primary and secondary education provide guidance to pupils in school whereas counsellors in the County Follow-up Service provide guidance to youth from 16 – 24 who are out of school and/or do not have an occupation.

Universities and some university colleges have established career centres to provide guidance to the students.

Adults who need guidance may use the local offices of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration or they may visit regional career centres established by partnerships for career guidance.

A small number of private agencies also provide career guidance on a commercial basis.

9.2 Target groups and modes of delivery

All pupils/students have equal rights and are entitled to guidance adapted to their needs. Guidance, career guidance and social pedagogical guidance, is an integrated part of primary and secondary education in Norway. Specialist teachers are assigned to provide guidance, individually or in groups, and coordinate the schools' efforts in the field. In order to improve the guidance services delivered and to look upon career guidance as a process, the whole school is engaged in the thinking around guidance, and it is now a part of the general curriculum. In August 2008 a new subject, Elective Programme Subject (*Utdanningsvalg*) in lower secondary school was made compulsory, and is an important part of the guidance process (see section 5.2).

ICT programmes for identifying talents and interest and provision of information about relevant training and work to individual profiles are commonly used. Counsellors organise visits to local enterprises and most pupils in lower secondary school have 1 – 2 weeks of compulsory work placement in an enterprise or in a public institution. A lot of schools have established partnerships with local enterprises, local authorities and organisations in order to create a link between schools and the local community.

A pilot project in the use of a digital career plan is carried out in some lower and upper secondary schools in three counties in order to make the pupils reflect upon the choices of education and training. If implemented on a national scale, a career plan may be an important tool as regards lifelong guidance.

Targeting pupils in lower and upper secondary education and training, the counties organise annual education and career fairs where a variety of training providers and representatives of many different occupations gather to provide information and to recruit.

The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (formerly the Labour Market Service and the National Insurance Service) were established on 1st July 2006. Social services in the municipalities and the service together make up the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV). This has been one of the largest administrative reforms in Norway in recent times.

For the public employment service, the main target groups are those experiencing difficulties in the labour market. Priority groups are long-term unemployed people, immigrants and the vocationally disabled, i.e. people with physical, mental or social handicaps. These groups are offered a variety of training and placement services, including career guidance.

NAV has also developed a range of self-help tools, most of them web-based. One career choice programme, *Veivalg*, offers self assessments of interests, work values and skills in addition to an occupational matching facility and job-seeking assistance. *Veivalg* is frequently used in schools by pupils in lower and upper secondary education and training. Euroguidance, hosted by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, and Eures, hosted by NAV, provide information on European education and employment opportunities.

As part of the Norwegian strategy for e-learning, considerable emphasis is put on vocational and career guidance provided electronically, rather than printed information. A variety of web-based databases with information on education and vocational opportunities has been developed. Two portals partly funded by national or regional authorities (www.vilbli.no and www.utdanning.no) are important entry points to all significant information about the education system and relevant public bodies at different levels, providers of training, available courses and programmes, entry requirements etc.

There is currently no vocational and career guidance service specifically targeting employed people. However, the regular counselling services of NAV are available to these groups, if they seek advice. As part of the partnerships for career guidance a number of career centres have been established aiming at adults opting for career changes. The private counselling companies are open to all groups, including regular pupils, unemployed or employed, youth and adults.

Some counties have established web-based online guidance.

As the right to guidance is stated in the Education Act and its regulations, national school authorities may keep the guidance services under supervision. In addition to the national survey and evaluation being conducted from 2009 to end 2010, annual inquiries among the pupils can tell whether the pupils are content with the services rendered.

9.3 Guidance and counselling personnel

In upper and lower secondary schools guidance is provided by teachers with appropriate skills. The job of a counsellor is often, but not always, combined with a regular teaching job. There are formal qualifications requirements for teachers, but there are currently no formal qualification requirements for guidance counsellors. In 2009, however, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training issued recommendations (see also section 2.1.2) that guidance counsellors should have education at minimum bachelor level. This education should consist of at least 60 ECTS guidance relevant education, of which 30 ECTS or more should cover the guidance counsellors' main tasks, i.e. related to guidance counselling within either vocational and educational issues or social pedagogic issues. This is related to the two kinds of guidance that the pupils are entitled to. It is also recommended that the guidance counsellors have vocational experience and knowledge of the school system.

In addition to these recommendations, the directorate has developed guidelines for qualifications criteria for guidance counsellors within the two guidance areas (educational vocational and social pedagogical).

In tertiary education the general educational requirement for counsellors is education at university level (Bachelor's degree or Master's degree). There is no requirement for a specific specialist training for these counsellors.

Several tertiary education institutions offer “counselling courses” as an option within the regular training programme structure. From autumn 2009 career guidance and social pedagogical counselling is part of a permanent system for further training for teachers. Universities and university colleges have developed studies equivalent to 60 ECTS. A number of teachers in lower and upper secondary schools are offered free admission to these study programmes.

The public employment services include a counselling office in each community. The office may be staffed by a variety of professions with education at bachelor level or higher, in addition to in-service guidance training.

10: Financing: investment in human resources

10.1 Funding for initial vocational education and training

IVET is provided at upper secondary and is delivered cost-free to students in public training institutions. Some private education institutions are authorised by the Ministry of Education and Research (KD) to deliver training according to national subject curricula. There have been no recent changes in administrative arrangements or principles, balance of funding or funding mechanisms.

Public upper secondary IVET is financed by the counties. The counties get a block grant from the national level. The block grant covers all expenditures for services that the counties provide, including upper secondary education. The counties finance both education at school and education in the apprenticeship enterprise. Each apprentice enterprise receives the same amount for every apprentice. (Exceptions are enterprises either offering apprenticeships in small subjects worthy of preservation – *små og verneverdige fag* – or taking on apprentices with special needs. These receive a higher amount.) Private schools are financed by the state at national level and through participant fees. The apprentices get a reduced salary for the duration of the apprenticeship period. Students in upper secondary IVET are entitled to grants and subsidised loans through the State Education Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*) if they come from low income families. This is available also for apprentices and adult students. Students that live away from home to attend training obtain an additional subsistence grant. All students get grants for purchasing compulsory equipment. The size of the grant varies according to study programme. Support to students at upper secondary level is mainly provided as grants. Student loans carry no interest charges during the period of study.

Public and authorised private institutions that deliver tertiary CVET programmes according to approved programme curricula receive direct funding from KD. For public institutions, this is supposed to cover some 80-90 percent of the total budget, calculated by a formula with variables including the number of students registered and successfully completing their studies. The remaining part of the budget at public tertiary institutions is covered by contracted research and the commercial delivery of tailor-made CVET to enterprises and public institutions. Private tertiary institutions cover the remaining part of the budget mainly by tuition fees.

Formally recognised adult education associations (*studieforbund*) and distance education institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) that deliver VET according to national curricula receive direct funding from the Ministry based on the general funding arrangements.

10.2 Funding for continuing vocational education and training, and adult learning

10.2.1 Funding for publicly provided CVET:

Public universities and university colleges are organised directly under the Ministry of Education and Research, which also covers most of their costs through block grants. The remaining part of their budgets is raised through contracted research and other types of projects, as well as provision of tailor-made CVET to private enterprises and public institutions.

For CVET that goes beyond mainstream education, the general principle is that this should be the main responsibility of the beneficiaries, i.e. enterprises, social partners and individuals. Since it is in the national interest to have a well educated population and a competitive private industry, public authorities have a system of indirect co-financing by targeted subsidies and tax relief. Adult education associations (*studieforbund*), distance education institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) and folk high schools (*folkehøgskoler*) are subsidised by the Ministry. Enterprises qualify for tax relief on their investments in staff training.

Adults are entitled to free primary and secondary education and training. Municipalities are responsible for primary and lower secondary education and counties are obliged to organise upper secondary education and VET. Financing is covered 100 percent by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The master craftsman education is provided by an appointed adult education association according to approved national curricula under the administration of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Training costs are shared between the Ministry of Education and Research and the individual participant. Ministry financing consists of direct support to the adult education associations for guaranteeing nationwide delivery, according to a contract that is negotiated regularly. In addition, the Ministry subsidises the participant fees under the general arrangement for adult education associations (see below). Remaining costs are covered by participant fees.

CVET delivered by public and private universities and university colleges is partly delivered through the regular study programmes, where IVET and CVET students follow the same classes. Some regular study programmes are organised specifically as CVET for teachers, engineers, health personnel and other groups. In public institutions, all regular study programmes are tuition free.

The remaining part is covered by tuition fees. Students in both public and private institutions are entitled to grants and loans from the State Education Loan Fund.



Private higher education institutions with accredited study programmes may receive financial support from the Ministry calculated according to the same financing model as for public institutions. Depending on the type of programme and the commercial potential of the institution, the state share of budgets in the private institutions varies between zero and 85 per cent. The remaining part is covered by tuition fees. Students in both public and private institutions are entitled to grants and loans from the State Education Loan Fund.

In cases where upper secondary and tertiary public and private training institutions deliver tailor-made CVET to public and private enterprises and institutions on a commercial basis, the customer covers all training costs. Individual participants are not entitled to support from the State Education Loan Fund and there is no financial support to the purchasing enterprise or institution. These are, however, entitled to tax relief for the investment in staff training

10.2.2 Funding for CVT in enterprises:

Enterprise-based training is organised as in-service courses, external courses or by means of e-learning for individual employees. Enterprises are responsible for financing training except for training delivered by commercial partners in relation to the introduction of new products and tools, and for staff participating in regular study programmes at public training institutions. There are currently no general, public arrangements for direct financial support of CVET in enterprises.

10.3 Funding for training for unemployed people and other groups excluded from the labour market (see also section 6.3)

Training under the labour market policies is funded by the Ministry of Labour. The funds are allocated to the operational agency subordinate to the Ministry - the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV) - which allocates resources to the regional and local offices according to the regional level of unemployment.

Training for integration is provided to all legal immigrants and has been compulsory since 2004. Language and social studies training, as well as work-qualifying training, is the organisational responsibility of local municipalities that receive immigrants for permanent settlement. Training is provided by local public or private schools, training centres and enterprises and is fully financed by direct grants from the Directorate of Integration (IMDI) which is a subordinate agency under the Ministry for Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

10.4 General funding arrangements and mechanisms

There are different forms of funding arrangements such as tax relief, loans to enterprises, loans and scholarships to individuals, as well as labour market oriented measures. These measures are supplementary to the main VET financing.

11: National VET statistics – allocation of programmes

11.1 Classification of national VET programs

11.1.1 Main criteria used to allocate VET programs

There exists an official translation between the Norwegian Standard Classification of Education and ISCED. Upper secondary education and training is defined at the same level regardless of whether the programme chosen is VET or general studies. According to the *Norwegian Standard Classification of Education* the following Education Programmes are VET-programmes equal to level 3, and orientation category 1, in ISCED97:

After Reform 94	After the Knowledge Promotion
31 Health and social care studies	70 Building and construction
32 Agriculture, fishing and forestry	71 Design, arts and crafts
33 Arts, crafts and design studies	72 Electricity and electronic
34 Hotel and food-processing trades	73 Health and social care
35 Building and construction	74 Media and communication
36 Technical building trades	75 Agriculture, fishing and forestry
37 Electrical trades	76 Restaurant and food processing
38 Engineering and mechanical trades	77 Service and transport
39 Chemical and processing trades	78 Technical and industrial production
40 Woodworking trades	
41 Media and communication	
42 Sales and service	
50 Technical vocational school including school year 2006/2007	

Source: SSB 2010, i.

11.1.2 VET levels in the national educational system

Level	Equivalent in ISCED	Minimum duration	Maximum duration	Average duration	Typical starting age of pupils
Upper secondary	3	1.5 years	3 years	2 years	15-16
Post secondary	4	9 months	12 months	-	19-20
Higher education	5a	3 years	6 years	-	19
Higher education	5b	2 years	2 years	2 years	19-20
Higher education	6	3	4	-	-

11.2 Fields of education and training

Level	Fields of education/study
Upper secondary	Technical and Industrial Production;
	Electrical Trades;
	Building and Construction;
	Restaurant and Food Processing Trades;
	Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry;
	Health and Social Care;
	Design, Arts and Crafts;
	Media and Communication;
	Service and Transport.

Classified according to the 9 VET-programmes offered at upper secondary level.

Most categories in upper secondary lead to between 5-59 specialised qualifications. Specialisation increases through the 2nd and 3rd year (Upper secondary level 2 –Vg2 and apprenticeship). In April 2009, there were 62 different upper secondary level 2 and 194 apprenticeship schemes leading to a formal VET qualification and certification.

11.3 Links between national qualifications and international qualifications or classifications

Norway does not yet have a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). All national qualifications will be related to the EQF by 2012. Norway is now in the process of developing general descriptors for all programmes within VET related to the EQF levels and has already developed and decided descriptors for level 6-8 in the EQF.



12: Authors, Sources, Bibliography, acronym, abbreviations

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Europass: <http://www.europass.no>

Eurostat: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>

Information centre for folk high schools (Informasjonskontoret for folkehøgskoler)
<http://www.bluebricks.no/if>

KOSTRA, Municipality-State-Reporting:
http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/00/00/20/kostra_en/

The Master Craftsman Certificate Committee: <http://www.mesterbrev.no>

The Ministry of Education and Research:
<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd.html?id=586>

Norway Opening Universities: <http://norgesuniversitetet.no/seksjoner/english>

The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning:
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The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education: <http://www.siu.no>

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training: <http://www.udir.no>

Norwegian Folk high schools: <http://www.folkehogskole.no/>

Norwegian Institute for Adult Learning:
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Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration: www.nav.no

Oslo University College: <http://www.ouc.no/>

Statistics Norway: <http://www.ssb.no>

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi): <http://www.imdi.no/en/Sprak/English/>

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education: <http://www.nokut.no/sw335.asp>

The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund:

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<http://www.trainingvillage.gr/>

<http://www.utdanning.no>



12.3 List of acronyms and abbreviations

- AID:** The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion
(*Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet*)
- AMO:** Labour market training (*Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring*)
- BKA:** Basic Competence in Working Life Programme
(*Program for basiskompetanse i arbeidslivet*)
- ECTS:** European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
- ECVET:** The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training
- EEA:** The European Economic Area
- EFTA:** The European Free Trade Association
- EQF:** The European Qualifications Framework
- ILO:** International Labour Organisation
- IMDI:** Directorate of Integration (*Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet*)
- ISCED:** International Standard Classification of Education
- KD:** The Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*)
- KS:** Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
(*kommunesektorens interesse- og arbeidsgiverorganisasjon*)
- LLL:** Lifelong Learning
- LWS:** Labour and Welfare Service
- MCC:** Master Craftsman Certificate Committee (*Mesterbrevnemnda*).
- NATO:** North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
- NAV:** Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (*Arbeids- og velferdsetaten*)
- NDU:** NAV Management and Development
- NGO:** non-governmental organisations
- NHD:** Ministry of Industry and Trade (*Nærings- og handelsdepartementet*).
- NOKUT:** Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
(*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*)
- NOU:** Norway Opening Universities (*Norgesuniversitetet*)
- NQF:** National Qualifications Framework
- OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- SIU:** Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education
(*Senter for internasjonalisering av høgre utdanning- SIU*)
- SLU:** The State Education Loan Fund
(*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*)
- SME:** Small and medium enterprises
- SRY:** The National Council for Vocational Education and Training
(*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring*)
- UDI:** Directorate of Immigration (*Utlendingsdirektoratet*)

Annex I – definitions

Term: **General education**

Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or group of subjects, especially, but not necessarily, with a view to preparing participants for further (additional) education at the same or a higher level. Successful completion of these programmes may or may not provide the participants with a labour-market relevant qualification at this level. These programmes are typically school-based. Programmes with a general orientation and not focusing on a particular specialization should be classified in this category.

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), “International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997”, Paris, November 1997

Term: **Pre-vocational or pre-technical education**

Education which is mainly designed to introduce participants to the world of work and to prepare them for entry into vocational or technical education programmes. Successful completion of such programmes does not yet lead to a labour-market relevant vocational or technical qualification. For a programme to be considered as pre-vocational or pre-technical education, at least 25 per cent of its content has to be vocational or technical.

Source: ISCED 1997

Term: **Vocational and technical education**

Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to acquire the practical skills, know-how and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations or trades. Successful completion of such programmes leads to a labour-market relevant vocational qualification recognized by the competent authorities in the country in which it is obtained (e.g. Ministry of Education, employers’ associations, etc.).

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), “International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997”, Paris, November 1997

Term: **Tertiary or Higher Education**

Term: **Post-secondary non-tertiary education**

Programmes that lie between the upper-secondary and tertiary levels of education from an international point of view, even though they might clearly be considered as upper-secondary or tertiary programmes in a national context. They are often not significantly more advanced than programmes at ISCED 3 (upper secondary) but they serve to broaden the knowledge of participants who have already completed a programme at level 3. The students are usually older than those at level 3. ISCED 4 programmes typically last between six months and two years.

Source: ISCED 1997

Term: Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET)

Initial vocational education and training (IVET) is defined as training undertaken typically after full-time compulsory education (although it may start before) to promote the acquisition of the necessary knowledge, skills and competences for entry to an occupation or group of occupations. It can be undertaken purely within a school-based and/or work-based environment. It includes apprenticeship training.

Source: Glossary of the EknowVET database

Term: Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET)

Def. 1:

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) can be broadly defined as professional or vocational development through education and training undertaken typically after one has completed initial vocational education and training (IVET). It can be provided and undertaken at the initiative of public authorities, social partners, sectors, enterprises, individuals as well as a range of voluntary and community organisations. It also includes learning on-the-job not synonyms, much of which can be classified as non-formal or informal learning. It may lead to certification.

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) thus relates to the further professional, vocational or personal development of people. It can take place in a societal, industrial sector and/or in a specific organisational or company context.

Source: Glossary of the EknowVET database

Def. 2:

Education or training after initial education and training – or after entry into working life aimed at helping individuals to:

- improve or update their knowledge and/or skills;
- acquire new skills for a career move or retraining;
- continue their personal or professional development

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop

Term: School-based programmes

In school-based programmes instruction takes place (either partly or exclusively) in educational institutions. These include special training centres for vocational education run by public or private authorities or enterprise-based special training centres if these qualify as educational institutions. These programmes can have an on-the-job training component, i.e. a component of some practical experience at the workplace.

Source: UOE data collection on education systems, Volume 1, Manual, Concepts, definitions and classifications

Term: Alternance training

Education or training alternating periods in a school or training centre and in the workplace. The alternance scheme can take place on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis depending on the country. Participants are not contractually linked to the employer where they do their practice, nor do they generally receive remuneration (unlike apprentices).

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop.

Term: Apprenticeship

Systematic, long-term training alternating periods in a school or training centre and at the workplace; the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

Source: Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop.

(Please note this definition is not prepared specifically for the context of statistical data collection. Further definitions exist at Eurostat, but no single standard definition has been agreed).

Term: Qualification

A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

Source: EQF, 2006

Term: Skills

The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

Source: EQF, 2006

Term: Competence

The proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/ or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Source: EQF, 2006



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