

NORWAY

VET in Europe – Country Report

2011

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.

ReferNet reports are based on a common template and are intended for use in an online database available at:

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

Therefore, the reader may encounter repetitions in content.

The preparation of this report has been co-financed by the European Community.

Title: Norway. VET in Europe – Country Report 2010

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: Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
- 3: VET to support recovery from the crisis
- 4: Historical background, legislative and institutional framework
- 5: Initial vocational education and training
- 6: Continuing vocational education and training
- 7: Training VET teachers and trainers
- 8: Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
- 9: Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
- 10: Financing: investment in human resources
- 11: Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and its reference year is 2010. 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

Table of Contents

1: General context – framework for the knowledge society.....	7
1.1 Political and socio-economic context.....	7
1.2 Population and Demographics.....	7
1.3 Economy and Labour Market Indicators.....	8
1.4 Educational Attainment of population.....	12
1.5 Definitions.....	13
2: Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility.....	18
2.1 VET policy developments and priorities in supporting LLL.....	18
2.2 Implementation of European tools and principles.....	23
2.3 Internationalization and transnational mobility in VET.....	25
3: VET in times of crisis.....	31
3.1 Overview.....	31
3.2 Effects of the crisis on VET and corresponding measures.....	32
4: Historical background, Legislative and Institutional framework.....	35
4.1 Historical background.....	35
4.2 Legislative framework for IVET.....	35
4.3 Institutional framework for IVET and organigram.....	37
4.4 Legislative framework for CVET.....	38
4.5 Institutional framework for CVET.....	40

5: Initial vocational education and training	42
5.1 Background to the IVET system and diagram of the education and training system	42
5.2 IVET at lower secondary level.....	49
5.3 School based IVET at upper secondary level.....	50
5.4 Apprenticeship training.....	53
5.5 Programmes and alternative pathways for young people.....	56
5.6 Vocational education and training at post secondary (non-tertiary) level.....	56
5.7 Vocational education and training at tertiary level.....	57
5.8. Language learning in IVET	57
6: Continuing vocational education and training.....	58
6.1 General background.....	58
6.2 Formal learning in CVET.....	60
6.3 Non-formal learning in CVET.....	63
6.4 Language learning in CVET.....	67
6.5 Training programs to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market.....	67
7: Training VET teachers and trainers	71
7.1 Priorities in training VET teachers and trainers.....	71
7.2 Teachers and trainers in IVET.....	72
7.3 Types of teachers and trainers in CVET.....	77
8: Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs).....	78
8.1 Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skill needs.....	78
8.2 Practices to match VET provision (skills) with skill needs (jobs).....	80

9: Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment.....	82
9.1 Strategy and provision.....	82
9.2 Target groups and modes of delivery.....	83
9.3 Guidance and counselling personnel.....	84
 10: Financing - investment in human resources.....	 85
10.1 VET financing policy.....	85
10.2 Funding for initial vocational education and training.....	86
10.2 Funding for continuing vocational education and training, and adult learning.....	86
10.4 Funding for training for the unemployed.....	88
 Authors, Sources, Bibliography, Acronym Abbreviations.....	 89

Theme 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 per cent 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, municipalities and county 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 4.92 million and a total area of 385186 sq. km. (including islands of Svalbard and Jan Mayen). Population density is low at 15.6 per sq.km, the annual population increase has augmented from 0.6 per cent in 2005 to 1.2 per cent in 2010 and 0.3 in 2011. 36 per cent of the population is located in the five counties surrounding the Oslofjord. Almost 80 per cent of the population live in urban settlements, where the population density is 1 615 per km².

The age structure of Norway per 2011 shows that 18 per cent are between 0 and 14 years, 66 per cent between 15 and 64 years and 16 per cent 65 years and over. In the short run, from 2010 to 2013, there will be stability in the number of young people (15-24 years) in the population. After 2011, 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 65+ will see a slightly stronger increase than other age groups in the years to come.

Table 1.2: age-specific demographic projection 2010 – 2025(*). Absolute figures and (%)					
	2010	2011	2015	2020	2025
Total	4 858 199 (100.0)	4 920 305 (100.0)	5 192 062 (100.0)	5 532 233 (100.0)	5 838 083 (100.0)
0-24	1 545 271 (31.8)	1 564 349 31.8	1 632 374 31.4	1 708 615 30.9	1 787 222 30.6
25-64	2 590 255 (53.3)	2 613 713 53.1	2 728 672 52.6	2 891 985 52.3	3 006 580 51.5
65 +	722 673 (14.9)	742 243 15.1	831 016 16.0	931 633 16.8	1 044 281 17.9

(*) Based on 2011 population data. Scenario: Medium national growth.

Source: Statistics Norway 2011, a.

In 2010 (on the 1st of January) the immigrants and those born in Norway to immigrant parents comprised over 600 900 persons (12.2 per cent of the total population). 314 000 (52 per cent) originated from non-western countries. Immigrants reside in all 430 municipalities. 27 per cent of non-western immigrants live in the Oslo area and they constitute some 28 per cent of the total population in the capital (a: SSB 2011).

The level of education in the immigrant population varies according to country background. For example, among immigrants from the Philippines, Poland, Russia 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.. 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 2011).

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.

<i>Table 1.3.1.: GDP pr. capita, 2005 & 2008. US \$, current prices and PPPs</i>	
<i>2005</i>	<i>2008</i>
<i>47 318</i>	<i>58 717</i>

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 per cent work in the primary sector (a: SSB 2011).

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 per cent of all enterprises. 86 per cent of them have less than 5 employees. SME employees constitute approximately 56 per cent of the total labour force. Only about 1844 enterprises have 100 or more employees (a: SSB 2011).

In manufacturing, the number of employees in the traditional industries like metal production and the mining industry has decreased and now amounts to about 10.2 per cent of the workforce (a: SSB 2011). 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 rural/peripheral areas. Nevertheless, most of the employees in the tourism sector work in the cities.

In 2010 the development was a moderate growth in mainland Norway. Gross domestic product (GDP) for mainland Norway increased by 2.2 per cent in 2010 after having dropped by 1.3 per cent in 2009. The growth in the 4th quarter 2010 was 0.3 per cent and mainly came as a result of an increase in both final consumption expenditure of households and gross fixed capital formation .

<i>Table 1.3.2.: Employment by production sector 2010. Real figures and per cent of total employment (1000 persons)</i>		
<i>Sector</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
<i>Primary sector and utilities</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>4.3</i>
<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>236</i>	<i>9.4</i>
<i>Construction</i>	<i>209</i>	<i>8.3</i>
<i>Distribution and transport</i>	<i>485</i>	<i>19.4</i>
<i>Business and other services</i>	<i>471</i>	<i>18.8</i>
<i>Non marketed services</i>	<i>996</i>	<i>39.7</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2506</i>	<i>100.0</i>

<http://www.ssb.no/emner/06/01/yrkeaku/tab-2011-02-22-06.html>

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 2.6 per cent in 2008 to 3.6 per cent in 2010. Nevertheless, the growth in the unemployment rate in Norway is lower than in many other countries (c: SSB 2011). The financial crisis, and the groups most hit will be further elaborated in Theme 3.

TABLE 1.3.3. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUPS AND HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED (%), 2003, 2006 AND 2010

	TIME	2003			2006			2010		
GEO	ISCED / AGE	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
NO	0-2	19.4	6.9	:	11.2	6.0	:	11.4	6.8	:
	3-4	8.9	3.5	:	6.1	2.9	1.5	6.3	2.9	1.5
	5-6	:	3.3	:	:	2.2	:	:	2.0	:
	No A.	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
	TOTAL	11.9	3.7	1.4	8.7	3.1	1.3	9.3	3.2	1.6

Table 1.3.4: Unemployment rates, 2009 average. % of labour force

Total	3.2
Men	3.6
Women	2.6
15–24 years	<u>9.1</u>

Source: Statistics Norway 2011, a.

http://statbank.ssb.no/statistikkbanken/Default_FR.asp?PXSid=0&nvl=true&PLanguage=0&tilside=selectvarval/define.asp&Tabellid=08517

Table 1.3.5: Employment, 15 - 64 years, 2010 average. % of population

Men	77.3
Women	73.3
Total employment rate	75.3

Source: Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

During the period from 2001-2008, Norway 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).

TABLE 1.3.6.: TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS % OF GDP, AT SECONDARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION (ISCED 2-4), 2002-2008

<i>GEO</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
<i>EU27</i>	2.32 (s)	2.35 (s)	2.29 (s)	2.25 (s)	2.23 (s)	2.20 (s)	:
<i>NO</i>	2.51	2.72	2.62	2.34	2.30	2.36	2.27

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 per centage of the population aged 18-24 that leave school early is slightly higher than the EU average (17.4 per cent versus 14.1 EU 27) (Eurostat 2011). The per centage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education (69.7 per cent) is below the EU average of 78.6 per cent (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. More than half of those who do not complete upper secondary education within the prescribed number of years, complete by the age of 40. For more information on efforts against drop-out, see theme 5.1.3.

Eurostat statistics indicate that the per centage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training is above the EU average. In 2010, 17.8 per cent of the population aged 25-64 participated in education and training, compared to the EU average of 9.1 per cent (Eurostat 2011). 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. For more information, see also theme 6.3.

1.5. Definitions

	Definition	Original title	Translation in English	National context
Alternance training	Not applicable			This term is not used in Norwegian.
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.	<i>Lærlingeordningen</i>	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.
Competences	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	<i>Kompetanse</i>	Competence	No significant difference from international definition.

	is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.			
Continuing vocational education and training	<p>Vocational education or training after initial education and training – or after entry into working life aimed at helping individuals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve or update their knowledge and/or skills; • acquire new skills for a career move or retraining; • continue their personal or professional development <p>Comment: CVET 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.</p>	<i>Yrkesfaglig etter- og videreutdanning</i>	Continuing vocational education and training, in-service training	No significant difference from the international definition.

First stage of tertiary education	Includes tertiary programmes with: (a) academic orientation (type A), which are largely theoretical; (b) occupational orientation (type B), usually shorter than type A and geared towards entry to the labour market. Type A programmes provide access to advanced research studies and professions with high skill requirements. Type B programmes prepare students for direct entry into a specific occupation. Entry to ISCED level 5 normally requires successful completion of ISCED levels 3 or 4. Comment: Level 5 A programmes with academic orientation are typically outside the scope of VET.	<i>Tertiærutdanning</i>	Post-secondary education	The term “ <i>tertiær</i> ” in Norwegian is (perhaps confusingly) used for education and training offered at ISCED levels 4 and above.
General education	Education which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper	<i>Allmennutdanning/ allmennopplæring</i>	General education	The national definition does not differ from the international definition.

	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.			General education is provided in all of the 12 upper secondary programmes: 3 programmes for general studies and 9 VET programmes.
Initial vocational education and training	Vocational education and training at upper secondary level, including apprenticeship, provided by public and private institutions	<i>Yrkesfaglig oppl�ring</i>	Vocational education and training	No significant difference from the international definition.
Lower secondary education	Lower secondary education generally continues the basic	<i>Ungdomsskole</i>	Lower secondary school	No significant difference from the international definition.

(ISCED 2)	programmes of primary, although teaching is typically more subject-focused, often employing more specialised teachers to conduct classes.			
Occupation	Group of activities that necessitate a homogeneous series of techniques and skills within a specific field and speciality.	<i>Yrke</i>	Occupation/ Vocation/ Profession	No significant difference from the international definition.
Post-secondary non-tertiary education;	These programmes straddle the boundary between upper secondary and tertiary education. They serve to broaden the knowledge of upper secondary education graduates. These programmes are designed to prepare students for studies at first stage of tertiary education or for direct labour market entry. They do not lead to a tertiary qualification.	<i>Fagskoleutdanning</i>	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.
Pre-vocational or pre-technical education	Not applicable			This term is not used in Norway

Profession	Professional activity or group of professional activities, access to which, the pursuit of which, or one of the modes of pursuit of which is subject, directly or indirectly, by virtue of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of specific professional qualifications.	<i>Profesjon</i>	Profession	No significant difference from international definition.
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	<i>Kvalifikasjon</i>	Qualification	No significant difference from the international definition.
School-based programmes	Programmes in which instruction takes place (either partly or exclusively) in educational institutions. These include special training centres for vocational education run by public or private	<i>Skolebasert opplæring</i>	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. However, county authorities have the right to provide for

	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.			one year of vocational training organized by the school, if a pupil is not sign an apprenticeship contract
Skills	The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.	<i>Ferdigheter</i>	Skills, learning outcomes	No significant difference from international definition
Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	Final stage of secondary education that normally begins at the end of compulsory education. The entrance age is usually 15 or 16 years. Entrance qualifications (completion of compulsory education) and other minimum entry requirements are generally needed. Instruction is often more subject-oriented than lower secondary education (ISCED 2). The typical duration of	<i>Videregående opplæring</i>	Upper secondary education and training	Either vocational education (normally four years) and training at upper secondary level, including apprenticeship, provided by public and private institutions, or general upper secondary education (three years) preparing for entry in higher education

	ISCED level 3 varies from two to five years.			
--	-------------------------------------------------	--	--	--

Theme 2: Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization, and mobility

2.1 VET policy developments and priorities in supporting LLL

2.1.1. Lifelong learning in Norway

The 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, validation of non-formal and informal learning and lifelong learning firmly on the political agenda. 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 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 (*Realkompetanseprosjektet*) (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. For more information on validation of prior learning, see theme 6.3.

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 (*Kvalitetsreformen*) in higher education (2003) and the Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education and training (2006) - the lifelong learning definition has been further developed in a “cradle to grave” perspective. The aspect of lifelong learning and competence development 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*]. In this white paper, the government states its wish to give adults with limited education new possibilities to take an education and, lay the foundation for a more flexible adult education, improve the system of assessment of formal, informal and non-formal learning and strengthen career guidance.

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 theme 4.3).

2.1.2. Current debates

The Knowledge promotion reform

The 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) in primary and secondary education focused 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 in upper secondary school: the In-depth Study Project (*Prosjekt til fordypning*) (see more below).

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. For more information on curriculum development, see theme 5.1.3.

The reform is still under evaluation, and a central issue of debate has been whether the reform has been able to boost Norwegian VET, in addition to general education. A major concern for social partners, in particular employers, has been that the new broad education programmes in the first two years of VET do not entirely prepare pupils for apprenticeships. Another topic of debate, has been that the drop-out rate in upper secondary VET has not been significantly reduced in the years following the implementation of the reform.

The drop-out rate in Norway

Statistics show that 60 per cent of the VET learners complete their upper secondary training successfully or receive formal admissions requirements to higher education institutions within 6 years. The rate of completion is lower in VET than in general education programmes at upper secondary level in Norway. 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, including strengthening the counties' work with pupils at risk of dropping out, early intervention measures at lower secondary level, piloting a new working life subject (*arbeidslivsfag*) at lower secondary level and developing common indicators at the field. For more information on measures against drop-out, see theme 5.1.2.

A varied and more practical basic education

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. In White paper no. 44 (2008-2009) to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St. meld. nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], the Government recommends inter alia closer follow-up of each individual pupil and apprentice and 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.

Making basic education more practical is also relevant for lower secondary education. From the school year 2010/2011, 135 schools in 82 municipalities and 3 private schools have been testing a new VET related subject at lower secondary level, called working life subject (*arbeidslivsfag*). 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. In this way, it is also considered to be a measure against drop-out at upper secondary VET. 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.

Ensuring apprenticeships for VET learners

A recurring challenge in Norwegian VET is that among the relatively high number of young people entering VET, not enough pupils complete their vocational education and training. In addition to a higher drop-out rate in VET than in general upper secondary, many pupils in VET choose to leave their VET program for a third year of general upper secondary education. This gives them the right to enter higher education, but no trade certificate. There is concern that this tendency will lead to a shortage of skilled workers in Norway in the long term.

Several stakeholders in Norway have argued for a statutory right to an apprenticeship for young people in VET. The debate has also gained much focus in Norwegian media. It has been argued that a poor outlook for obtaining an apprenticeship may dissuade young people from entering or continuing VET. In White paper no. 44 to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St.meld.nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*], the Government stated its intention to engage the social partners to commit to the establishment of apprenticeship places, and to develop a strategy for establishing apprenticeships in the public sector. In October 2010, the Ministry of Education and Research instructed the Directorate for Education and Training to examine whether and how a statutory right to an apprenticeship and/or a right to four years of school based upper secondary VET could be introduced. Today, only three years of upper secondary education and training is guaranteed in Norway. The proposition of implementing a statutory right to an apprenticeship poses several practical and principal dilemmas, as the allocation of apprenticeships will continue to have to be based on voluntary commitments from private companies, as well as from public bodies.

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. Some fear that the certificate will be a solution of limited quality that could lead pupils down a blind alley, and that it will create an educational programme at a level lower than that in demand by society and the working community. Looking at the results thus far, this cannot be confirmed, as most pupils use the scheme as a step towards complete vocational training. In trades with strong traditions in apprenticeships, it is feared that the certificate of practice will contribute to weakening and undercutting the vocational programmes for such trades. It does seem that this has happened. Some operators in well established trades have clearly declined participation in the scheme (NIFU STEP, 2009a).

The decision of whether the measure shall be made permanent will be made in close dialogue with the social partners, and only after the final evaluation report is presented by NIFU in 2011. The first interim report, from 2009, suggested that the project might be a measure for preventing drop-out, as 65% of the pupils that completed the programme showed motivation to enroll for two more years in order to obtain the full trade and journeyman certificate.

VET pathway to higher education (*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 in electrical trades and in construction. 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.

Vocational colleges (post- secondary level)

White Paper no. 44 also 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. It also recommended establishing a separate national council for vocational colleges; giving students that have completed a two-year vocational college education general admissions certification for higher education institutions; strengthening statistics and knowledge platforms for vocational colleges; and studying whether one should introduce a system of credit points in connection with ongoing work with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

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 Knowledge Promotion (*Kunnskapsløftet*) 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 (*Kvalitetsutvalget*) 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 current 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. In White Paper no. 44, the following elements are considered important for a Norwegian quality assessment system:

- Statistics that indicate 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. For 2010, NOK 6 million (approximately 750 000€¹) were granted for research on VET to start mapping the needs of the education sector. The objectives are to allocate information to the ones responsible for developing the quality in VET.

Teacher competence

For 2009-2013, initiatives aimed at raising competences amongst teachers and trainers will have a total budget of NOK 400 millions (approx. €50 millions), and will include:

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

¹ Average conversion rate 2010. €1 = NOK 8.01.

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. 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. Firstly, teaching material for continuing training for VET teachers and trainers was presented in 2010. Secondly, work based training in enterprises has been introduced as a measure to strengthen VET teachers' and trainers' competences.

In 2010, the Directorate for Education and Training conducted a survey among teachers participating in further education. The survey showed that the participants were satisfied with the further education, and that many of them wished to change their own pedagogical practice. For more information on in-service training for teachers and trainers, see theme 7.

New guidelines for tripartite cooperation on VET in Norway

Tripartite cooperation in VET in Norway is organized in the National Council for VET (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring – SRY*) and the nine Vocational Training Councils (*Faglige råd*), one for each education programme at upper secondary level. At county level, tripartite cooperation is organized in the County Vocational Training Boards (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnder*). The overarching aim of the tripartite cooperation is to train Norwegian VET students that fulfil the needs of the working life. Skills needs in working life are continuously evolving, which must be reflected in the provision of education and training. This is particularly the case for the content and structure of the education programs.

In the preceding appointment period for the National Council for VET and the Vocational Training Councils (2004-2008), it was found that the greatest challenges in the tripartite cooperation at national level were directly related to the particular subjects, for example questions regarding the composition of curricula, the structure of available courses and apprenticeships in upper secondary education and training, the implementation of exams and demand for documentation of training. For the tripartite cooperation, the Knowledge Promotion reform poses a particular dilemma: While the reform has promoted local scope of action, the trades might have the need for national standards. In addition, the reform has led to increasing divergence between subjects, while different trades might need differentiated solutions for the VET subjects qualifying for their trades.

The Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) has a dual role, which is inherent in its function as a public administrative body on the one hand, and as secretariat in the tripartite cooperation for VET on the other. In order to optimize the secretariat function, the Directorate for Education and Training is to describe the organization of the work flow between the sector, the councils and central authorities in a document that is to be published in 2011. More effective tripartite cooperation will make it possible to take advantage of the scope of action inherent in the Knowledge Promotion reform described above. For more information on the tripartite cooperation in VET, see theme 4.3..

2.2. Implementation of European tools and principles

The outcome based learning objectives of the national subject curricula of the Knowledge Promotion Reform makes it relatively easy to relate to European tools and principles of transparency. The learning outcomes of the Norwegian national subject curricula are all described as learning outcome based competence objectives. The general descriptors for VET in the Norwegian Qualifications Framework (NQF), which have recently been developed, are based on these learning outcomes. The Ministry of Education and Research has made the VET descriptors subject to a consultation process and these were commented on by the appropriate bodies by April 2010. In addition, The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training also developed descriptors for lower secondary education and upper secondary education qualifying for higher education.

The descriptors for lower and secondary education and training are based on the learning outcomes/competence objectives of the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary Education.

The Ministry of Education and Research is to send the entire Norwegian Qualification Framework for comments to the appropriate bodies in 2011. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is to coordinate the comments submitted by the nine Vocational Training Councils (*Faglige råd*). Comments by stakeholders represent an essential quality assurance mechanism in the NQF process.

As of 2010, Norway had not yet developed a strategy for implementing a unit based credit system in VET (ECVET).

Challenges regarding the introduction of this system would have to be elaborated in dialogue with the social partners, if Norway decides to implement the ECVET system at national and sectoral level.

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (*Senter for Internasjonalisering i Høgre Utdanning* - SIU) is responsible for the management of the Europass framework in Norway. The core activity is to promote increased utilization of the five Europass documents:

- Europass CV (ECV),
- Language Passport(LP),
- Europass Mobility(EM),
- Certificate Supplement(CS)
- Diploma Supplement (DS). The Diploma Supplement is used within the HEI sector and will not be treated here.

The Europass CV and the Language Passport are templates available for download online and filled out individually. The statistics show a slight decrease in the number of generated ECVs in Norwegian, but this does not take into account the fact that many users download and update their CVs on their computers. As the LP often is included in the ECV, the number of generated LPs in the statistics is misleading.

Number of ECVs and LPs generated online in Norwegian:

	Europass CV	Europass LP
2007	8267	101
2008	8224	91
2009	6816	91
2010	5893	142

Currently, the Europass Mobility (EM) experience is an organised, transnational experience involving a sending and a host organisation. The EM are currently being re-designed by the European Commission to embrace a wider variety of learning experiences and one can consequently expect a change in this document's area of utilization. Presently, in Norway, the mobility document is most often issued within the Leonardo Da Vinci programme, rarely by providers or companies outside the framework of the European projects. Out of 504 EM documents issued in 2010, 461 were issued within the LdV programme.

The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training is responsible for the content of the Certificate Supplement (CS) in Norway. In 2008, the Directorate started up the process of revising the Europass CS according to the National Curriculum in connection to the Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*). New descriptors for the CS are to be published in Norwegian and English in spring 2011. In Norway, the Europass CS are now available for 190 VET qualifications. County authorities (*fylkeskommunen*) are encouraged to issue the CS document together with the trade or journeyman's certificate to apprentices, who have completed their IVET. But as the CS is available for free download on the Europass website most county authorities forward the IVET certificate-holders to acquire their CS this way.

Number of CS issued*:

	Europass Certificate Supplement
2007	15992
2008	18922
2009	15913
2010	Not available at this date

*The number of CS for 2010 is not available at this date but it is expected to be in line with last year's statistics. The statistics show the number of CS issued by county authorities but does not include number of downloaded CS.

2.3. Internationalisation ⁽²⁾ and transnational mobility in VET ⁽³⁾

2.3.1. Policy framework for internationalisation and transnational mobility in VET

In 2008-2009, the Norwegian Government published three important documents, which articulate the main policy priorities and strategies to promote internationalization and transnational mobility in education in Norway. These documents are: the White paper no. 44 to the Storting *The Education Strategy* [St.meld.nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja* and the Green Paper *Vocational education for the future (Fagopplæring for framtida*, NOU 2008:18). The reports focus on internationalization in education, quality issues, measures to prevent drop-out, guidance and career counselling, etc.

⁽²⁾ *Internationalization of education is understood as the process of integrating an international, intercultural and/or global dimension into the goals, functions (teaching/learning, research, services) and delivery of education (adapted from Internationalization of Higher Education: New Directions, New Challenges, IAU 2005 Survey).*

⁽³⁾ *Transnational mobility in VET is understood as any period that a worker, jobseeker, VET student, teacher or trainer spends abroad in an education or training institution, a company or any other organisation for learning or teaching purposes. Comment: knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the period spent abroad may be validated and lead to certification. (Cedefop definition).*

White paper no. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Internationalisation of Education* [St.meld.nr. 14 (2008-2009) *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen*], offers a solid platform for the 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. In this white paper, it is stated that 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, or equally good alternatives to get acquainted with international perspectives in education at home.

With reference to the VET sector, the paper recommends stronger representation of VET in international mobility and the review of existing mobility schemes in order to consider measures to establish a larger number of training places for VET abroad.

The Green Paper *Vocational education for the future (Fagopplæring for framtida*, NOU 2008:18) emphasizes the necessity of the participation in international cooperation and benchmarking as well as provides lists of recommendations on how to establish a closer relation among VET and the world of work.

The LLL program is used as a scheme for the transnational mobility within upper secondary VET.

Another mobility scheme, which has the same target group, is a Norwegian-German bilateral program called *Do it! (Gjør det!)*. The program is designed by the German and Norwegian ministries of education and research, and is a consequence of the Germany strategy of the Norwegian Government.

In 1999, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed the Strategy for Germany (*Tysklandsstrategien*), which was revised in 2003 and 2007. The rationale that this strategy is founded on is awareness of Germany's important role as cooperation partner for Norway with regard to political cooperation, economic growth, academic mobility and cultural exchange. This attitude is reflected in the national efforts to build up and maintain competence on Germany in various areas, and to stimulate the collaboration and exchange among Norwegian and German organisations and institutions.

The third mobility scheme, which has some overlapping target groups, is the Nordplus Program for cooperation among the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Some of the measures to increase the internationalisation in primary and lower secondary education, as well as to address legal and administrative obstacles that prevent transnational mobility in VET, are described in the White Paper no. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Internationalisation of Education* [St.meld.nr. 14 (2008-2009) *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen*]; they are the following:

- Focus on quality in learning mobility and better correspondence to the curriculum, as well as the integration of the international dimension and transnational mobility into the strategic plans of education and training institutions.

- Best possible use of the existing mobility schemes: good information on programs, focus on quality in international projects, dissemination of good practices and results, attracting newcomers to international mobility schemes, etc.
- Closer cooperation with the world of work, stronger representation of VET in the international mobility schemes, and access measures to make it easier for apprentices to receive apprenticeship places abroad.
- Raising awareness about the importance of internationalisation of education in the whole sector, including different education levels and various target groups, i.e. intensifying the international cooperation in VET, etc.
- Evaluation of different study financing measures in order to develop good and fair mobility schemes for individual pupils and groups of pupils. One of the most important legal measures is the “free of charge”-principle ensuring that transnational mobility is free of charge for every pupil who participates in it.
- Participation in international surveys and cooperation about quality work.

One of the most important legal measures is that in Norway, public education shall be free of charge, ensuring that transnational mobility is affordable for every pupil who has an intention to participate in it. This principle opens up for the equal and fair participation in the transnational learning mobility regardless of the family and economic background. If necessary, apprentices may apply for financial support from the State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*).

Another important principle is equal education possibilities for all pupils, including pupils with special needs. In case it is necessary, additional funding is provided.

The third important principle for the distribution of available funding is the correspondence to national priorities in VET. In 2009, the National Committee for Leonardo da Vinci-program introduced national priorities for the implementation of the Leonardo da Vinci program in Norway, which are as follows:

- 1.) Increase the completion rate for apprentices, pupils and trainees
- 2.) Increase the quality in career guidance
- 3.) Increase the quality in communication and quality management with regards to teaching

National priorities for the Leonardo da Vinci programme were developed in order to secure some allocation of funds to certain target groups. Youth is the most important target group, thus the largest share of the financial funds is earmarked for the transnational mobility of pupils and apprentices. Another important category is teachers.

2.3.2. Transnational mobility programmes and schemes in VET

In Norway, three programmes are used in order to enable transnational mobility in VET:

- LLL (Leonardo da Vinci)
- Nordplus (cooperation among schools in Scandinavia and Baltic countries)
- The German- Norwegian bilateral programme “Gjør det”.

Leonardo da Vinci Mobility – Trends and Figures

Overview of applications 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

<i>Target group</i>	<i>Appl. 2008</i>	<i>Appl. 2009</i>	<i>Appl. 2010</i>
<i>IVT</i>	46	62	59
<i>PLM</i>	6	7	6
<i>VETPRO</i>	14	17	27
<i>Total</i>	66	86	92

<i>Target group</i>	<i>Applied tot. in Euro 2008</i>	<i>Applied tot. in Euro 2009</i>	<i>Applied tot. in Euro 2010</i>
<i>IVT</i>	3,390,669	4, 773,639	4,817,893
<i>PLM</i>	124,536	466,098	299,996
<i>VETPRO</i>	375,018	365,918	1,001,862
<i>Total</i>	3,890,223	5,605,655	6,219,751

<i>Target group</i>	<i>Applied participants 2008</i>	<i>Applied participants 2009</i>	<i>Applied participants 2010</i>
<i>IVT</i>	1,237	1,877	1,982
<i>PLM</i>	50	190	123
<i>VETPRO</i>	198	198	581
<i>Total</i>	1,485	2,265	2,686

The periods of study abroad take place in both schools/training establishments and companies. It is difficult to indicate proportions precisely, because in many cases the placements are arranged by schools/training establishments, which have a network of institutions (including companies) they cooperate with.

The most important sources of funding are international programmes and the State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*). In some cases, regional county councils and companies offer some support; unfortunately these data are too dispersed to make any generalisations possible.

In Norway, Europass Mobility (EM) is the most common document for identification and description of learning outcomes and experiences gained through mobility schemes. The knowledge, skills and competences acquired through the mobility experience is filled out jointly by the sending partner and the host organization, in the EM. Presently, the EM is mainly used within the Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility.

2.3.3. Arrangements to secure work placements for transnational mobility in VET

Information meetings with interest organisations (for instance the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise – NHO, etc.), branch offices, training establishments, companies and other relevant stakeholders' to promote transnational mobility and highlight its effects are important for encouraging companies to participate in transnational mobility in VET. It might be observed that successful placements serve as a means to promote mobility, i.e. after having participated in transnational mobility, companies are more willing to participate several times or recommend it to others.

The White Paper no. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting, *Internationalisation of Education* [St.meld.nr. 14 (2008-2009) *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen*] emphasizes the quality and relevance aspects of transnational mobility. Both the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training as well as SIU (Centre for international Cooperation in Higher Education) have made a lot of efforts to improve the quality in learning mobility and achieve better correspondence to the curriculum. In 2010, SIU has been given a larger mandate to work with the internationalisation in primary education. The mandate is specified as follows by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research:

"SIU shall be co-responsible in promoting internationalisation and demonstrating its added value. In addition SIU shall ensure that internationalisation is regarded as a tool for promoting quality and relevance in primary education. Furthermore, SIU shall ensure that internationalisation in the school has a dual purpose: That the school makes contact with the world outside Norway, and that the international aspect is included in the work locally with the curricula and in teaching in general."

SIU has carried out a project *Internationalisation in Primary Education*, (*Prosjektet Internasjonalisering i grunnsopplæringen*) which consisted of the following activities in 2010:

1. Surveying the involvement of the school owners through a survey at the county councils and municipalities.
2. Preparing an analytical report on the basis of this survey, where the input figures from the program activities were analysed in connection to the internationalisation strategies of the county councils.
3. Developing a *Handbook on International Cooperation* (*Håndbok Internasjonalt samarbeid for grunnsopplæring*), with a focus on cooperation through projects – usually supported by programmes. The handbook is published and available on SIU's website.
4. Improving the content of the website by tailoring it to the needs of different target groups. There are also new pages about policies, participants, reports, etc.
5. Establishing a closer cooperation with national and regional stakeholders, for instance national centres, such as the National Centre for Multicultural Tutorial (*Nasjonalt senter for flerkulturell opplæring* - NAFO), The Norwegian Centre for Science Education (*Nasjonalt senter for naturfag i opplæringen*), The Norwegian Centre for Mathematics Education (*Nasjonalt senter for matematikk i opplæringen*) and the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education (*Nasjonalt senter for fremmedspråk i opplæringen*), etc. Direct contact with thirteen county councils has been established through visits from SIU.

The provision of work places for transnational mobility is not targeted exclusively at IVET students, but it is preferred. National priorities for the Leonardo da Vinci programme were developed in order to secure some allocation of funds to certain the target groups. Youth is the most important target group, thus the largest share of the financial funds is earmarked for the transnational mobility of pupils and apprentices. Another important category is teachers.

Norway does not have any registry/database of companies participating in transnational mobility projects in VET.

Theme 3: VET to support recovery from the crisis

3.1 Overview

Although the financial crisis did not hit Norway to the same extent as many other countries, it still sets 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 1.7 per cent from 2008 to 2009 in both GDP and GDP Mainland Norway. In 2010 this downward development seems to have stopped/narrowed as the GDP increased by 0.3 per cent from 2009 to 2010 (c: SSB 2011). In 2010, 94 000 people were registered as unemployed, which corresponds to 3.6 per cent of the labour force. This is an increase from 2.6 in 2008 and 3.2 per cent in 2009 (a: SSB 2011).

After a year and a half of moderate developments in the Norwegian economy, clear higher growth is expected. The development is expected to be driven by a broad increase in domestic demand. The cyclical upturn in the economy will contribute to an increase in employment and gradually lower unemployment. The real wage growth is set to increase going forward, but a clear increase in interest rates is also expected.

Between the 1st quarter of 2010 and the 1st quarter of 2011 the number of unemployed increased by 11 000 persons. While the share among people who have been unemployed for less than three months decreased, the share of long-term unemployed has risen from 32 to 34 per cent. Long-term unemployed are people who have been out of work for more than 26 weeks. This increase is a consequence of the crisis as this group in large consists of people that are not highly educated. They became unemployed during the crisis and now they have problems getting a job.

Unemployment is particularly attached to the industrial and the building and construction sector. These sectors, along with business services and child care and youth work, are the ones that have contributed to the economic slowdown since 2008. Increased activity in general government contributed positively throughout the year and helped offset the downturn in the Norwegian economy (c: SSB 2011). In addition, due to increased construction activity in 2010 has led to lower unemployment in this sector.

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 2011).

Regarding immigrants, the registered unemployment rate decreased in 2010 in Norway for the first time since the 3rd quarter in 2008 compared to the corresponding quarter the year before,⁴

⁴ Registered unemployment among immigrants decreased from 7.8 per cent in February 2010 to 7.7 per cent in February 2011. In the rest of the population, this rate decreased from 2.5 to 2.3 per cent.

With regard to the number of registered unemployed, there is still an increase among immigrants, of 1 650. However, when the unemployment rate within this group declines slightly, this means that the number employed has increased. The growth among labour immigrants is one of the main factors behind this development. Immigrants from Africa still had the highest unemployment rate level in the first quarter of 2011(13.4 per cent). The rate for immigrants from the EU countries in Eastern Europe, the group from Asia, Latin America and those from Eastern Europe outside the EU is 10.2, 8.8, 7.8 and 7.5 per cent respectively. There is a gap to the groups from the Nordic countries and Western Europe, which have considerably lower unemployment rates; 3.0 and 3.7 per cent respectively.

The high level of unemployment among Africans is partly due to the dominance of refugees within this group. African immigrants have for several years had the highest registered unemployment rate irrespective of the economic cycles. The unemployment rate among immigrants from the EU countries in Eastern Europe is caused by the declining economic cycles and the loss of jobs that many labour immigrants within the construction industry and some manufacturing industries experienced in 2009. However, the activity within these industries is now increasing, and the unemployment rate is therefore falling slightly (c: SSB:2011).

3.2 Effects of the crisis on VET and corresponding measures

3.2.1 Trends in learners' behaviour

As of 1 October 2010, 40706 (53.5%) pupils started upper secondary VET, while 35322 (46.5%) started general upper secondary school. Newly introduced study programs in 2008 as a result of the Knowledge Promotion reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) of 2006 makes it difficult to directly compare these numbers with results of earlier years. However, only about 15000 apprenticeship contracts are signed each year, which means that a high number of pupils starting VET in Norway will not complete upper secondary education through the 2+2 model. Nevertheless, this has been a tendency over a long period of time and is not considered to be related to the international economic crisis.

Anyway, the financial crisis had consequences for vocational education and training in other areas. Firstly there was a sharper reduction in applications for vocational education programmes. Application figures for vocational training at upper secondary1 level (Vg1) in autumn 2009 showed a decline of 2.0 per cent, compared with 2008. From 2009 to 2010, there was a decline of 0.6 per cent. From 2009 to 2010, the decline was particularly noticeable in applications for building and construction trades (down 24 per cent). At the other extreme, the health work programme experienced an increase of 14 per cent. In addition, there has been a marked increase in the number of pupils in vocational education programmes who interrupted their vocational training and who instead applied for general studies.

Increased demand for vocational post-secondary education and training has been apparent since 2008. In 2009, the budget to the county technical post-secondary vocational colleges was increased by NOK 15.2 millions (approx. €1.9 millions). The number of recognised programmes at this level is also increasing, though less in 2009 and 2010 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. Moreover, 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.

In higher education, The Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service, NUCAS (*Samordna opptak*)⁵ had registered approximately 103 400 applications for entrance in higher education institutions by the application deadline in April 2010. Compared to 2009, there was a slight decrease of 0.8 per cent. In 2009, the increase of applications was of 12.6 per cent. This was the first year since 1996 that the total number of applications was higher than 100 000. NUCAS considered that the labour market situation and larger age cohorts are important factors for explaining the trend.

As regards adults taking part in upper secondary education and training, it has not been possible to directly compare the numbers, because of new counting parameters in the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning - VOX. However, VOX points out that the number of new participants was significantly higher in 2009⁶ than in earlier years (VOX 2011).

3.2.2. Trends in enterprises' behaviour

Due to the financial crisis, the intake of apprentices was reduced. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) was concerned that the global economic crisis might have an impact on the possibility of enterprises providing apprenticeship training. This has been particularly valid for enterprises in the building trade and industry. The apprenticeship contract commits the enterprise ordinarily to employing an apprentice for two years. In a period with an unstable market situation, small-sized enterprises in particular would be reluctant to employ new apprentices. Sectoral uncertainty may lead enterprises to hesitate to hire new apprentices and training establishments may see themselves forced to let off apprentices if no suitable work is available or if there are not enough available trainers. Apprentices have special protection against dismissal (cf. the Education Act § 4-6 Amendment and rescission of the apprenticeship contract and training contract). However, the training establishment may have to terminate or lay off apprentices if there is no suitable work or enough instructors/trainers to provide training.

The per centage of applicants for apprenticeships who have become apprentices fell from 72.5 per cent in 2008 to 69.3 per cent in 2009. However, in 2010, there were signs of recovery: The per centage of granted apprenticeships stabilized at 70.3 per cent. A survey among the county authorities conducted by NIFU STEP (2009b) showed that the number of apprentices laid off or dismissed has been very small.

3.2.3. Measures taken to address the negative effects or as a result of the crisis

The financial crisis intensified a slowdown of the Norwegian economy, after several years of very strong economic growth. In order to mitigate the negative effects of the crisis, the Norwegian government proposed amendments to the 2009 Fiscal Budget. The proposed measures amounted to NOK 20 billion (approximately €2.49 billion), of which NOK 16.75 billion (approximately €2.09 billion) were an increase in budget expenditures and NOK 3.25 billion (approximately €405 million) were targeted tax relief for the business sector. The proposed fiscal stimulus package was expected to dampen the decline in employment, especially in the building and construction sector. As part of the stimulus package, an additional provisional subsidy for training enterprises was introduced. The grant had a NOK 185 million (approximately €23 million) framework.

⁵ The Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service, NUCAS (*Samordna opptak*) coordinates the admission to regular undergraduate studies at all the universities, university colleges, state colleges, and some private colleges in Norway

⁶ Newer numbers from Vox do not exist.

The aim was to help maintain the total number of apprenticeships in a difficult economic situation through an increase of the apprenticeship subsidy by approximately NOK 4 800 (approximately €600) per running contract, i.e. approx. by 5 per cent. The funding was granted over the county authorities' block grant, and applied to payments related to apprentice training in 2009. In addition, a NOK 10 million (approximately €1.25 million) increase in the grant for apprentices with special needs was also continued. The decision to give an extra subsidy to training enterprises was made at political level.

Due to expected challenges in assuring enough apprenticeships, the government proposed to maintain the increase in apprenticeship grants for training enterprises that was introduced in 2009 in the 2010 national budget. For more information on the VET financing policy, see theme 10.1. The NOK 10 million increase in the grant for apprentices with special needs was also continued.

In a 2009 survey conducted by the Directorate for Education and Training, county authorities ranked national crisis packages as the most important measure that they thought would have the greatest effect on maintaining apprenticeships and establishing new ones. The statistical data also indicate that the counter crisis measures might be regarded as successful; while the intake of apprentices in the economic downturn of the late 1980s fell by 34 per cent (in 1987, the intake was 10 531 apprentices, while in 1989 number of new contracts fell to 6 956), the percentage of applicants that translated into apprenticeships only fell to a limited degree from 2008 to 2010.

There has been no curriculum revision of programs or curricula as a consequence of the crisis.

Theme 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 (*Vg3*) in school leading up to the same final craft or journeyman's examination. This is a costly alternative for the county authorities, while pupils undertaking the *Vg3 option in school* achieve poorer results in their trade or journeyman's examination than the apprentices. Specific groups are especially 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 post-secondary 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 act 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) (*Opplæringslova*) 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.”

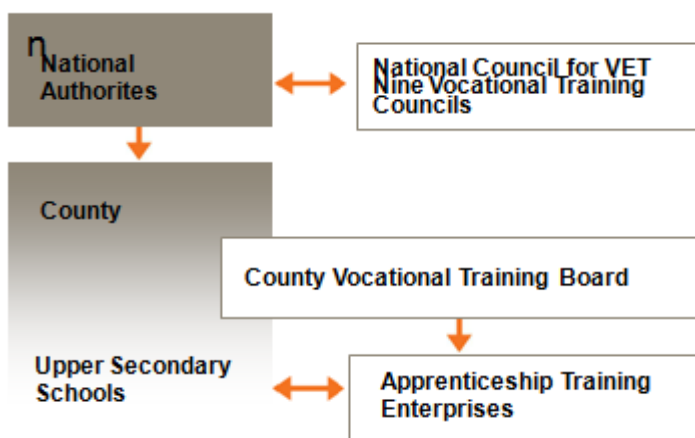
Chapter 4 in the Education Act regulates upper secondary apprenticeship.

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

National Administrative Structure of Vocational Education & Training (VET)



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 Knowledge Promotion reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) of 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.

In order to be approved as certified enterprises providing training for apprentices in the Norwegian 2+2 model, enterprises have to enter a contractual agreement with the VET office (*fagopplæringskontor*) at the county authority. It is VET offices at county authorities which often offer transnational placements for apprentices on behalf of SMEs. In order to reduce the administrative burden for the individual enterprise, and to ensure that apprentices are given the correct training, groups of SMEs often establish umbrella organizations – training offices (*opplæringskontor*) – which have responsibility for the training of apprentices and that formally enter the contractual agreement with the VET office at the county authority. These 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. In these cases, the training offices have the formal responsibility for the apprentices (b: OECD 2010). However, each individual training enterprise must still be approved by the VET office at the county authority.

4.4. Legislative framework for CVET

Act relating to Post-secondary Vocational Education and Training (Lov om fagskoler 2003, latest amendment 2010)

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 purposes of the Act relating to post-secondary vocational education and training is to ensure and promote quality provision, and to ensure student rights. The amendments to the law in December 2010 relate to the introduction of a national qualifications framework, to the recognition of prior learning and to the use of credits.

Collective agreements are very important in regulating Norwegian working life in general, including in post-secondary vocational education and training. There are no specific trade unions for staff at this level of education and training, however. Organisation and collective agreements will vary according the ownership of the school (private or county). The reason is that overall agreements are negotiated in three main 'batches' at the national level: between the relevant unions and the state represented by the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs (*Fornyings- Administrasjons- og Kirkedepartementet*), the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (*Kommunesektorens interesse- og arbeidsgiverorganisasjon – KS*), and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (*Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon*), respectively. For more specific issues, agreements tend to follow the vocational field of the school or programme in question.

Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler 2005, latest amendment 2009)

Higher education is in Norway defined as research-based education and training.

Through a higher education reform in 2003, the Quality Reform (*Kvalitetsreformen*), 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 still some study programmes of two years' duration, some integrated five-year master's degrees and some professional study programmes that last 6 years⁷.

The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (hereafter the Higher Education Act) applies to all higher education, both state and private. The purpose of the act is to make provisions for Norwegian higher education institutions to

- a) provide higher education at a high international level.
- b) conduct research and academic and artistic development work at a high international level.
- c) disseminate knowledge of the institution's activities and promote the understanding and application of scientific and artistic methods and results in public administration, cultural life, and business and industry.

The Higher Education Act 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. It also regulates employment matters that are specific to higher education. 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 in 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.

Collective agreements are very important in regulating Norwegian working life in general, and this goes for higher education, too. The most important union for academic staff in higher education is the Norwegian Association of Researchers (*Forskerforbundet*). All state higher education institutions are free to negotiate wages for their own staff, within the frameworks set through collective agreements at the national level.

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.

⁷ In medicine, veterinary medicine, psychology and theology

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.

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 administers 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 Norway, education offered at higher education institutions, and at post-secondary vocational colleges, respectively. 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 and two years' duration.

The National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen* — NOKUT) is responsible for the accreditation of both higher education and post-secondary vocational education and training.

Higher education institutions are organised directly under the Ministry of Education and Research 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. Students and staff participate in decision-making in higher education, and they are by law represented at the boards of the higher education institutions.

The organisation of the post-secondary vocational colleges is more complicated, as most are private, a lot belong to the county level, and a small number (14) are organised directly under the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*). However, irrespective of ownership, all boards must have representatives of students and staff, and this is verified by NOKUT in connection with recognition applications.

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 (*Mesterbrevnemnda*) has the full responsibility for both decision-making and implementation of the Master Craftsman (*Mester*) Scheme (see also 6.2).

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 6.3.).

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 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 council 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.

Theme 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

5.1.1. Compulsory education and adults' rights to primary and secondary education and training

Norwegian public mainstream education and training has several levels: primary (*barneskole*), lower secondary (*ungdomsskole*), upper secondary (*videregående opplæring*), 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. They may choose from three different study programs preparing for higher education, or nine different study programs in VET. The main access point for upper secondary VET is therefore the first year of upper secondary education and training for those students who choose one of the programmes for VET. A majority of pupils starting upper secondary education start studying a vocational programme. However, because of a higher drop-out rate in VET, and because many VET students choose to switch from their vocational programme to a third year which prepares for entrance in higher education, a minority of the students who enrolled in VET in 2003 had achieved a trade or journeyman's certificate within five years.

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 organizations. 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 2.6 per cent of pupils attended private schools in 2010 (e: SSB 2011), whereas private institutions in 2008 cater for around 7 per cent and 15 per cent of students at upper secondary and tertiary levels, respectively.

Table no. 5.1.1: Distribution of pupils in upper secondary VET at public or private schools, 2010	
Public	77 694
Private	4 115

Source: Statistics Norway 2011, 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,). 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.

5.1.2. Particular challenges for IVET and measures to reduce drop-out

In upper secondary VET, a pressing issue has been the allocation of apprenticeship places. There is no individual right to apprenticeship places. However, White Paper no. 44 (2008-2009) to the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) [St. meld. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*] discusses this issue and recommends assessing whether and eventually how a statutory right to apprenticeship place and/or four years training in school could possibly be implemented. For more information on this policy debate, see theme 2.1.

Fighting drop-out from upper secondary education, and particularly in upper secondary VET, is a strong government priority. The Ministry of Education and Research is continuously working with several measures to reduce early school leaving, in close cooperation with county municipalities. 2010 Statistics from Statistics Norway (SSB) show that 57 per cent of the pupils at upper secondary schools complete their education during the standard period of time, while seven out of ten finish within five years.⁸

Pupils who drop out of school before the normal completion time of four years do not necessarily drop out of the education system all together. They might have taken a break to do something else (folk high school, gone abroad as exchange students or they might be working). Many re-enter the upper-secondary system as much as ten years later due to these opportunities. It should also be mentioned that Norway has a low unemployment rate (3.6 per cent in 2010 compared to 3.3 per cent in 2009, SSB). Despite the global economic crisis, it is therefore still relatively easy to get a job in Norway.

According to research, there is a significant variation in the drop-out rate between education programmes and it is especially high in some vocational education programmes. For instance, half of all students in Hotel and Food-Processing Trades dropped out before they had finished the programme, compared to the programme for Sport and Physical Education, where only 3 per cent dropped out (NIFU STEP, 2008a).

⁸ For further information, see SSB webpage: <http://www.ssb.no/vgogjen/>

White Paper no. 44 to the Storting (2008-2009) *Education Strategy* [St.meld.nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja*] addresses efforts against drop-out and social disparities. The White Paper emphasises early intervention as a main strategy to ensure a good education for everyone and to prevent drop-outs. This entails both intervening at an early age and taking action at an early stage when problems arise during the course of the education.

As a follow-up of White Paper no. 44 (2008-2009) and recommendations from the OECD on Norwegian VET (Kuczera et al. 2008), the Ministry of Education and Research has initiated a three year project on drop-outs (*Ny GIV*) aimed at strengthening the efforts to improve completion rates in upper secondary education. The project entails cooperation with the county authorities and follow-up of their efforts to improve completion rates in upper secondary education.

In November 2010, national goals for completion in upper secondary education were set within the framework of the *Ny GIV* project. The ministry and the county municipalities have agreed on a common set of indicators, in order to secure transparency of results in each county authority. The national goals are as follows:

- Increase the transition rate from the first to the second year in upper secondary education by two per cent compared to the 2010 level.
- Increase the transition rate from the second year to the final year in upper secondary school or to the first year of an apprenticeship in vocational training by two per cent from the 2010 level.
- Increase the rate of pupils achieving a passing grade after the third year in general upper secondary school, and the rate of apprentices starting the second year of vocational training, by two per cent compared to the 2010 level.
- Increase the completion rate after five years of general upper secondary education, and after six years of vocational education and training, by six per cent compared to the 2004 level.

In turn, county authorities are invited to define their own goals for completion. The county authorities can themselves choose how to follow up the project locally, e.g. through cooperation between municipalities and/or the social partners.

Furthermore, to combat drop-out in VET, the Norwegian education authorities are currently focusing efforts within three areas:

As there is a clear correlation between poor results in lower secondary education and drop-out of upper secondary education, measures have been introduced to strengthen focus on basic skills, so that fewer pupils will end up in the group at risk of dropping out.

In order to convince pupils of their relevance, the teaching of common core subjects (e.g. Norwegian, English, mathematics etc.) will be more related to the vocational programme the pupil is attending. In particular, this should make teaching better adapted to the needs of the less motivated pupils in vocational programmes. To achieve more practically oriented teaching in common core subjects, teachers' competence is going to be strengthened and new examination arrangements are being considered.

There will be increased efforts aimed at following up pupils who are considered to be at risk of dropping out. Economic grants are offered for improved follow-up of pupils that are struggling academically and measures are also introduced to fight absenteeism.

On the issue of drop-out in upper secondary education, Norway is also participating in Nordic cooperation.

Making unconsidered choices of education pathways at upper secondary level may increase the risk for drop-out. Therefore, more emphasis has been put on career guidance. 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. For more information on guidance and counseling, see Theme 9.

5.1.3. Curriculum reform and innovative approaches to teaching and assessment

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 (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. For more information on the involvement of social partners in Norwegian VET, see Theme 4.

5.1.4. Main characteristics and elements of the subject curricula

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 (*Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet*). 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.

- The Core Curriculum deepens appreciation for basic values and the view of humanity underlying the instruction and constitutes the binding foundation and values for primary and upper secondary and training. The Core Curriculum is not a subject curriculum and there are no time frames. It underlies all education in Norway from primary education to adult education.
- The Quality Framework consist of the principles that 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. Key competences are integrated into the Quality Framework, such as learning strategies, social competences, cultural competences, motivation to learn and pupil participation.

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;
- 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. New national curricula have been developed for each subject in both school-based and apprenticeship-based education and training. 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. 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 after 2nd, 4th and 10th grade, as well as after every stage in upper secondary education and training. The subject curriculum also describes the principles for assessment. Decisions regarding the organisation, methods and work methods are, on the other hand 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.

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.

The subjects within VET are divided into Common Core Subjects (*felles fag*), Common Programme Subjects (*programfag*) and In-depth Study Project (*prosjekt til fordypning*). As the curricula are regulations, the schools and training establishments are bound by their content.

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.

In recent years, three different VET-related subjects have been developed. The In-depth-study Project (*Prosjekt til fordypning*) is a subject at levels 1 and 2 upper secondary VET aimed to increase the cooperation between schools and the training establishments. The pupils are given the opportunity to define the contents of their training. The curriculum is adjusted to each pupil's interests and also towards the training establishment's competences. The In-depth-study Project applies to all 9 vocational education programs and comprises around 20% at level 1 and 35% at level 2.

Table no. 5.1.4: distribution of subjects in curricula at the various levels of upper secondary IVET. teaching hours per year

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 20%	253 35%	

Source: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010

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 per cent 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.

5.1.5 Teaching methods and materials

While subject curricula contain clear output based competence aims, decisions regarding the organization, methods and work methods are left to the education and training institutions. As basic skills 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.

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.

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 (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) 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.

Local curriculum work is essential in order to carry into effect 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.

5.1.6 Quality assurance mechanisms and inspections

In Norwegian VET, the strong tripartite cooperation, involving social partners both at county level and at national level represents a crucial quality assurance mechanism. The new main task for the County Vocational Training Board (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnda*) to give advice on quality issues in VET is paralleled by a strengthened obligation for the county authority (*fylkeskommunen*) to consult the County Vocational Training Board on quality issues. In this way, new obligations set through the Education Act from 2008 are likely to ensure tripartite cooperation at regional level on issues related to the overall system for quality assurance in VET. Accreditation of training establishments is specially emphasised in this context. The County Vocational Training Board should also present proposals on quality development, including the enhancement of partnerships between schools and companies, and skills and competence development for teachers, trainers and other groups of vital importance for VET performance. Thus, the new responsibilities for the County Vocational Training Boards has led to increased possibilities for social dialogue on quality issues in VET, regarding both school-based and work-based training. For more information on the role of social partners, see theme 4.

In addition to the institutionalized involvement of social partners in VET, a formal inspection system exists. The State is responsible for inspections regarding all activities of the Education Act and has the authority to give legally binding order to correct the conditions that are contrary to the Education Act.

As a consequence of the Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*), the local freedom regarding the primary and lower secondary school has been strengthened. Meanwhile, the State's inspection role has become more central. In parallel of an increasing freedom of action for municipalities, the State has put more emphasis on assessment, reporting and inspection.

The Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) has delegated the responsibility as the inspectorate at national level to the Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*), which is responsible for developing and supporting inspection, to facilitate a unified inspection throughout the country and provide guidance on the legislation. The County Governors are the operational inspection authority for basic training and has responsibility for activities at county level. They are also appeal body for individual decisions regarding students in the primary and lower secondary school. The Ministry still has the authority to exercise supervision and can instruct the Directorate for Education and Training and the County Governor about how inspections should be exercised.

The Education Act also regulates the County Governors (*fylkesmennene*) responsibility to provide guidance to school owners. This applies not only to guidance on school academic questions but also guidance on other issues related to the Education Act. This includes, inter alia, guidance regarding administrative law and is among other things, intended to provide best possible cooperation between the State and the school owners.

Over the past few years, inspection towards the primary and lower secondary school has been strengthened. An important part of this was the introduction of common national inspection. The reason for this was that the inspection forms and scope varied between the County Governors. In 2005 and 2006 The Directorate for Education and Training developed and organized the content and methodology for inspection. Joint national inspection was carried out for the first time in 2006.

Joint national inspection has come in addition to the more general inspection missions to the County Governors. The inspection activity is event-based and managed from the regional risk assessments that are made with the County Governor. Situations may occur that invoke the authorities' immediate attention, which requires that the County Governor have the ability to perform inspections on its own initiative.

5.2 IVET at lower secondary level

Name of IVET programme	Admission requirements	Main economic sectors ⁽⁹⁾	Corresponding ISCED level and orientation/destination	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school- and work-based training (share in %?)	Average duration of studies	Access to (horizontal/vertical) to other pathways
Cross curricular Optional subjects (valgfag)		Non market services			NA	57 hours per year for 3 years	NA (All young people)
Working life subjects (arbeidslivsfag)					Not specified	227 hours over 3 years	
Elective Programme Subject (<i>Utdanningsvalg</i>)							

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.

⁽⁹⁾ Please enumerate the main economic sectors the educational programmes fall under by referring to the following sectors - Primary sector and utilities; Manufacturing; Construction; Distribution and transport; Business and other services; Non-marketed services).

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, thus providing a better foundation for choice of vocation. The Introduction to Working Life Subject (*Arbeidslivsfag*) is a pilot project at the lower secondary level (see more in theme 2.1). Pupils may choose it instead of 2nd foreign language or in depth study of English, Norwegian or Sámi. The subject has 227 hours in total. 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 motivate pupils for vocational subjects and 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.

5.3. School based IVET at Upper Secondary level

All young people leaving compulsory school have a statutory right to receive 3 years of upper secondary education.

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 including 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. 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). In addition, a large number of VET pupils in some education programmes choose to leave VET in after two years in order to attend a third year of intensive courses in general subjects which prepares them for higher education, but does not lead to a trade certificate.

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 Holders of trade certificates in electrical trades may choose a specialized three year bachelor engineering degree, known as <i>y-veien</i> .
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 Holders of trade certificates in building and construction may choose a specialized three year bachelor engineering degree, known as <i>y-veien</i> .
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
Agriculture, fishing and	ISCED 3	Most subjects follow 2 years in school and 2 years of formalized	All the programmes can transfer to Post-

forestry		apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise. 2 subjects follow 3 years in school of which 1 subject transfer to higher education	<p>Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4</p> <p>Agriculture, fishing and forestry has an option for the third year which prepares pupils for higher education.</p>
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	<p>All the programmes can transfer to Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education which is placed at ISCED level 4</p> <p>Media and communication has an option for the third year which prepares pupils for higher education. A large majority of students in Media and Communication choose this option</p>
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

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.

Students' competencies are assessed continuously throughout the 4 (3) years of education and 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.

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.

Although Eurostat statistics show that 54.1 per cent of Norwegian students enter upper secondary education and training started studying a vocational programme, a minority of students who enrol in VET are likely to achieve a trade or journeyman's certificate within five years. For more information on challenges in Norwegian VET, see theme 5.1.3.

TABLE 5.3.2.: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION BY PROGRAMME ORIENTATION (VALUES AND SHARE OF THE TOTAL), 2009							
GEO	TOTAL ISCED3	ISCED3GE N (NUM)	ISCE3 GEN (%)	ISCED3PV (NUM)	ISCE3PV (%)	ISCED3VOC (NUM)	ISCED3 VOC (%)
EU-27	20633767	10946188	53.0	:	:	9687579	47.0
NO	235771	108250	45.9	:	:	127521	54.1

5.4 Apprenticeship training

There is no formalised alternance training in Norway. All young people leaving compulsory school have a statutory right to receive 3 years of upper secondary education.

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 apprenticeships.

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. The two-year apprenticeship takes place with an employer (or employers) and follows the national curriculum. As a consequence of the Knowledge Promotion Reform, the number of apprenticeship subjects was reduced from 255 to 176.

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. For more information on the relationship between the participatory organs and central education authorities, see theme 4.

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. As the productive work increases throughout the 2-year apprenticeship period, the salary increases accordingly. Salary increases from 30 per cent to 80 per cent of a skilled worker's salary during the two years of apprenticeship. 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 authority.

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 VET office at the county authority. The county has the right to revoke 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 organized by the school.

The apprenticeship training is funded over public budgets and the training enterprises receive a state grant for each apprentice (in 2010: €12829 over two years). .

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 adaptation of academic subjects.

Table no. 5.4.1 Applicants to apprenticeship training 2010

Source: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010

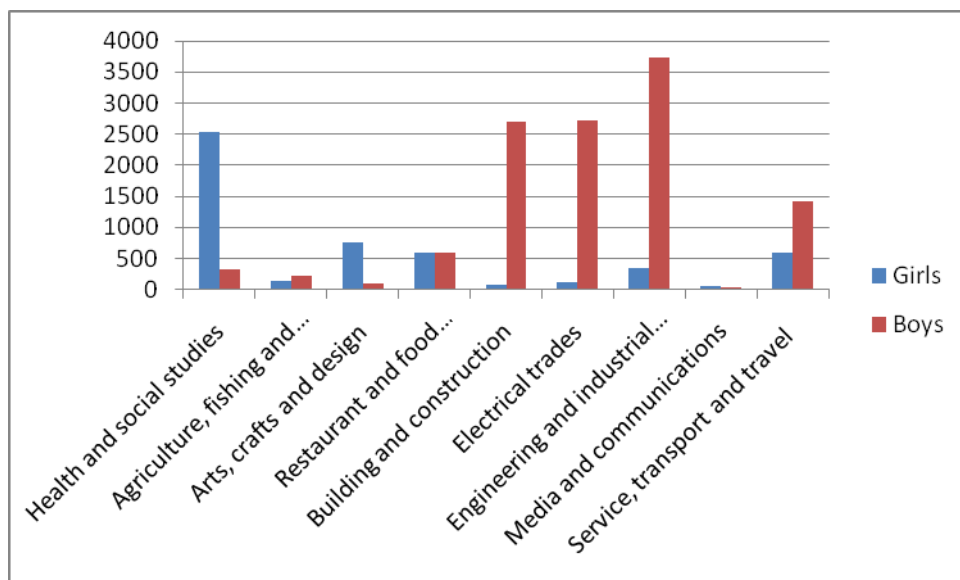


Table no. 5.4.2: New apprenticeship contracts per year

Table no. 5.4.2: New apprenticeship contracts per year							
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
New contracts as of Oct 1 st .	14 540	16 341	18 180	18 699	18 585	15 928	16769

Source: SSB 2011, a

In 2010, out of the about 16 800 (16 769) new contracts signed, 12 874 were apprenticeship placements made by the counties (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010a). 21 060 trade and journeyman's examinations were completed. 6 717 of the candidates to the examination were candidates for experience based trade certification (*praksiskandidater*).

Training establishments 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.

After 2 years of apprenticeship training, upper secondary IVET is completed by a practical-theoretical trade and journeyman's examination (*Fag- og svenneprøve*) lasting several days, where apprentices demonstrate their vocational skills and have to give an account for the chosen procedure at the test site. 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 examination is prepared and assessed by a trade specific examination board appointed at the county level, where social partners are represented. In 2010, 92.25 per cent of those who sat for the examination passed.

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.

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. In addition, some tailor-made three-year engineering degrees at bachelor level specifically adapted to students who hold a trade or journeyman's certificate in electrical trades and in construction exist.

5.5 Programmes and alternative pathways for young people

5.5.1. The training candidate

The training candidature scheme (*lærekandidatordningen*), 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 (*lærekandidat*) 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.

5.5.2. The certificate of practice

The certificate of practice (*praksisbrev*) scheme is still under piloting. For more information on this issue, see theme 2.1.

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 theme 6 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 4.4) which is applicable as for the academic aspects of their activities. In this report, IVET at tertiary level is classified as CVET. For more information, see theme 6.2.

5.8. Language learning in IVET

English is a common core subject for all pupils in upper secondary education, and it is the only compulsory foreign language for VET candidates. Pupils in all nine IVET educational programs in upper secondary education are required to follow the national curriculum for English during two years (Vg1 and Vg2). The total number of hours is 84 teaching hours in Vg1 and 56 hours in Vg2 (60 minutes).

The curriculum, the number of hours and assessment is the same as for pupils following the general education path. There are therefore no additional requirements for English for vocational pupils wishing to attain entrance into higher education. One difference is that pupils following vocational programs follow the subject for two years, whereas only one year in general education path.

The main subject areas are language learning, communication and culture, society and literature. There are no prescriptions for methods of delivery of the subject within the curriculum as it is up to the local level to decide how to reach the subjects aims and competences. The Directorate for Education and Training has developed net based guidelines for all common core subjects, including English. These guidelines provide concrete examples of methodologies in some competences and basic skills. How the methods can be used for adapted learning is also a part of these guidelines. Teaching of English may be vocationally oriented, as the curriculum states that the goals of education in English are, inter alia, to understand and use both general language and technical terminology related to the education program and read and produce specialist literature related to one's own education programme. The curriculum contains elements of the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR), but there are no national standards based on the CEFR-levels.

Pupils are given an overall mark at the learning period of the subject ends. Both VET candidates and students following academic programs may sit for a central exam that is based on the curriculum. The exam gives VET candidates the opportunity to show their skills of VET terminology and other knowledge of English acquired in their VET program.

Theme 6 - Continuing vocational education and training

6.1. General background

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 per cent of the population aged 16-74 participate in some form of learning activity. 54 per cent 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 county authorities, 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.

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 theme 6.2.). There is also at least some private provision at all levels, however, and at private institutions, students are often required to pay tuition fees, depending on the level of public funding.

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. Some of these provide training qualifying for Master Craftsman. 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). At this level, a growing number of programmes are only offered through flexible provision, part-time being the most common form.

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 was awarded more funding (plus NOK 3 million, approx. €375. 000) in 2010 to improve university-enterprise cooperation on flexible provision of higher education for professionals. Norway Opening Universities (*Norgesuniversitetet*) 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. 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.).

As a rule, most programmes and institutions in higher education are open to part time studies. Since 2003, all higher education students have an Individual Education Plan (*individuell utdanningsplan*). This is a document the students have to fill in when they register, and which is signed both by the student and the institution. In the Individual Education Plan, each student has to indicate whether he/she plans to study full or part time, and the level of ambition in terms of names of courses and no. of planned ECTS credits per semester and year. It is thus an excellent planning tool both for the students and the higher education institutions.

Training for employment and integration (see more in section 6.5)

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 (*introduksjonskurs*) 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 (Nyen 2004) 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. 19 institutions in 2009 reported a total of 469 669 attendants in their courses. About 66 000 of the participants attended courses offering some kind of formal exam.

In 2009, 12 Distance Education Institutions (*fjernundervisningsinstitusjoner*) delivered courses to 18 376 participants (Vox 2011). 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 per cent 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.

6.2 Formal learning in CVET

In Norway, the term “*tertiær*”, tertiary, is used for all post-secondary education and training, both higher education, and vocational college 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 schools at this level are private.

The public schools at this level are administered by the county authorities (except 14 administered directly by the Ministry of Education and Research). The county authorities 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. However, many programmes, particularly among those aimed at the health and social sector, are designed as part-time studies in which students are required to work part time and do project work for their study at a work place, often their own. 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. A system of learning outcomes has not yet been introduced at this level.

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. The higher education institutions are responsible for the development of their own quality assurance systems, which need to be reaccredited by NOKUT at regular intervals (every six years). With the implementation of the national qualifications framework for higher education, decided in 2009 and with implementation deadline in 2012, learning outcome descriptors are now an integral part of all programme design.

Comprehensive institutional data are reported to a Database for statistics on higher education, which is used by the Ministry for instance for budget preparations. In addition, Statistics Norway has relevant register data. The website of the Database for statistics on higher education is unfortunately only available in Norwegian, see <http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/>.

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.

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 has never been 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 autumn 2010, for instance, 61 per cent of all registered students were in the age group 25 and younger, while 10 per cent were in the age group 41+ (respectively 128 502 and 20 953 out of a total of 209 680 ordinary registered students).

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*).

6.3 Non-formal learning in 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 (*Kompetansereformen*) 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 (VOX 2011).

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 19 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.. In 2010, a total of 504 236 students attended courses delivered by adult education institutions. 56.3 per cent were women and only 24.2 per cent under the age of 30 (see table 6.2.2.1.).

Table 6.2.2.1 Participation in courses delivered by Adult Association, Distance Education Institutions and Folk High Schools (short courses), 2010

Adult Education Associations, participation by age, gender and course subject, 2010. N and %. Source: Vox.

	TOTAL	14-29	30-49	50 +	Unknown	% of total course participants
TOTAL (% women)	504 236 (56.30)	122 136 (52.40)	160 278 (56.90)	179 085 (57.80)	42 737 (58.60)	100.00
Language courses (% women of these)	16 547 (64.60)	5 387	6 469	4 285	406	3.30
Aesthetic subjects & handcraft (% women of these)	212 388 (61.70)	49 413	56 664	102 784	3 527	42.10
Humanities, philosophy, ethics (% women of these)	31 667 (56.50)	18 187	3 829	9 392	259	6.30
Social studies (% women of these)	17 101 (65.20)	1 894	2 908	3 157	9 142	3.40
Organisation and management (% women of these)	94 620 (49.90)	22 531	30 365	23 005	18 719	18.80
Business and ICT (% women of these)	11 714 (56.40)	743	2 654	5 292	3 025	2.30
Health, social and sports (% women of these)	63 595 (63.70)	6 597	36 688	18 029	2 281	12.60
Transport and communication (% women of these)	7 583 (32.70)	2 896	1 187	3 038	462	1.50
Science, industry, technical subjects (% women of these)	16 785 (21.70)	2 374	6 098	3 568	4 745	3.30
Natural resources management, ecology, environment protection and outdoor recreation (% women of these)	30 532 (36.90)	11 787	12 780	5 892	73	6.10
Goods and services (% women of these)	1 704 (70.00)	327	636	643	98	0.30

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 2010, 17 162 participants were registered under these courses: 57.4 per cent women, and 35.7 per cent 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 %, 2010. Source: Vox.

	TOTAL	14-29	30-49	50 +	Unknown	% of total course participants
TOTAL	17 162	6 135	8 982	1 817	228	100.00
(% women)	(57.40)	(63.10)	(56.20)	(44.40)	(57.00)	
Language courses	421	186	169	62	4	2.50
(% women of these)	(60.80)					
Aesthetic subjects & handcraft	427	151	242	34	0	2.50
(% women of these)	(94.60)					
Humanities, philosophy, ethics	143	73	36	32	2	0.80
(% women of these)	76.20					
Social studies	4 623	1 815	2 318	423	67	26.90
(% women of these)	(70.80)					
Organisation and management	2 040	510	1 253	223	54	11.90
(% women of these)	(56.10)					
Business and ICT	3 027	918	1 763	294	52	17.60
(% women of these)	(74.20)					
Health, social and sports	1 760	835	798	107	20	10.30
(% women of these)	(88.60)					
Transport and communication	2 615	1 020	1 278	308	9	15.20
(% women of these)	(8.80)					
Science, industry, technical subjects	1 063	387	568	97	11	6.20
(% women of these)	(27.90)					
Natural resources management, ecology, environment protection and outdoor recreation	18	5	11	2	0	0.10
(% women of these)	(27.80)					
Goods and services	1 025	235	546	235	9	6.00
(% women of these)	(32.70)					

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 per cent of the 18 600 participants in short courses were above between 30-49 years of age and 55.80 per cent were women (see table above).

6.4. Language learning in CVET

In post-secondary vocational education and training and in higher education, all providers design courses and programmes themselves. There are no rules or regulations regarding language learning at these levels. At the former level, education and training is as a rule provided in Norwegian. In higher education, Norwegian is also prevalent, but the number of courses and programmes provided through other languages (in practice English), in order to promote internationalisation, is increasing rapidly, with 2379 in 2007, 3183 in 2008, 3692 in 2009 and 3967 in 2010 (*Database for høgre utdanning* - DBH). Of these, 219 are full master's programmes, see www.studyinnorway.no for details. Other languages are generally only used when learning them is (part of) the purpose of the programme concerned.

6.5. Training programs to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market

Training for unemployed job seekers is the national responsibility of the Ministry of Labour (*Arbeidsdepartementet*). The operational responsibility for labour market measures lies with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (*Arbeids- og velferdsetaten* - NAV). NAV at county level is responsible for the local implementation and operation, according to the needs of individuals and the labour market, within given steering signals, budgets and regulations from the Directorate of Labour and Welfare.

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 unemployed (6 months or more), long-term job seekers (2 years, the last 6 months totally unemployed), immigrants and people with a reduced working capability are target 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.

Training for unemployed and challenged job seekers

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 2010, 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 76 932. Of these, 58 906 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 2010, the annual average number in the programme was 17 813. 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 work assessment 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 provide specific skills for updating of competences, or provide work preparation and job seeking skills. Courses may combine formal curricula of VET and informal work practise and by this be a part of, and may lead to a trade- or journeyman's certificate or other formalised qualifications. 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 attended, 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 2010 the annual average number in the programme was about 7 308.

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 people 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 work assessment allowance. In 2010 the annual average number in the programme was 1 240. There are about 100 labour market enterprises. They have agreements/contracts with and are subsidised by NAV.

In- house training (Bedriftsintern oppl ring) is entitled to contributions if it contributes towards preventing exclusion from working life by strengthening the competence of employees in undertakings that have serious restructuring problems, and which as a result of the restructuring problems must make significant changes to the undertaking's production or establish itself in new markets.

Contributions for in-house training are not provided for employees that have been completely laid off. Partially laid off employees may participate in training schemes during the time they are at work. Contributions are also not provided if there is a tie-in period related to the training.

Until 1 January 2012 contributions for in-house training may also be provided to undertakings that are temporarily affected by market failures due to economic conditions. It is a precondition that these conditions have a particularly serious effect on the labour market.

Contributions may be provided for the training of own employees. In-house training must include theory, and may be combined with practical training. Contributions may only be provided for training that is beyond the scope of the undertaking's ordinary training.

In 2010, the annual average number participated In-House training was about 2 598. 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 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 for 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 (*Justisdepartementet*) and the Police are now responsible for the immigration policy. Labour related immigration is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour (*Arbeidsdepartementet*). Finally, the Ministry for Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (*Barne- Likestillings- og Inkluderingsdepartementet*) 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.

Theme 7: Training VET teachers and trainers

7.1 Priorities in training VET teachers and trainers

The framework plan for VET teacher education which, was laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research in January 2006, and the Practical-pedagogical teacher training in vocational subjects are presently undergoing revision as part of the general reform of teacher education for the secondary level (grades 8-13). The reform is scheduled for implementation by 2013. One aspect of the revision is the implementation of the national qualifications framework for higher education, which requires the inclusion of learning outcome descriptors. Others include improved overall quality provision, better integration of vocational theory and practice, and pedagogy and didactics better aimed at reducing drop-out, so as to train better professionals.

The quality of the programmes at each higher education institution offering VET teacher education is assured through provisions in the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (*lov om universiteter og høyskoler*) and through their being subject to evaluations and reaccreditation procedures by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen* - NOKUT).

According to the Act of Higher Education, the higher education institutions (that provide teacher education) should adapt the study situation for students with special needs. It should be noted, however, that such measures should not lead to any reduction in academic or other requirements.

7.2 Teachers and trainers in IVET

7.2.1 Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET

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.

There are three main groups of VET training staff at the secondary level:

- Formally qualified VET teachers who provide formal school-based IVET and CVET (both theory and practical training);

- Trainers (*instruktører*) are vocationally skilled staff, but not required to have 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. However, the enterprise providing training must be approved by the VET office at the county authority. For more information, see theme 4.3. 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 actors¹⁰.

¹⁰ The educational resources are available at the following website:
http://www.udir.no/Utvikling/Etterutdanningsmaterieell_FY/

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

Table 7.2.2.1: 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	Higher education institutions, whose QA systems include student feedback 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.

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 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 higher education institutions. The institutions develop the detailed training programmes in accordance with national curricula regulations laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research. The national curricula indicate content and structure, didactics relating to the different vocational subjects and regulations for assessment, but leave room for flexibility for the respective higher education institutions. The programmes have to be approved by the Board of the individual higher education institution. External quality assurance is the responsibility of 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:

1.) 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 points. Main fields of study are pedagogical theory, vocational didactics and supervised teaching and training practice (minimum 12-14 weeks).

2.) 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 of competence, e.g. on new curricula and teaching material/computer courseware, 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. 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.

Table 7.2.2.2: 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 (<i>Faglig råd</i>)
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.

7.3 Types of teachers and trainers in CVET

7.3.1 Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in CVET

As there is no distinction between IVET and CVET teachers, the information on IVET teachers in 7.2 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 7.2.1) at the secondary level, 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 participation in in-service courses after they have become trainers or training supervisors (56 per cent 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 Knowledge Promotion Reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*), 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.

Theme 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)

8.1.2. Main mechanisms used for anticipation of skills needs

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 advisory bodies of the decision-making system and in the implementation of training, where the social partners hold the majority of seats in all advisory bodies. For more information on institutionalized cooperation in VET, see theme 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 give advice 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 (*Kunnskapsløftet*) coordinated by the Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*), 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 (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) then decides whether to start curriculum development work.

8.1.2. Recent studies on skill needs

Quarterly, the Norwegian Welfare and Labour Administration (NAV) publishes the journal Labour and Welfare (*Arbeid og velferd*). The journal contains analyses of developments in the labour market, prognoses for employment and analyses of different issues within the responsibility of NAV. Issues concerned are absence due to illness, reduced working capacity, age and disability pension and parental leaves of absence. In issue 2, 2009, a forecast of the supply of labour in 2030, divided into levels of education was presented (Furuberg 2009). The forecast is based on the estimate that individuals will make the same choices as persons of equivalent sex, age and education level did on average during the period 2002-2006.

- In 2030, it is estimated that 34 per cent of the Norwegian population will have completed higher education, compared to 26 per cent in 2007. In 2030, women will represent 59 per cent of those with higher education, compared to 53 per cent in 2007.
- Mainly due to increased immigration, it is estimated that 9.3 per cent of the population will have an unknown or not stated level of education¹¹.
- The number of people with only completed compulsory schooling as the highest obtained level is expected to be almost stable. However, men will represent 56 per cent of these, compared to approximately 50 per cent in 2007.
- The number of people with upper secondary education and training as the highest completed level of education will decrease by 3 per cent from 2007 to 2030. The equivalent number of people in the labour force will decrease by 11 per cent. An important reason for this is the rising number of people with higher education.
- Labour force participation is expected to decrease by 3.4 per cent from 2007 to 2030, mainly due to an ageing work force.

¹¹ Statistics Norway (SSB) do not contain information of completed education from abroad.

In issue 2, 2010, a follow up article of the one described above was published in Labour and Welfare, presenting a forecast of the supply of labour qualified at upper secondary level, divided into sectors (Furuberg 2010). The forecast is based on the same estimate as the one described above. If the estimated decrease in people with upper secondary education and training as the highest completed level of education takes place mainly within general upper secondary education, it is likely that the number of people with higher education will increase. If, on the other hand, the decrease takes place within vocational education and training, this is likely to cause a shortage of skilled workers.

- The forecast indicates that the number of people in the labour force with general upper secondary education as the highest completed level of education will decrease by 20 per cent from 2007 to 2030.
- The number of people in the labour force educated within machinery and mechanics will decrease by 14 per cent from 2007 to 2030, according to the forecast.
- It is estimated that the number of people in the labour force with vocational education and training within construction will increase by 24 per cent from 2007 to 2030.
- In 2030, it is estimated that the number of auxiliary nurses / health care workers will increase by 53 per cent, compared to 2007. However, it is estimated that the number of people with vocational education and training within other types of health and care subjects will decrease. In addition, the ageing population will lead to an increased demand for health and care services. In a study of the labour market for health care personnel, Texmoen and Stølen (2009) estimate that there will be a shortage in 2030. For more information on this study, and its consequences for VET, see theme 8.1. in *VET in Europe - Country report - Norway 2010* (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2010b).

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 (*Faglige råd*) and the National Council for Vocational Training (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring* - SRY), 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/>).

Teaching of English in upper secondary VET may be vocationally oriented. For more information on this issue, see theme 5.8.

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.

As explained in Theme 5.1.6., content of training and methodology is to a great extent left to the local level. Therefore, adapting teaching methods to labour market needs must be developed locally. In December 2010, six county municipalities started a pilot project concerning secondments of VET teachers and instructors in training enterprises in six counties, as a measure to raise competence and awareness of labour market needs. In this pilot project, VET teachers go through placements in training enterprises in order to acquire knowledge of up to date working methods and equipment. In this way, they get better knowledge of the demands of the labour market to education and training. At the same time, training enterprise instructors go through placements in upper secondary schools in order to learn more about the education and training that pupils receive before starting their apprenticeships. The objective of the placements is to develop VET teachers and instructors, and to contribute to raising the quality of Norwegian VET. Another important objective is increasing cooperation between schools and local enterprises. The pilot period will end in December 2012.

Theme 9: Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment

9.1 Strategy and provision

Guidance and guidance services are provided by different institutions according to level of education and relation to the labour market. The main guidance services are located within the school system. 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 organized by the individual schools. All pupils/students are entitled to guidance according to their needs. Guidance counsellors in primary and secondary education provide guidance to pupils in school whereas counsellors in the County Follow-up Service (*Oppfølgingstjenesten*) 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 (NAV) 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.

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 or other forms of regional cooperation. 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.

From 1 January 2011, Vox (the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning) will be national coordinator for career-guidance. Vox`s main aims are to strengthen the quality and professionalism in career guidance and to help enhance cooperation and coordination.

A national evaluation of the guidance services provided by lower and upper secondary schools, as well as the County Follow-up Services was carried out in 2009 – 2011. The evaluation shows that the guidance field within the educational system is improving in terms of quality, but at a rather slow pace. New working methods and organizational forms are implemented or under development, and this has led to quality improvements in counselling. The opportunities for competence development for counsellors have also improved. In general, however, the counsellors themselves, and partly also the students, experience that resources for counselling are limited.

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. For more information, see Theme 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 has been 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 targeting especially specific groups (such as immigrants, people with learning difficulties or physical handicaps), especially. However, the regular counselling services both in schools and of NAV should be available also 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. 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. For more information on inspection, see theme 5.1.7. In addition to 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 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.

Theme 10: Financing: investment in human resources

10.1. VET financing policy

Financing policy in IVET

It is a high political priority that basic education, including upper secondary VET, is of a high quality, and in the National budget 2010, the Norwegian government proposed a NOK 58 million (approximately €7.2 million) increase allocation for measures destined to reduce drop-out, including initiatives aimed at pupils who do poorly in quality assessment tests and on testing a new practical subject at lower secondary school (Ministry of Education and Research). Due to expected challenges in assuring enough apprenticeships, the government proposed to maintain the NOK 200 million (approximately €25 million) increase in apprenticeship grants for training enterprises that was introduced in 2009. For more information on this measure, see theme 3.2. A NOK 10 million (approximately €1.2 million) increase in the grant for apprentices with special needs was also continued.

In order to support the long-term aim of building skills for the knowledge society and increasing higher education capacity on high priority professional courses, the revised national budget for 2009 allocated NOK 96,6 million (approximately €12.1 million) to create 3000 extra higher education places, most of which are on multi-year courses. The government proposed continuing with this increase in the student intake in 2010.

Financing policy in higher education

The 2010 National budget provided for approximately another 2 600 new study places in higher education institutions, that was to be created from the autumn of 2010, making 5 600 new higher education places in total. Overall, this proposal was to result in higher education institutions receiving an extra NOK 291.2 million (approximately €36.35 million) in 2010. This is in addition to the financial support provided through the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*). The government also proposed continuing its investment in decentralised education, continuing education and tertiary vocational education. In addition, the government proposed to increase basic funding for higher education institution by NOK 50 million (approximately €6.2 million) in 2010, in order to support a clearer division of labour as well as to foment more professionalized cooperation within the higher education sector.

Financing policy in adult education

The government set aside NOK 7 million (approximately €873 000) in the 2010 National budget million to help selected counties develop flexible education programmes to enable the unemployed to complete and gain formal recognition for their skills even after they have returned to work.

The government wants adults who need help with basic skills such as reading, writing, maths and use of ICT equipment to receive the necessary assistance. The government therefore proposed allocating NOK 79,8 million (approximately €9.96 million) to the Basic Competence in Working Life Programme (*Program for basiskompetanse i arbeidslivet* - BKA) in the 2010 National Budget. The government's action plan in January 2009 and the revised national budget in May doubled funding for this area from NOK 38,5 million to NOK 78,5 million. The 2010 budget proposed maintaining that higher level of funding, adjusted for inflation, in 2010.

10.2. 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 (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) 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 county authorities (*fylkeskommunene*). 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 training 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. Students and apprentices in upper secondary education who have to move away from their home to attend school or enterprise based training are also entitled for support from the State Education Loan Fund. This is available also for 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.

10.3. Funding for continuing vocational education and training, and adult learning

10.3.1 Public funding schemes and mechanisms to finance CVET

State higher education institutions are organised directly under the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*), 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. State higher education institutions are not allowed to charge fees for ordinary studies, only for tailor-made programmes and in certain cases for flexibilisation of courses. Many private higher education institutions also receive important parts of their funding from the state and either do not charge tuition fees for ordinary degree programmes, or else only negligible charges, so that fees in practice are limited to tailor-made provision. Private higher education institutions with no, or only very modest, state funding naturally charge tuition fees for all their programmes.

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

Students in both public and private institutions in post-secondary and higher education and training are entitled to grants and loans from the State Education Loan Fund.

When upper secondary and tertiary 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.

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.

10.3.2 Public-private cost-sharing

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. As 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 of Education and Research. 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 per cent by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The Master Craftsman education is provided by the Adult Education Association (*Folkeuniversitetet*) according to approved national curricula under the administration of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (*Nærings- og Handelsdepartementet*). The Master Craftsman Committee (*Mesterbrevnemnda*) that issues the certificates is self-financed through a yearly fee paid by the masters. Training costs through adult education associations 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. Remaining costs are covered by participant fees.

10.3.3 Collective (employer, employee) investment to finance 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.

10.3.4 Reaching the groups at risk through funding schemes and mechanisms

In Norwegian policy, including education and training, mainstreaming is the main approach, so as to avoid any stigmatisation of specific groups. The two most powerful tools to ensure that education and training are open to all irrespective of social background are the following:

- that education and training at the primary, secondary and higher levels is free of charge at public institutions, which cater for the vast majority of pupils and students, and
- that support for living costs – and for tuition fees at private institutions – is available to all students at the post-secondary and higher levels through the State Educational Loan Fund (provided they, i.e. the students themselves, do not earn too much).

In higher education, the Individual Education Plan signed by both students and institutions (see also 6.1.1) is an excellent tool to follow up on intended study progression, and many higher education institutions routinely organise individual reviews with students lagging far behind their stated goals in the Individual Education Plan.

Many adults in practice use ordinary higher education as CVET, which can be seen from the high age profile of the student body, see section 6.1.2. 6

10.4 Funding for training for the unemployed

The labour market measures are outlined in the national budget from the Storting (Parliament) to the Ministry of Labour and further to the Directorate of Labour and Welfare. The Directorate allocates the budget to the county authorities. The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (*Arbeids- og velferdsetaten, NAV*) at county authority level is responsible for the local implementation and operation of the labour market policy within given steering signals, budgets and regulations from the Directorate.

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.

Unemployment benefit can be paid during participation in different training and qualifying labour measures. To be entitled to a benefit, one has to have had an income of a certain level. This is for instance in 2011: at least NOK 113 500 (approximately €14 200 EUR) the last year before being unemployed or NOK 227 000 (€28 350) during the last three years. People with no right to a benefit are entitled to an individual benefit for people on employment schemes while they participate. This will often be the case for young unemployed people without previous work experience.

Authors, sources, bibliography, acronyms and abbreviations

Authors

Please indicate the authors for this Country report. You can do this either by sub-theme or for the whole input (as appropriate).

This report has been authored by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*).

Sources, references and websites

Act relating to Master Craftsman Certificates in Craft and other Industries (Lov om mesterbrev — 1986). Available at URL: <http://www.lovdata.no/all/tl-19860620-035-0.html>

Act relating to Post-secondary Vocational Education and Training (Lov om fagskoler 2003, latest amendment 2010). Available at URL: <http://www.lovdata.no/all/nl-20030620-056.html>

Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler 2005, latest amendment 2009). Available at URL: <http://www.lovdata.no/all/nl-20050401-015.html> .

Adult Education Act (Lov om voksenopplæring - 1976, latest amendments 2003 Available at URL: <http://www.lovdata.no/all/nl-20090619-095.html>

Andersen, Rolf K., Hagen, Anna, Hertzberg, Dagfinn and Nyen, Torgeir (2010): *Kompetanseutvikling gjennom hospitering*. Report no. 16. Oslo: FAFO..Available at URL: <http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20160/20160.pdf> .

Education Act. *Opplæringslova*. Available at URL: <http://www.lovdata.no/all/nl-19980717-061.html> .

Eurostat (2010) a: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>

Eurostat (2010) b: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=edat_ifse_08&lang=en

Eurostat 2011: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do>

Financial Support to Students and Pupils Act (Lov om utdanningsstøtte til elever og studenter -1985, latest amendment 2005). Available at URL : <http://www.lovdata.no/all/hl-20050603-037.html> .

Folk High School Act (Lov om folkehøgskoler —2002, latest amendments 2006). Available at URL : <http://www.lovdata.no/all/hl-20021206-072.html> .

Furuberg, Jorunn (2009) : ”Tilbodet av arbeidskraft etter utdanning 2007–2030” [”The supply of labour, divided into education level, 2007-2030”] in *Arbeid og Velferd* [Labour and Welfare] 2/2009. Available at URL : http://www.nav.no/Om+NAV/Tall+og+analyse/_attachment/198873?=true&_ts=12177936568

Furuberg, Jorunn (2010) : "Framtidig tilbud av arbeidskraft med vidaregåande utdanning" ["Future supply of labour with upper secondary education"] in *Arbeid og Velferd [Labour and Welfare]* 2/2010. Available at URL: http://www.nav.no/Om+NAV/Tall+og+analyse/_attachment/238658?=true&_ts=1286dc91008

Høst, H. (ed.) (2008): *Fag- og yrkesopplæring i Norge – noen sentrale utviklingstrekk [Vocational Education and Training in Norway – important developments]*, Oslo: NIFU STEP. Report 20/2008.

Høst, H. (ed.) (2008): *Continuity and Change in Norwegian Vocational Education and Training (VET)*. Oslo: NIFU STEP. Report 29/2008. Available at URL: <http://www.nifu.no/Norway/Publications/2010/Webrapport%206-2010.pdf>.

Kuczera, Malgorzata, Giorgio Brunello, Simon Field and Nancy Hoffman (2008): *Learning for jobs – OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training – Norway*. Available at URL: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/34/41506628.pdf>

Ministry of Education and Research (2007): National Report on the Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, Norway.

Ministry of Education and Research (2008): *Response to the questionnaire to the DGVT*.

Ministry of Education and Research: The 2010 budget for the Ministry of Education and Research. Available at URL: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd/pressesenter/pressemeldinger/2009/--styrkjer-kunnskapsnasjonen-noreg.html?id=581329>

NIFU STEP (2008a): *Bortvalg og kompetanse. (Early leaving, non-completion or completion)*. Markussen, E. Frøseth, M.W. Lødding B. and Sandberg, N. Vol. 2008/13, Oslo, Norway.

NIFU STEP (2009a) : *Evaluering av forsøk med praksisbrev. Delrapport 1. [Evaluation of the Certificate of Practice Pilot. Interim report 1]* Report no. 32/2009. Oslo: NIFU Step. Available at URL: <http://www.udir.no/Upload/Rapporter/2009/5/Praksisbrev.pdf>.

NIFU STEP (2009b): *Spørsmål til Skole-Norge*. [Questions to Norwegian Schools- (unauthorised translation) Rapport 33/2009, Oslo, Norway.

NIFU STEP (2009c): *Spørsmål til Skole-Norge høsten 2009. Resultater og analyser fra Utdanningsdirektoratets spørreundersøkelse blant skoler og skoleeiere*. [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training questionnaire to schools and school owners] Rapport 45/2009. Oslo, Norway.

Norges Bank. Average exchange rates NOK/€ available at URL: <http://www.norges-bank.no/en/price-stability/exchange-rates/eur/>.

Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (2008) a: *National ReferNet report on progress in the policy priority areas for Vocational Education and Training – NORWAY*.

Norwegian Directorate of Education and training (forthcoming): *National ReferNet report on progress in the policy priority areas for Vocational Education and Training – Norway*.

Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (2008) b: *Norway - Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System*.

Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2010a): *Formidling av søkere til læreplasser* [Allocation of apprenticeship places]. Available at URL:
<http://www.udir.no/Tilstand/Analyser-og-statistikk/Fag--og-yrkesopplaring/Formidling-av-lareplasser/Formidling-av-sokere-til-lareplass-ved-formidlingens-slutt-november-2010/>

Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2010b): *VET in Europe – Country Report 2010. Norway*. Available at URL :
http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_NO.pdf

Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2011): *Utdanningsspeilet – Tall og analyse av grunnsopplæringen i Norge*. [The Education Mirror – Numbers and analysis of basic education in Norway]. Available at URL:
http://www.udir.no/Upload/Forskning/Utdanningsspeilet%202011/Utdanningsspeilet_2011.pdf?epslanguage=no .

Norges Offentlig Utredning (NOU) (2008): *Fagopplæring for framtida*. 2008:18. [Greenpaper no. 18. Vocational Education for the future].

Nyen, Torgeir (2004): *Livslang læring i norsk arbeidsliv* [Lifelong learning in Norwegian working life] Fafo report 435. ISBN: 82-7422-430-2,
<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/435/435.pdf> .

OECD(2008): *Education at a Glance – OECD indicators*.

OECD (2010) a: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx#>

OECD (2010) b: *Learning for jobs – Synthesis Report of the OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training*.

Skule, Sveinung, Stuart, Mark and Nyen, Torgeir (2002) “International briefing 12: Training and development in Norway” in *International Journal of Training and Development*, vol: 6, issue: 4, pp: 263-276. December 2002.

Statistics Norway (2011) a: <http://www.ssb.no/oa/>

Statistics Norway (2011) b: http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/00/00/10/innvandring_en/

Statistics Norway (2011) c: http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/08/okind_en/

Statistics Norway (2010) d: http://www.ssb.no/aku_en/

Statistics Norway (2011) e: <http://www.ssb.no/utgrs/tab-2011-02-18-04.html>

St. meld. nr. 42 (1997-1998) *Kompetansereformen* [White Paper no. 42 (1997-98) *The Competence Reform*].

St. meld. nr. 36 (1998-1999) *Om prinsipper for dimensjonering av høgre utdanning* [White Paper no. 36 (1998-1999) *On principles for the dimensioning of higher education*]

St. meld. nr. 30 (2003-2004) *Kultur for læring* [White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for learning*].

St. meld. nr. 16 (2006-2007) *...og ingen sto igjen – tidlig innsats for livslang læring* [White Paper no. 16 (2006-2007) *Early intervention for Lifelong Learning*].

St. meld. nr. 31 (2007-2008) *Kvalitet i skolen* [White Paper no. 31 (2007-2008) *Quality in school*].

St. Meld nr. 14 (2008-2009) *Internasjonalisering av utdanningen* [White paper no. 14 (2008-2009), *Internationalisation of Education*].

St. meld. nr. 44 (2008-2009) *Utdanningslinja* [White paper no. 44(2008-2009) *The Education Strategy*].

Stølen, N. M. and I. Texmon (2009): *Arbeidsmarkedet for helse- og sosialpersonell fram mot år 2030* [The labour market for personnel within the social and health-care sectors towards 2030], *Kongsvinger: Statistics Norway*,
http://www.ssb.no/emner/06/01/rapp_helse/rapp_200909/rapp_200909.pdf

Vox 2011: Vox-speilet 2010, available at URL <http://www.vox.no/no/Analyse-og-dokumentasjon/rapporter/Vox-speilet-2010/>

Websites:

Akershus County, Section for VET: <http://www.yrke.no>

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

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

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

Information centre for folk high schools (*Informasjonskontoret for folkehøyskoler*)
<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.no – Your gateway to the public sector in Norway: <http://www.norway.no>

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

Norwegian Agency for Lifelong learning – Vox: <http://www.vox.no>

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

The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning:
http://www.vofo.no/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3&Itemid=7.

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:
<http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=2598&epslanguage=NO>

Norwegian laws/Acts in English: <http://www.lovdata.no/info/uenga.html>

Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration: www.nav.no

The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund:
http://www.lanekassen.no/templates/Page_6768.aspx

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Science: <http://www.hioa.no/eng/>.

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

Studyinnorway.no – Information about studying in Norway: <http://www.studyinnorway.no>

Utdanning.no – National common gateway to information on education, career and learning:
<http://www.utedning.no>

Vilbli.no – Information about upper secondary education and training: <http://www.vilbli.no>

List of acronyms and abbreviations

- AMO:** Labour market training (*Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring*)
- BA:** 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
- 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*).
- NHO:** The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (*Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon*)
- NOKUT:** Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen*)
- NOU:** Norway Opening Universities (*Norgesuniversitetet*)
- NQF:** National Qualifications Framework
- NUCAS:** The Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (*Samordna opptak*)
- OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- SIU:** Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (*Senter for internasjonalisering av høgre utdanning- SIU*)
- SME:** Small and medium sized enterprises
- STR:** The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring*)
- UDI:** Directorate of Immigration (*Utlendingsdirektoratet*)