



spotlight on VET

NORWAY

VET in Norway

The Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for education and training at all levels. In upper secondary VET, both curricula and the VET system structure are laid down in national regulations, and providers are required to comply with them. The regional county authorities are responsible for general education and VET provision, distributing VET financing provided by the State budget and ensuring apprenticeship placement and supervision.

All young people completing compulsory schooling have a statutory right to three years of upper secondary education. Half of them choose between eight VET programmes.

Upper secondary VET is conducted both in schools and in public and private enterprises. The county authorities must approve training establishments. The standard two-plus-two model normally includes two years in school, where students also participate in practical training in workshops and enterprises, followed by two years of formalised apprenticeship (training and productive work) in enterprises. The first year of training consists of an introduction to the vocational area. During the second year, VET students choose specialisations and courses are more trade-specific but core subjects are also included. Some crafts follow varying models with three years in school or one year in school followed by three years of formalised apprenticeship.

Upper secondary VET is completed by a practical-theoretical trade or journeyman's examination (*Fag- eller svenneprøve*) leading to an EQF level 4 qualification: a trade certificate (*Fagbrev*) for industrial and service trades or a journeyman's certificate (*Svennebrev*) for traditional crafts. The eight programme areas offer about 190 different certificates.

There are many possible routes to higher education (HE) via upper secondary VET.

With a trade or journeyman's certificate, the options are:

- (a) via a one-year bridging course in core subjects (*påbyggingsår*);
- (b) direct admission to certain specially designed bachelor programmes (*Y-veien*).

Without a trade or journeyman's certificate:

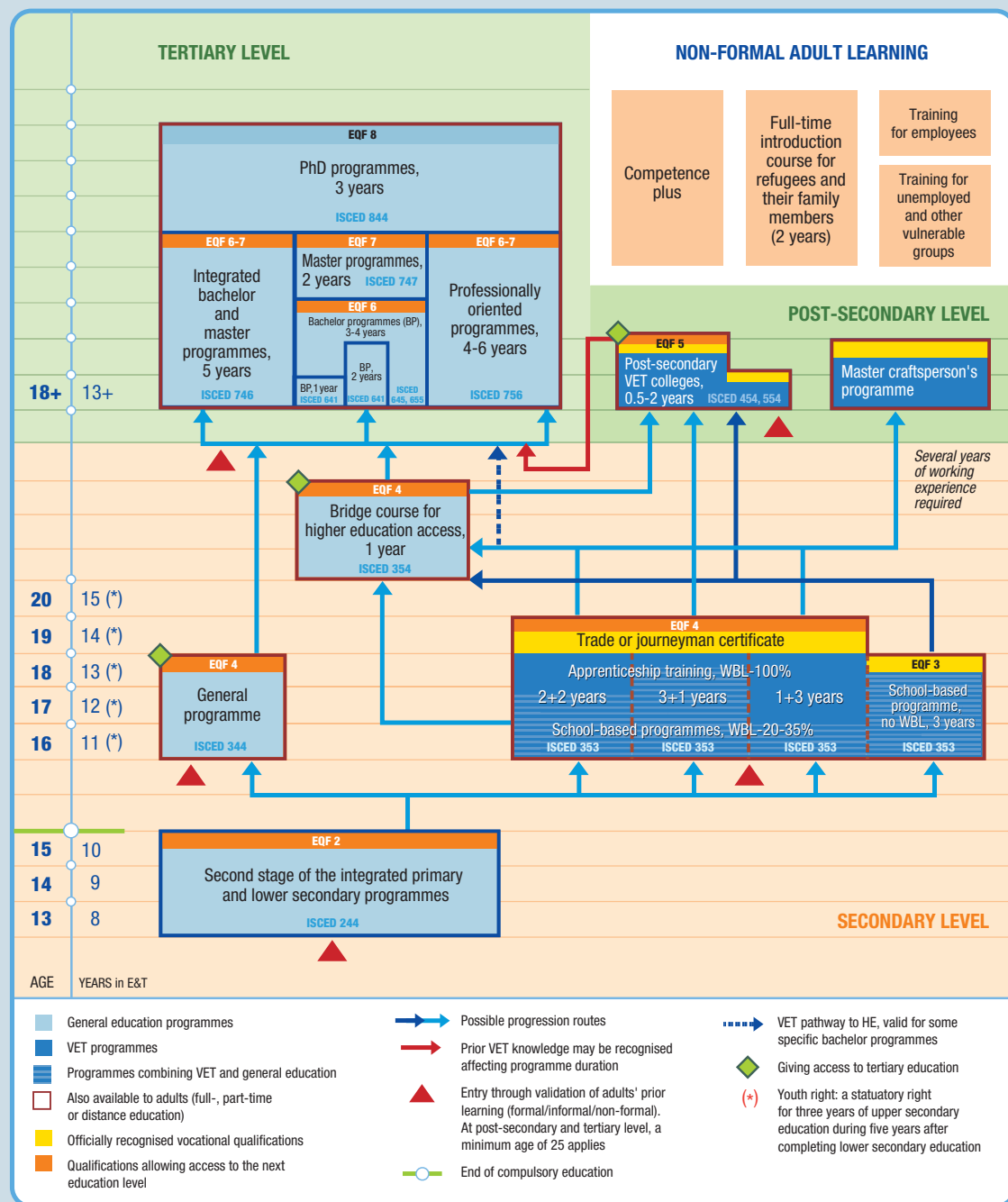
- (a) five years' experience gained in work and/or education and passing a course in core subjects (for people 23 or older);
- (b) recognition of relevant formal, informal and non-formal learning for people aged 25 or above who do not meet general entrance requirements;
- (c) completing the bridge course in core subjects after completing the first two years of a VET programme.

Legal rights shape adult VET and contribute to making vocational skills visible. People over 25 are entitled to upper secondary education or training adapted to their needs and life situation. Adults also have a right to have their prior learning assessed towards national curricula, which may result in exemption from parts of training. The experience-based trade certification scheme enables adults to sit a trade or journeyman's examination upon proof of sufficient relevant practice. The candidate must demonstrate comprehensive experience in the trade or craft, normally a minimum of five years.

Master craftsperson programmes are VET for holders of a relevant trade or journeyman's certificate with several years' work experience. These programmes, which are a public certification arrangement under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, combine general business management, marketing and vocational theory. Programmes are offered by both private and public providers, such as Folkeuniversitetet. Vocational college education (*Fagskoler*) at EQF level 5 offers a range of short VET programmes for students with an upper secondary education. Providers design their own courses and curricula, but programmes must be recognised by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

The comprehensive higher education system has no formal or other distinction between vocational and non-vocational education; they are equal for higher education admission.

VET in Norwegian education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Norway.

Distinctive features of VET

At upper secondary level, Norway has a long-standing tradition of close national and regional cooperation between education authorities and the social partners. National cooperation is organised in the National Council for VET (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring* – SRY), nine vocational training councils (*Faglige råd*), one for each programme area, and national appeal boards (*Klagenemnder*). Regional cooperation involves county vocational training boards (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnder*) and examination boards (*Prøvenemnder*).

Tripartite cooperation aims to ensure training provided to Norwegian VET students meets labour market and skill needs. It informs changes in the VET structure, curriculum development, regional structure and volume of VET provision, the framework of examinations leading to trade or journeyman's certificates, and quality control at all levels. At ISCED level 4, the social partners participate in the National Council for Vocational Colleges. In higher education, institutions are requested to set up a consultative council for cooperation with social partners.

Norway has a unified education structure with VET integrated as an equal to general education in upper secondary education. Most education at this level is provided by public schools. Since pupils have a right to attend upper secondary education, most choose to do so. Pupils are entitled to enrol in the upper secondary VET programme of their choice.

More than half of trade and journeyman's certificates are awarded to people over 23.

Challenges and policy responses

The main policy measures in Norwegian upper secondary VET concern:

- (a) increasing the number of apprenticeship placements and increase the competence of vocational teachers;
- (b) improving post-secondary vocational colleges and the position of their students.

Skilled workers with VET qualifications will play an important role in the reorganisation of the Norwegian economy. Figures from the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) show that many enterprises lack these employees and consequently lose assignments. Statistics Norway (SSB) estimates a shortage of almost 100 000 skilled workers in 2035.

The government and the social partners are collaborating closely to increase the number of apprenticeship places and so enable more pupils to complete their education. In 2015 the government launched a vocational teacher promotion initiative strategy supporting increased vocational teacher competence. The work continues in 2017.

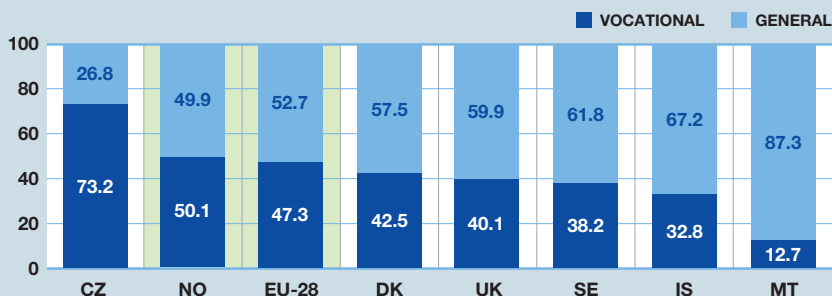
To make VET more attractive, a new white paper *Skilled workers for the future (Fagfolk for fremtiden)* was adopted in May 2017. It has close to 50 measures aiming at making post-secondary VET a fully equivalent profession-oriented alternative to university and university college education.



Education and training in figures

Upper secondary students (ISCED 2011 level 3) enrolled in vocational and general programmes

% of all students in upper secondary education, 2015

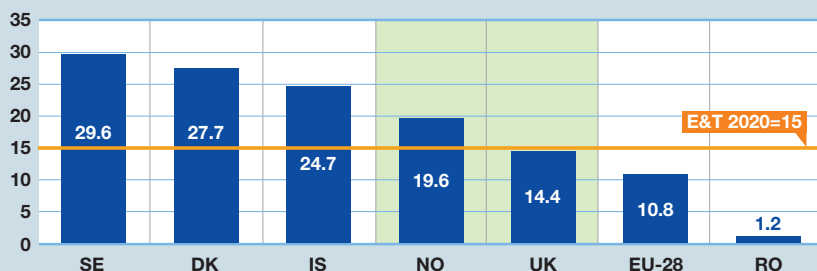


NB: EU-28 data is based on estimated data.

Source: Cedefop calculations, based on Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 2.6.2017.

Lifelong learning

% of population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2016

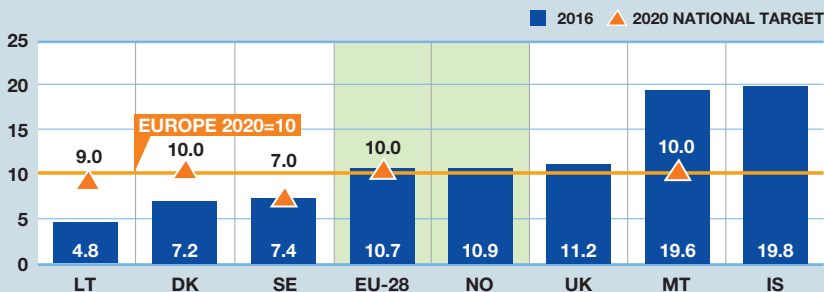


NB: Break in time series in Denmark.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 2.6.2017.

Early leavers from education and training

% of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training during the last four weeks prior to the survey, 2016

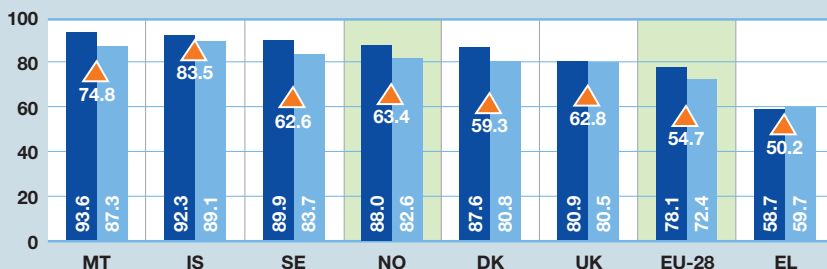


NB: Break in time series in Denmark. 2020 national target data were not available for NO, UK and IS.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 2.6.2017.

Employment rates of young graduates

% of 20 to 34 years old no longer in education and training, 2016



■ Upper vocational secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

■ Upper general secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

▲ Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)

NB: Break in time series in Denmark.

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, date of extraction 2.6.2017.



Further information

- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2016). *The education mirror: analysis of primary and secondary education and training in Norway* (in Norwegian). <http://utdanningsspeilet.udir.no/>
- Cedefop; ReferNet Norway (2016). *VET in Europe report: Norway*. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/norway-vet-europe-country-report-2016>
- Eurydice (2013). Norway: overview. In: European Commission (ed.). *Eurydice*. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Norway:Overview>
- Information on the vocational teacher promotion initiative (in Norwegian): https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/a196e650447d459faa1b1e1879216f3e/kd_yrkesfaglarerloftet_web_01.10.pdf
- Information on increasing the numbers of apprenticeships (in English): <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/education/school/innsiktsartikler/the-vocational-education-and-training-vet-promotion/id2466567/>

www.kd.dep.no	Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research
www.asd.dep.no	Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
www.nfd.dep.no	Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries
www.udir.no	Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
www.siu.no	Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education
www.kompetansenorge.no	Skills Norway
www.nokut.no	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
www.ssb.no	Statistics Norway

This Spotlight is based on input from the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (ReferNet Norway 2017).



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