


Measures against adverse gender differences in schools

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NORWAY

Timeline

2017 Design 2018 Design 2019 Design 2020 Design 2021 Design
2022 Completed

ID number 29040

Background

In 2017, the government appointed an expert committee (the Stoltenberg Committee). The purpose of the committee was to build a nuanced and balanced knowledge base on why gender differences occur in school performance.

Objectives

The objective is to identify the causes of gender differences and propose effective measures to reduce them.

Description

The tasks of the committee were:

- (a) to review relevant systematic knowledge overviews, as well as other relevant national and international research on gender differences in school performance;
- (b) to systematise existing knowledge and related it to the context of today's Norwegian school system to arrive at a common knowledge base about the challenges;
- (c) to investigate whether there are conditions in Norwegian schools or education, or in society at large, that systematically contribute to gender differences in school performance;
- (d) to investigate whether gender differences in school performance produce different impacts in different groups of the population, including, for example, students with specific special education needs and students with minority backgrounds;
- (e) to investigate the consequences of gender differences in school performance for participation in higher education;
- (f) to propose measures at both national and local levels, based on the knowledge base;
- (g) to propose pilots that may qualify for systematic testing through impact studies, based on the knowledge base.

The committee arranged several information collection rounds in 2018. On 12 October 2018, the OECD and NIFU published reports on gender differences in school performance on behalf of the Stoltenberg Committee.

In 2019, the committee proposed a total of 64 measures in the following areas:

- (a) knowledge system for kindergarten and lower and upper secondary education;
- (b) early and adapted efforts;
- (c) organisation and school content in lower and upper secondary education;
- (d) transitions in education.

2017 Design

2018 Design

2019 Design

The committee published a Norwegian official report (NOU) on the topic on 4 February 2019 and proposed a number of measures to influence gender distribution in the vocational field.

2020 Design

No new developments took place in 2020.

2021 Design

Some measures were approved, such as the right to an apprenticeship placement.

2022 Completed

The share of girls choosing civil engineering and technology and industrial subjects at upper secondary level was record high in 2022. As in previous years, there are big differences between the genders. In 2013, just under five percent of the students in construction and civil engineering were girls, while just over 12 percent of students in technology and industrial subjects were girls. In 2022, the proportion of girls was 11 and 18 percent respectively.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Link to the report](#)

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Measures against adverse gender differences in schools: Norway. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/29040>