


Unemployment benefits for competence development

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NORWAY

Timeline

2019 Design

2020 Legislative process

2021 Completed

ID number 29024

Background

In May 2017, the government appointed the Subsistence Committee (Livsoppholdsutvalget), as a follow-up to White Paper 16 (2015-16) (*Fra utenforskap til ny sjanse. Samordnet innsats for voksnes læring.*) The committee has been tasked with assessing support for subsistence for adults who need basic education.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a historically high increase in the number of people applying for unemployment benefit; the majority because they have been laid off. Many who are now involuntarily without a job would like to make sure that they have relevant and up-to-date knowledge when they eventually return to the labour market. In the meantime, they are dependent on unemployment benefit. The general rule in the current regulation for unemployment benefit states that a person in education or training shall not receive unemployment benefit.

Objectives

One objective is for more people to be given the opportunity to obtain the necessary education and skills so they are equipped for a modern and more knowledge-intensive work life. This is important to ensure a sustainable welfare society. Competence also provides greater job security, which is important for individuals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus is placed on making it easier to combine education and training with receiving unemployment benefit.

Description

The committee was asked to identify and provide recommendations on the financing of subsistence for adults who need better opportunities to complete primary and secondary education.

2019 Design

The first report of the committee was circulated for public consultation on 27 March 2019: NOU 2018:13 - Adults in primary and secondary education, financing of subsistence (the Subsistence Committee). The committee emphasised that training programmes should be more flexible and adapted for adults, and pointed out that this

is a prerequisite for reaching the target. Along with a public consultation run by the Ministry of Education and Research, agencies were commissioned to further investigate different suggestions from the report.

2020 Legislative process

As a first step to make it easier to combine benefits with education and training, a temporary regulation change was announced and adopted in April 2020. The temporary solution made it possible to receive unemployment benefit without the extra application and approval for attending education and training and also for people who already combined work and education to continue their education even if they lost their job or were laid off. The requirements to be an active jobseeker and available for work if offered a job remained unchanged. Students who receive loans or grants for education and training are not included in the scheme.

2021 Completed

In the 2021 State budget, the government proposed to extend the temporary scheme from the end of 2020 until 1 July 2021.

One of the proposals from NOU2018:13, which was on public consultation in 2020/21, included the possibility of combining unemployment benefit with education. The consultation deadline was 10 February 2021.

The extension of the scheme and the possibility of combining unemployment benefit with education, also in non-pandemic times, were adopted in October.

A report based on the scheme was published. It showed an increase in the number of students following changes in unemployment benefits rules. The number of learners in upper secondary vocational education rose from 200 to 600.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners
Unemployed and jobseekers

Thematic categories

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies
Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs
Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Link to information about the Subsistence Committee and its reports](#)

[Link to consultation about unemployment benefit with education](#)

[Link to the temporary regulation change](#)

[Link to report](#)

[Link to extension of the scheme](#)

“ … ” **Cite as**

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