


# The Employment Committee - increasing the education completion and employment rates

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NORWAY

## Timeline

2019 Implementation 2020 Implementation 2021 Implementation  
2022 Completed

ID number 29004

## Background

The proportion of people of working age who are employed in Norway is relatively high, especially because many women and older adults participate in working life. However, there are still some disturbing features in the Norwegian labour market. For employment in some key groups, in particular men and young people, there is a declining trend. This is a development that over the past 10-12 years also seems to have gone in the opposite direction of countries such as Sweden, Germany and Great Britain. The proportion of men employed in Norway is now lower than in many comparable countries.

## Objectives

The aim is to increase upper secondary school completion and employment.

## Description

An Employment Committee was established in 2018 to address these challenges. The work was divided into two phases. In phase one, the committee presented proposals for increased employment. In phase two, the social parties and professional experts were included in the work and discussions continued based on the report from phase one and new proposals presented.

In phase one, the committee provided an overall analysis of employment trends of different groups in Norway. In phase two, the expert group compared trends with other countries and pointed out potential factors that can explain any differences. They:

- (a) analysed whether there are structural features of the functioning of the Norwegian labour market that can lead to low employment rates, including labour mobility geographically and between industries and professions. The expert group identified these and proposed possible measures for improvement;
- (b) assessed whether there are conditions and developments in the labour market that make it particularly demanding to include specific groups in the labour market and / or challenge the opportunity to maintain high employment and a high level of pay

- simultaneously;
- (c) evaluated possible measures that can help the labour force to have the necessary skills. This is partly because robotisation and the development of new technologies and digital solutions provide increased specialisation and increasing qualification requirements in the labour market;
  - (d) considered possible measures to increase job participation among people with disabilities and the reduced productivity of people who are unable to work full-time. The expert group drew on experiences from other countries;
  - (e) provided an overall analysis of developments in the reception of the various income protection schemes for persons of working age in Norway. The committee compared the situation and development for receiving income protection in Norway with other countries and pointed out possible circumstances that may help explain the differences;
  - (f) assessed whether public transfers and support schemes for people of working age were sufficiently purposeful and suitable to support increased participation and employment. This assessment included the importance of activity requirements related to the various schemes.

In addition, the expert group looked at the relationship between the health-related schemes and other income protection schemes and considered how the various schemes affected the individual's opportunities to get into work and activity. In connection with this, the expert group made recommendations on possible changes in the system that can support increased employment, both for the employer and the employee.

### **2019 Implementation**

The Employment Committee's expert group presented its proposals for increased employment on 28 March 2019. At the handover of NOU 2019: 7 Labour and income protection: measures to increase employment, the expert group had completed phase one.

In the committee that was set up on 5 April 2019, the social partners and professional experts begin phase two together.

### **2020 Implementation**

The second report was completed in 2020.

### **2021 Implementation**

The second Norwegian official report (NOU 2021:2 Measures for increased employment) was published on 11 February 2021, as a result of discussions between the social partners and professional experts. The discussions had their origin in the first NOU report and resulted in following suggestions for increased employment:

- (a) skills and qualifications: future and current employees to be better qualified to take part in working life;
- (b) follow-up and activation: strengthen work-oriented activity among those who are outside working life;
- (c) admission and inclusion: vulnerable groups to get easier access to work;
- (d) working environment and prevention: prevent and reduce sick leave and dropout and aid inclusion and professional careers;
- (e) follow-up of those on sick leave: introduce measures that contribute to reducing sickness absence and promote inclusion;
- (f) pilot work-oriented disability benefits;
- (g) measures for NEETs: to avoid being left out permanently;
- (h) promoting measures for workers to be allowed to work after the age of 70.

### **2022 Completed**

The change of government at the end of 2021 left many of these suggestions to be

followed up by the new authorities at different arenas. The work of the Committee ended.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Young people (15-29 years old)  
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)  
Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers

## Thematic categories

### Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies  
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET  
Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

### 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 Employment Committee](#)

[Link to the second report NOU2021:2 from the Employment Committee](#)

### “ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). The Employment Committee – increasing the education completion and employment rates: 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/29004>

