


Modular industry programmes for continuing training in post-secondary VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 NORWAY

Timeline

2018 Design 2019 Pilot 2020 Pilot 2021 Implementation 2022 Completed

ID number 28779

Background

Changes in industry are happening fast and the need for new expertise is great. The government allocates millions of Norwegian kroner to the development of flexible education programmes (industry programmes) in the industrial and construction industry and in healthcare. Three-party industry programmes have been in demand. The funding is earmarked for the development and operation of module-based vocational education at EQF level 5. This new scheme has its origin in the lifelong learning skills reform.

Objectives

The objectives are:

- (a) increased cooperation between the social partners and the government;
- (b) better access to flexible and job-relevant further education for individuals;
- (c) increased cooperation between education institutions and the business sector for developing further education.

Description

Design work for shorter and flexible industry programmes for continuing training in post-secondary vocational education was initiated in December 2018. The programmes address the building and construction and the healthcare sectors. They are meant to be modular, allowing for combining studies with work, and with a cross-sectoral/cross-professional dimension and may be web-based, school-based and job-based. The post-secondary vocational education schools are responsible for developing the study programmes and applying for accreditation. The project was supervised by the Ministry of Education and Research. Social partners and the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) were involved.

Flexible continuing education was organised in such a way that the State pays for the development, while enterprises must invest operating resources and individuals must invest their own time. It is possible to combine this flexible further education with working almost full-time, and it is organised in such a way as to give as many people as possible the opportunity to take such courses. According to the regulations, vocational colleges (EQF level 5) cannot offer courses below 30 credits. To carry out the pilot, the Ministry of

Education and Research has decided to grant exemptions to shorter educational units and modules. After the pilot, changes in the regulations have to be considered.

2018 Design

2019 Pilot

Piloting started in 2019.

2020 Pilot

The relevant regulations were on a public consultation round in 2020 and the educational scope of the pilot was one of the suggested changes. The modular industry programmes were expanded to include 10 industries. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, several of the schemes had an increased focus not only on those employed in industry but also on the unemployed and those who had been laid off. The pandemic also initiated other schemes and grants to recruit people to education and training. The focus areas were online training, training for the unskilled and how to facilitate the education institutions to accept more students. An evaluation of the implementation of modular industry programmes was presented in 2020. The focus in the report was how the tripartite cooperation worked in developing and implementing the programmes. Four topics were described more closely: goals and guidelines; organisation; tasks and measures; barriers and success criteria. The evaluation report showed that programmes are perceived as valuable arenas for employees, employers and the authorities, but there may be room to clarify what the programmes should be, what they should achieve and how they should work to achieve the desired results. It was recommended that the authorities clarified how measures proposed from the evaluation of the industry programmes were to be processed further.

2021 Implementation

The modular industry programmes were expanded with tailor-made programmes and courses for the unemployed, young people without much work experience and graduates. The government provided funding for upper secondary education, vocational colleges, universities, and colleges to scale up existing flexible education programmes. Vocational programmes, university, and colleges programmes are required to provide credit points. The programmes are free of charge and often offered online. This makes it easier to combine education with job search, family life or work.

2022 Completed

A report about the dimensioning of the education was published in January 2022, by the Ministry of Labour and Social inclusion. Strengthening vocational colleges is the most important measure for the education system, in terms of the number of students and the quality of education. For the further development of vocational colleges, the report pointed out that:

- (a) it is important to maintain and further develop the independent role of higher vocational education;
- (b) the county municipalities should coordinate the vocational colleges studies both regionally and nationally;
- (c) the county municipalities' allocation of state funds must be transparent and well-grounded;

Since 2018, 13 modular industry programmes have been developed. Three new programmes were introduced in 2022: the waste and recycling industry; the agriculture, forestry, and horticulture industries; and industry and construction. They were selected due to the high degree of restructuring, and low participation in competence development study programmes.

The higher vocational programmes are yearly adapted according to the needs of the world of work and allocation in the state budget.

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

Target group

Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

Osnabrück Declaration

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Link to homepage of the modular industry programmes](#)

[Link to evaluation report](#)

[Link to expansion of the programme](#)

Related policy developments

2025 **Legislative process**

Strategy for higher vocational education

The strategy was proposed by the Ministry of Education and Research for further improving

and strengthening higher vocational education. It is aimed at higher vocational education and all actors in the field.

 NORWAY

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

CVET

2025 Completed

The skills reform - lifelong learning

Work on the reform started in 2019 and will develop further in the years to come. The government has initiated several measures to reach the objectives of the reform:

Stimulating individuals and companies to invest in education and training through:

 NORWAY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Completed

VET-related priorities in the political platform of the government

Following the elections of autumn 2017, the government announced its priorities on 14 January 2018. For upper secondary VET, they included:

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Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem


IVET CVET

2024 Completed

Modularising adult training leading to the trade or journeyman's exam

Modules and options have been set up to increase adult training flexibility and tailor it to the needs of learners. This is expected to allow adult learners to combine training with work

and caring responsibilities.

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Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28779>