

## 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. There is cooperation on upper secondary and tertiary VET, both formal and informal, between education and training authorities and the social partners. The social partner representatives hold the majority of seats in all advisory bodies in the decision-making system for upper secondary VET. This enables technological and labour market changes to be continuously communicated to decision-makers; the overall aim is to provide relevant VET skills.

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 with 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 via upper secondary VET.

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

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

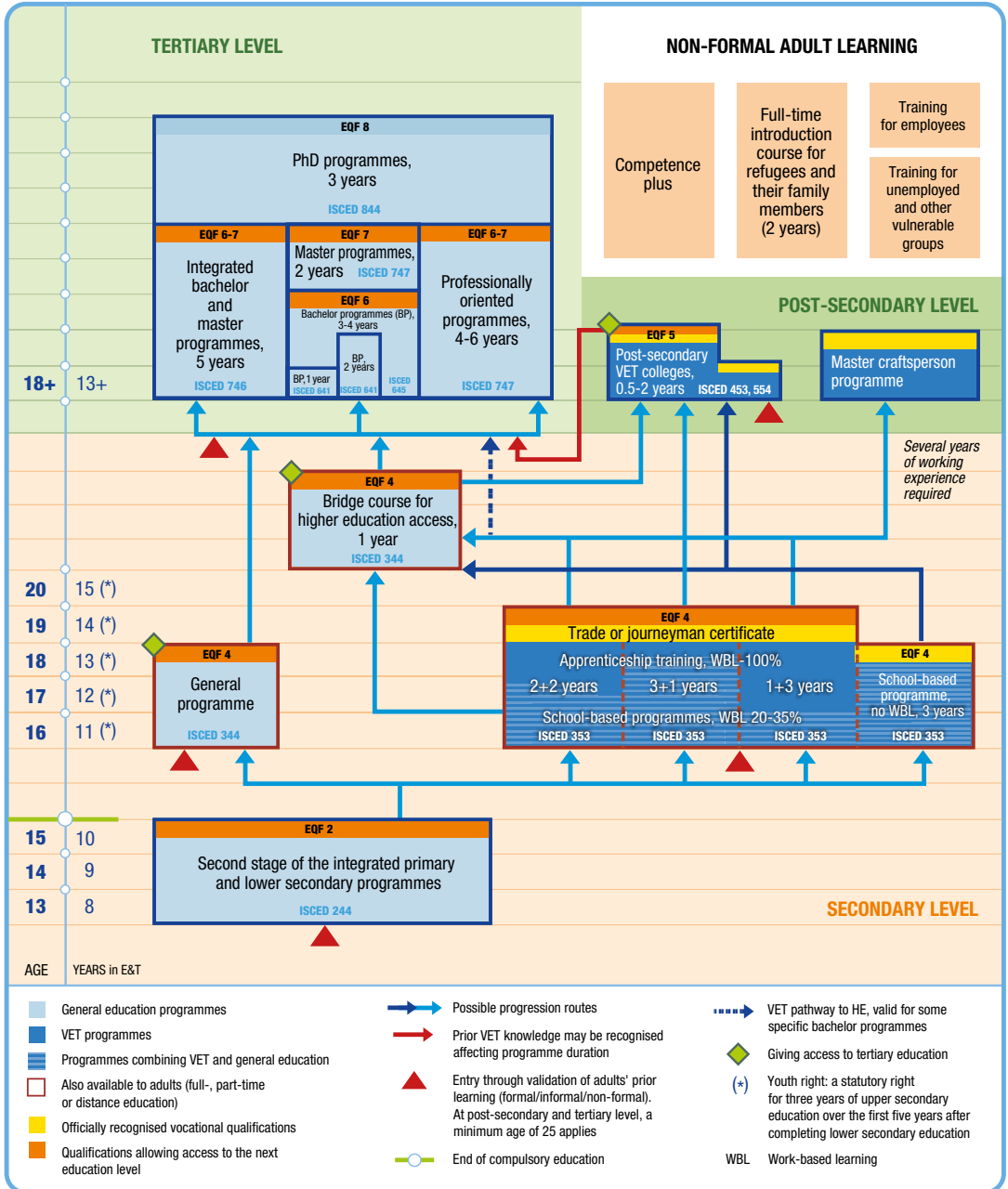
Options without a trade or journeyman's certificate are:

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

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 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 on proof of sufficient relevant practice. The candidate must demonstrate comprehensive experience in the trade or craft, normally over a minimum of five years.

Master craftsperson programmes are for holders of a relevant trade or journeyman's certificate with several years' work experience. The programmes are provided by vocational colleges (*Fagskoler*), both private and public, and combine general business management, marketing and vocational theory. VET colleges also offer a range of vocational programmes (EQF level 5) for students with upper secondary education.

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



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

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