



# Developments in vocational education and training policy in 2015–19

## NORWAY



Cedefop monitoring of vocational education and training policies and systems

Progress towards the medium-term deliverables  
of the Riga conclusions

**Country chapter**

**NORWAY**

Developments in vocational education and training policy  
in 2015-19

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# Introduction

In June 2015, the ministers in charge of vocational education and training in the EU Member States, the candidate countries and the European Economic Area countries, convened in Riga, agreed on objectives for vocational education and training (VET) policies for 2015-20<sup>(1)</sup>.

Cedefop has been entrusted with monitoring the countries' policies implemented towards reaching these objectives.

This country chapter is part of the monitoring process. It was drafted based on input from the national ReferNet team. It presents an overview of the major policy developments that have taken place in the country in 2015-19, in the areas covered by the Riga medium-term deliverables (MTDs).

The country chapter is structured as follows:

- (a) the introductory section Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015 briefly sketches the VET context in the country in 2015, highlighting selected figures and major policy initiatives that were just being adopted or started at that time. This introductory section is targeted at setting a baseline to put in perspective the policy choices and developments that have taken place since the beginning of the Riga cycle;
- (b) five thematic chapters then follow, devoted to the five respective MTDs outlined in the Riga conclusions. Each thematic chapter also begins with a 2015 baseline, more specifically addressing the MTD-related topics. The baseline is followed by the presentation of the major policy developments in the MTD since 2015;
- (c) the country chapter ends with a conclusion summarising the main lines of the 2015-19 policy developments and highlighting possible priorities for the future.

This country chapter is part of the information which the European Commission used to prepare the European Semester exercises<sup>(2)</sup> in 2017-19. It also informs the work of Cedefop and the European Training Foundation (ETF) in preparing a joint monitoring report on the implementation of the Riga conclusions.

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for the period 2015-2020, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué:*

[https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions\\_2015.pdf](https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/RigaConclusions_2015.pdf)

<sup>(2)</sup> European Semester: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en)

Both the joint report and the country chapter are aimed at informing the work of EU Member States' Directors General for Vocational Education and Training (DGVTs) and Advisory Committee for Vocational Education and Training (ACVT) on taking stock of the outcomes of the Riga conclusions and preparing the next steps for the EU VET policy for the next few years.

## Aspects of vocational education and training context in 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period, the proportion of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) programmes in Norway was above the EU average: 50.7% in 2014 compared to 48% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 151); 50% in 2015 compared to 47% in the EU <sup>(3)</sup>. The employment rate of IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds) was high: 90.9% in 2015 compared to 76.9% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 151). Adult participation in lifelong learning was also high: 20.1% in 2015 compared to 10.7% in the EU (Cedefop, 2017a, p. 151) (Table 1).

A social contract for VET had been adopted for the 2011-15 period, aiming to support cooperation between VET schools and enterprises, increase the number of apprenticeships, and encourage completion <sup>(4)</sup>. Increasing the attractiveness of VET and fighting high dropout rates had also been the priority of the VET policy set out by the new government which took office in October 2013. The main lines proposed also emphasised cooperation between schools and companies and increasing apprenticeships, as well as giving students possibilities to alternate between apprenticeships and school-based training. Also encouraged were parallel studies combining VET and a general programme (TAF, subsequently renamed YSK), which leads to a craft certificate *and* access to higher education. Pilot projects were carried out in 2014-15 <sup>(5)</sup>. The 2009-14 action plan for entrepreneurship in education and training had also been carried out.

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<sup>(3)</sup> Eurostat, data for 2015.

<sup>(4)</sup> The social contract was renewed in 2016 until 2020 and will aim at providing apprenticeship places to all qualified youths that apply.

<sup>(5)</sup> For example regarding dual VET (*Vekslingsmodellen*) and in-company traineeship for VET teachers.



Table 1. Framework data: score on VET indicators in Norway and in the EU: 2010-15

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	NO <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Yr	NO <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Range	NO	EU
<b>Access, attractiveness and flexibility</b>								
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'14	50.7 <sup>b</sup>	48.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E1</sub>	'13-'14	▪ -1.1	▪ -0.9
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'14	31.2 <sup>b</sup>	34.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E2</sub>	'13-'14	▪ 1.6	▪ 0.1
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'14	0.0 <sup>z</sup>	69.2 <sup>E3</sup>	'13-'14	▪ 0.0	▪ -1.4
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	46.0	38.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	46.0	38.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	22.0	20.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	22.0	20.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	18.2		'15	20.1	10.7 <sup>b</sup>	'13-'15	↘ -0.4	→ 0.0
Enterprises providing training (%)	97.0	66.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	97.0	66.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'14	42.3 <sup>b</sup>	42.7 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E1</sub>	'13-'14	▪ -1.8	▪ -1.0
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	45.0	25.0 <sup>e</sup>	'10	45.0	25.0 <sup>e</sup>			
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'15	39.0 <sup>b</sup>	33.0 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▪ -30.4	▪ -0.3
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	12.1	5.3	'15	13.7	6.9	'10-'15	↗ 0.3	↗ 0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	10.4		'15	12.9 <sup>C</sup>	4.3 <sup>bC</sup>	'13-'15	↗ 0.2	↘ 0.1
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	18.9		'15	20.8	9.5 <sup>b</sup>	'13-'15	↘ -1.6	↘ 0.4
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	7.4 <sup>B</sup>	9.5 <sup>eB</sup>	'11	7.4	9.5 <sup>e</sup>			
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	91.9 <sup>B</sup>	80.2 <sup>eB</sup>	'11	91.9	80.2 <sup>e</sup>			
<b>Skill development and labour market relevance</b>								
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)			'13	0.56 <sup>b</sup>	0.56 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E4</sub>			
IVET public expenditure per student (1 000 PPS units)			'13	6.4 <sup>b</sup>	6.4 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E5</sub>			
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.7	0.8 <sup>e</sup>	'10	0.7	0.8 <sup>e</sup>			
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET			'14	0.6 <sup>b</sup>	1.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E6</sub>	'13-'14	▪ -0.3	▪ 0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	A	A	'14	34.3 <sup>b</sup>	30.0 <sup>b</sup> <sub>E7</sub>	'13-'14	▪ -0.3	▪ -0.4
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates			'14	8.1	9.3 <sup>E8</sup>	'13-'14	▪ -0.1	▪ 0.4
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	58.5	41.5 <sup>E9</sup>	'12	54.4	41.6 <sup>E9</sup>	'10-'12	▪ -2.0	▪ 0.0
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20- to 34-year-olds)			'15	90.7 <sup>b</sup>	77.2 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▪ 12.0	▪ 0.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			'15	10.7 <sup>b</sup>	5.3 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▪ 21.3	▪ -1.0
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over			'15	26.8 <sup>b</sup>	23.7 <sup>b</sup>	'14-'15	▪ 13.8	▪ -

Indicator label	2010		2015 (*)			Trend in 2011-15 (per year)		
	NO <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Yr	NO <sup>f</sup>	EU <sup>f</sup>	Range	NO	EU
low-educated)								0.1
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			'15	86.8	83.7			
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	61.6	55.2	'15	63.0	57.3	'10-'15	▪ 0.3	▪ 0.4
<b>Overall transitions and labour market trends</b>								
Early leavers from education and training (%)	17.4	13.9	'15	10.2 <sup>c</sup>	11.0 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ -1.5	↘ <sup>-</sup> 0.6
30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	47.3	33.8	'15	50.9 <sup>c</sup>	38.7 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↗ 0.8	↗ 1.0
NEET rate for 18- to 24-year-olds (%)	6.9	16.6	'15	7.0	15.8	'10-'15	↗ 0.1	↘ <sup>-</sup> 0.1
Unemployment rate for 20-to 34-year-olds (%)		13.1	'15	6.4 <sup>b</sup>	12.9	'13-'15	↗ 0.6	↘ <sup>-</sup> 1.1
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)		77.4	'15	90.9 <sup>c</sup>	76.9 <sup>c</sup>	'12-'15	↗ 0.3	↗ 0.4
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	19.1	27.3	'15	17.3 <sup>c</sup>	23.5 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ -0.4	↘ <sup>-</sup> 0.8
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds (%)	79.6	68.6	'15	79.1	70.0	'10-'15	↘ -0.1	↗ 0.3
Employment rate for 20- to 64-year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	64.3	53.4	'15	60.5 <sup>c</sup>	52.6 <sup>c</sup>	'10-'15	↘ -0.9	↘ <sup>-</sup> 0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)			'16	74.5 <sup>d</sup>	82.8 <sup>d</sup>			

(\*) The data in this column are the data available in 2016. Where 2015 data were not available, data from previous years were used.

(<sup>A</sup>) UOE (UNESCO OECD Eurostat) back reconstruction of 2010 values based on ISCED (international standard classification of education) 2011 not yet available.

(<sup>B</sup>) AES (adult education survey) 2011, used as proxy for 2010 baseline.

(<sup>C</sup>) 2014 b flags in Eurostat online tables ignored on the basis of other relevant Eurostat metadata.

(<sup>D</sup>) Forecast made in 2016.

(<sup>E1</sup>) Based on 28 countries; partial information for NL.

(<sup>E2</sup>) Based on 25 countries (missing: ES, PL, RO); partial information for NL.

(<sup>E3</sup>) Based on 27 countries (missing: NL); partial information for EL, IT.

(<sup>E4</sup>) Based on 19 countries (missing: BE, DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT, SK).

(<sup>E5</sup>) Based on 21 countries (missing: DK, IE, EL, FR, HR, IT, PT).

(<sup>E6</sup>) Partial information for NL.

(<sup>E7</sup>) Based on 25 countries (missing: HR, IT, UK).

(<sup>E8</sup>) Based on 23 countries (missing: BE, IE, FR, CY, UK).

(<sup>E9</sup>) Based on 22 countries (missing: DE, IE, EL, NL, SI, UK).

(<sup>b</sup>) Break after 2010, therefore baseline data not included.

(<sup>u</sup>) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.

(<sup>z</sup>) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.

(<sup>e</sup>) Eurostat: 'estimated'.

NB: EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified. Arrows ↗ or ↘ signal a positive or negative trend based on more than two data points and of magnitude 0.1 per year or more. Trends based on more than two data points but of smaller magnitude are indicated by →; trends based on two points only are marked ▪. Trends are estimated by means of regression models.

Source: Cedefop, 2017a, p. 151.

## CHAPTER 1.

# MTD 1 – All forms of work-based learning with special attention to apprenticeships

## 1.1. Baseline 2015

Already at the beginning of the reporting period <sup>(6)</sup>, upper-secondary VET in Norway was organised following a model combining school education and apprenticeship training <sup>(7)</sup>. The main model, called '2+2', comprised two years of school education followed by two years of apprenticeship. There were some deviations within some VET programmes:

- (a) 1+3, with one year in school and three in apprenticeship;
- (b) 2 + 2.5, i.e. two years in school and two and a half years in apprenticeship;
- (c) 3 + 1, i.e. three years in school and one year in apprenticeship;
- (d) 3+1.5, i.e. three years in school and one and a half years in apprenticeship;
- (e) 3 + 3, i.e. three years in school and three years in apprenticeship;
- (f) 3+0, comprising only three years in school.

Variant 2+2 was the main model for upper secondary VET. All variants (except '3+0') would primarily qualify the student for taking a trade / journeyman's certificate exam. Variant '3+0' would qualify the student for a professional competence qualification <sup>(8)</sup>. All variants could lead to a further one-year bridge course for higher education access.

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<sup>(6)</sup> This introductory section presents the 2015 state-of-play in the MTD as a baseline for the monitoring exercise. Most of the situation it describes has remained unchanged over the reporting period and is therefore still in place and relevant at the end of the reporting period. The next sections in this MTD focus on what has changed with respect to this 2015 baseline, and how.

<sup>(7)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/norway-vet-europe-country-report-2014>

<sup>(8)</sup> 3+0 only exists within the Programme for Health Care, Childhood and Early Youth Development and the Programme for Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry. There is work-based learning included as part of the in depth study project and within the vocational programme subjects.

Schools were responsible for the school-education part. This part would be devoted to general education (languages, maths and sciences) and vocational subjects.

The apprenticeship training would take place in a *training enterprise*, i.e. an accredited enterprise or a public institution (or at an upper secondary VET school if the student would not manage to find an apprenticeship placement) <sup>(9)</sup>. The training enterprise was responsible for the apprenticeship part. This part would be devoted to work-based training and productive work. The apprentice would sign a contract with the training enterprise and the county authorities. Apprentices had the status of employee and received remuneration.

Norway had a long-standing tradition of cooperation between education and training authorities and the social partners. The social partners used to participate in all important advisory bodies, i.e. the National Council for VET, the Vocational Training Councils at sectoral level and the County Vocational Training Boards at regional level <sup>(10)</sup>.

Financial incentives were in place for companies to offer apprenticeships. A fixed State grant per apprentice was allocated to cover training costs. Extra funding was provided for SMEs or for taking in apprentices with special needs. Yet, results from a 2013 evaluation on the comprehensive curriculum reform implemented since 2006 (*Kunnskapsløftet*) suggested that the most critical point in completing VET was the transition from school to apprenticeship training <sup>(11)</sup>. Apprenticeship places were insufficient to cover the demand. Increased public funding to support enterprises' engagement to apprenticeships was part of the national commitments taken in the context of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) <sup>(12)</sup>. Alternative ways were also being piloted, such as the dual model (*Vekslingsmodellen*) <sup>(13)</sup>. Other approaches were to give students possibilities to go from a general education programme to a vocational programme after year one, or carry out parallel studies combining VET and a

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<sup>(9)</sup> A training enterprise is not set up for the purposes of training. It is an ordinary public or private enterprise/organisation accredited to take on apprentices by the county authority. It receives State grants corresponding to the amount it costs to have a student a year at school per apprentice.

<sup>(10)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/norway-vet-europe-country-report-2014>, page 31.

<sup>(11)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/norway-results-ready-major-research-based-evaluation-knowledge-promotion-reform>

<sup>(12)</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/countries.jsp?langId=en&intPageId=3512>

<sup>(13)</sup> Piloted nationally from 2013-18. Locally available since 2018.

general programme <sup>(14)</sup>. The option to complete a vocational education and add on a one-year supplementary course to qualify for admission to general university and college had been in place for several years.

## 1.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training (DGVT), are two-fold:

- (a) increase the number of apprenticeships by making sure that all qualified applicants are offered an apprenticeship, and increase the number of enterprises taking on apprentices;
- (b) adjust the curriculum for upper secondary VET programmes so that all students have the opportunity of experiencing real work situations through the use of different learning contexts.

## 1.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

### 1.3.1. New social contract for VET

A new [social contract for VET](#) was adopted for 2016-20. It is aimed at increasing the number of apprenticeships and the number of adults acquiring a trade or journeyman's certificate.

### 1.3.2. Public procurement requirement to employ apprentices

This measure was introduced in 2016. Starting in 2017, companies that participate in public-service contracts <sup>(15)</sup> are required to use apprentices. The requirement applies to Norwegian and international companies. Foreign companies bidding for public procurements must be approved as training establishments in Norway and have Norwegian apprentices, or apprentices/learners on practical training from corresponding apprenticeship schemes in their home country. Relevant legislation was updated accordingly.

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<sup>(14)</sup> <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/norway-new-government-prioritises-vocational-education-and-training>

<sup>(15)</sup> Public authorities shall require the use of apprentices for contracts worth at least NOK 1.1 million (ex. VAT) that last longer than three months. Counties and municipal authorities shall require the use of apprentices for contracts worth at least NOK 1.75 million (ex. VAT) that last longer than three months.

### **1.3.3. Increasing financial incentives for enterprises**

The economic incentives the State provides for companies that take on apprentices were strengthened during 2015-17. The basic funding for companies accepting apprenticeships has increased to a total of NOK 14 000 per training contract. The total effect on budget for this increase in funding was NOK 300 million.

### **1.3.4. Brand for enterprises that take on apprentices**

A special emblem distinguishing training companies was set up in 2015. It is intended to signal to customers that the supplier is an approved training establishment. The Directorate of Education and Training (Udir) has also implemented an online national register <sup>(16)</sup> for approved training enterprises. All enterprises with at least one apprentice are listed and it is possible to filter by subject, geographic area or by name.

### **1.3.5. Increasing the motivation and commitment of apprentices**

A 2015 amendment to the education act clarifies and underlines the importance of continuous assessment as the basis for final assessment in apprenticeship programmes. The measure is expected to increase motivation and commitment of apprentices throughout the programme.

### **1.3.6. Piloting Dual VET: *Vekslingsmodellen***

Following the *Social contract for VET 2011-15* for more relevant and flexible VET, a new upper secondary dual model (*Vekslingsmodellen*) has been piloted since 2013 as an alternative pathway for learners experiencing difficulties completing the main (2+2 model) VET pathway. The scheme offers the possibility to conclude an apprenticeship contract after year one (instead of year two) in the main 2+2 VET pathway. Two progress reports have been published <sup>(17)</sup> and the final report was published in January 2019.

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<sup>(16)</sup> <https://nlr.udir.no/>

<sup>(17)</sup> <https://www.udir.no/tall-og-forskning/finn-forskning/rapporter/vekslingsmodeller-i-fag--og-yrkesopplaring/>

### **1.3.7. Promoting work-based learning**

#### *1.3.7.1. Award for the best public apprenticeships placement: Statens beste lærebedrift*

To increase the number of apprenticeship placements in the public sector, a yearly award, with several reward criteria, for the best public apprenticeship placement was instigated in 2016 <sup>(18)</sup>. The winner of the award is represented in the selection committee when nominating the next year's winner.

#### *1.3.7.2. VET year 2018 campaign: Yrkesfagenes år 2018*

The Ministry of Education and Research, in cooperation with social partners, World Skills and the School Student Union of Norway (SSUN), rolled out an online and social media campaign to motivate young people to choose and complete vocational education and training <sup>(19)</sup>.

#### *1.3.7.3. New work-related elective subject*

A new practical and work-related elective subject, 'practical craft', will be tested at lower secondary level from 2019 onwards. The subject aims at motivating more pupils for school work and leading them to see the value of school through a practice-oriented subject.

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<sup>(18)</sup> <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SPHPM/pm-2016-03>  
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/universitetet-i-bergen-er-statens-beste-larebedrift-2017/id2582045/>

<sup>(19)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/2018-blir-yrkesfagenes-ar/id2583726/>  
[www.yrkesfag.no](http://www.yrkesfag.no)

## CHAPTER 2.

# MTD 2 – Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET and continuous information and feedback loops to IVET and CVET <sup>(20)</sup>

### 2.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period <sup>(21)</sup>, a quality assurance national reference point (QANRP) was in place. It has been set up since 2010 at the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. A national quality assurance approach for VET was being prepared, expected to be in place by 2020. Indicators for quality assurance in VET were being developed, taking the European quality assurance in vocational education and training (EQAVET) indicators as a reference. Quality standards for VET providers were part of legislation and applied in curricula. Legislation also required regional counties to have a quality assurance approach, with county authorities being responsible for the quality assurance of their VET providers.

Collection of information to guide the development of the VET system was in place. Statistics Norway used to collect register data on graduate transition from VET to work. Three large surveys were also carried out every year among

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<sup>(20)</sup> European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop): <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en>

ReferNet: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/refernet>

Priorities reported by Directors General for Vocational Education and Training for the 2016-20 period;

EQAVET (2016 Secretariat survey, website, newsletters): <http://www.eqavet.eu>

2016 compendium of EQAVET NRP *Erasmus+* funding;

Council recommendations on the 2016 national reform programmes:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/2016/#>

Education and training monitor 2016 country reports:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/et-monitor_en)

<sup>(21)</sup> This introductory section presents the 2015 state-of-play in the MTD as a baseline for the monitoring exercise. Most of the situation it describes has remained unchanged over the reporting period and is therefore still in place and relevant at the end of the reporting period. The next sections in this MTD focus on what has changed with respect to this 2015 baseline, and how.



learners, apprentices and enterprises with apprenticeships. Participation in these surveys became mandatory for counties in 2015. The information was used to design and update qualifications, occupational profiles, standards, programmes and curricula. The National Council for VET <sup>(22)</sup> and the *Vocational Training Councils* <sup>(23)</sup> played an important role in the translation of skill needs into national curricula and definition of essential competences to be included in vocational subject areas. A national VET quality assessment system was in development to trace the employment situation of VET graduates and enterprises' ratings of their qualifications.

## 2.2. Quality assurance mechanisms in line with EQAVET in 2015-19

The country's priority in this matter for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to ensure that the quality assessment system is in use:

- (a) at all administrative levels;
- (b) for all stakeholders.

In the reporting period, Norway is working on implementing a national quality assurance framework for VET.

In 2017, following the 2016 amendment of the Tertiary VET Act, a national complaints board for Tertiary VET (EQF 5) was established (*Nasjonal klagenemnd for fagskoleutdanning*). This is assigned to CERES, the National Centre for Systems and Services for Research and Studies <sup>(24)</sup>. The work consists of processing students' complaints on individual decisions in relation to tertiary vocational education, with the aim to guarantee students' rights and ensure equal treatment nationwide <sup>(25)</sup>.

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<sup>(22)</sup> The national council for VET is appointed by the Ministry of Education and Research and is composed of social partners, representatives of the ministry, and other stakeholders such as student organisations, pupil/apprentice organisations, and teacher unions.

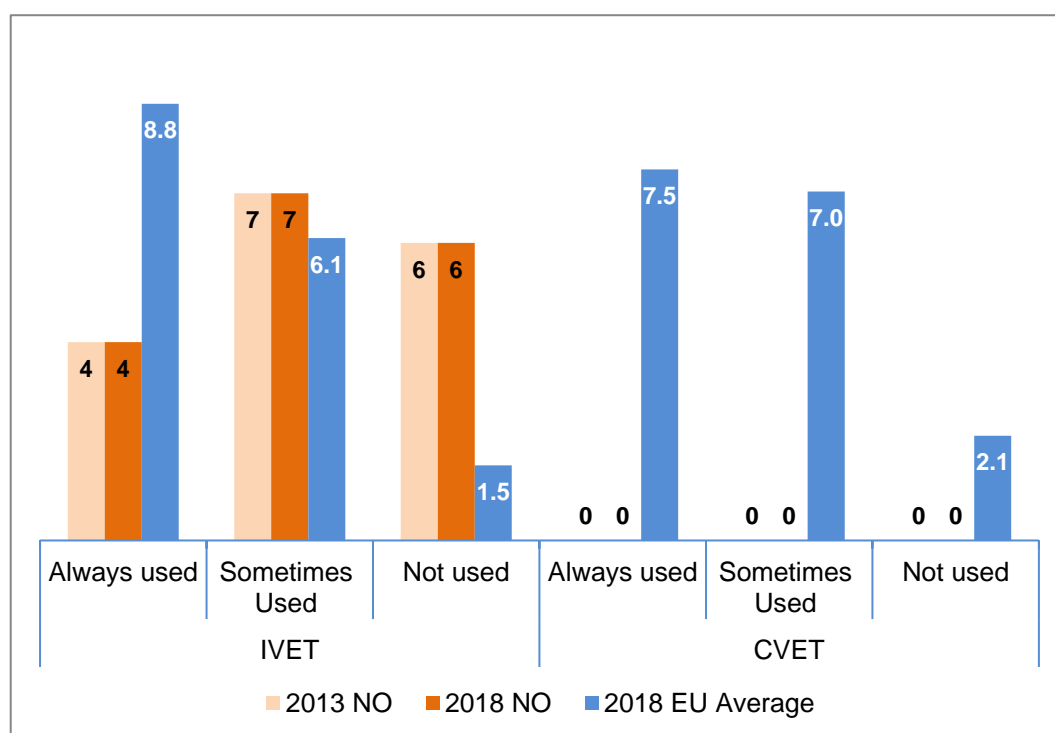
<sup>(23)</sup> There are nine advisory Vocational Training Councils, one for each of the main VET programmes.

<sup>(24)</sup> CERES is the body in charge of developing, operating, managing and maintaining student administration and research information systems and services on behalf of the Norwegian higher education sector and Norwegian research communities.

<sup>(25)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/utdanning/fagskoleutdanning/artikler/nasjonal-klagenemnd-for->

EQAVET indicators are not used to monitor continuing vocational education and training (CVET) <sup>(26)</sup>. In IVET, the extent of use has not changed since 2013: Norway remains below the 2018 EU average in the number of indicators ‘always used’, and above the EU average in the ‘not used’ indicators. The EQAVET indicators that are not used include the satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with the acquired skills/competences and data on mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market <sup>(27)</sup>.

Figure 1. Use of EQAVET indicators



NB: Of the 17 indicators suggested by the 2009 EQAVET recommendation, four were ‘always used’ in IVET in 2013 and 2018 in Norway, compared to 8.8 in the EU on average in 2018.

No information was provided for the use of EQAVET indicators in CVET.

EU average was calculated based on available information for 31 out of 35 VET systems.

Source: Cedefop calculations based on EQAVET Secretariat surveys for 2013 and 2018 data.

[agskoleutdanning/id2568630/?utm\\_source=www.regjeringen.no&utm\\_medium=epost&utm\\_campaign=Utdanning-29.08.2017](https://www.regjeringen.no/agskoleutdanning/id2568630/?utm_source=www.regjeringen.no&utm_medium=epost&utm_campaign=Utdanning-29.08.2017)

and

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/2e5aa13c6dcc4d00bbcc6f209adca068/informasjonsbrev-fra-nasjonal-klagenemnd-for-fagskoleutdanning.pdf>

<sup>(26)</sup> In Norway, both young and adults use the IVET system.

<sup>(27)</sup> The Norwegian assessment system has developed indicators that are different from those used in the EQAVET system.

### 2.3. Continuous information and feedback loops in initial VET in 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this matter, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to review the national structure of available VET programmes and apprenticeships.

Data on transitions and employability of VET graduates informed the review of available VET programmes. The review recommended changes within the current structure of available courses and apprenticeships, including a new VET programme in ICT and media production. Therefore, a new structure of upper secondary VET will be implemented as of 2020.

The Directorate for Education and Training is developing a new survey targeting skilled workers who have recently acquired their trade or journeyman's certificate. The aim is to gather information on the level of skills matching between acquired training and the labour market.

Discussions in the National Council for VET in the first quarter of 2017 included the economic and social effect of VET and links between general education and VET. New mandates for the National Council for VET and the vocational training councils were also suggested.

On 1 September 2017, a new public Committee (the *Lied Committee*) was appointed by the government to examine the Norwegian upper-secondary education system <sup>(28)</sup>. The starting point is that 30 % of learners do not complete upper-secondary school, in spite of several measures adopted in the recent past to reduce this number. The drop-out rate is bigger in VET programmes. Additionally there is a shortage of apprenticeship places. The committee is assigned to assess whether the system of upper-secondary education in place:

- (a) is relevant to labour market needs and conducive to a high completion rate for the young and adults;
- (b) ensures a desire to learn and motivation;
- (c) allows for changes needed, especially in terms of allocation of responsibilities between stakeholders.

Social partners are involved in the initiative through participation in a reference group. A first report was published in December 2018, describing the current education system at upper secondary level, how it is organised,

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<sup>(28)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dep/kd/org/styrrer-rad-og-utvalg/utval-skal-sja-pa-vidaregaande-opplaring/id2569543/>  
and  
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/b008ab7ead6f4a4cb81cb9050e7d1489/mandat-offentlig-utvalg-vgo.pdf>

responsibilities, and strengths and weaknesses, including in comparison with systems in relevant foreign countries. A second report, meant to suggest and assess different education pathways at upper secondary level, is to be released in December 2019.

In May 2017, the Ministry of Education and Research established a committee for the anticipation of skills needs (*Kompetansebehovutvalg – KBU – for mer kunnskap om fremtidens arbeidsliv*). The mandate of the committee is to assess Norway's future skills needs as a basis for national and regional planning, individual decision making, and the world of work. The committee is expected to exploit existing reports and analysis, contribute to research, and provide new knowledge and relevant information. It has a three-year mandate. Its first report was published on 31 January 2018. Findings suggest that:

- (a) competence level in Norway is good, but can be improved;
- (b) some vocations are faced with recruitment challenges;
- (c) learners face bottlenecks in access to relevant competences.

The report also confirms the central role of the workplace in lifelong learning, and the impact of digitalisation and automation on competence needs <sup>(29)</sup>. The second report was published on 1 February 2019 and defines eight challenges for the competence policy.

The first national survey on quality in higher vocational education was carried out in April 2018 <sup>(30)</sup>. The survey aims to provide higher vocational education schools with information useful for their internal quality work, and also to develop a knowledge base for the Government to strengthen quality development work in the sector. Results were presented in September 2018.

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<sup>(29)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/mer-kunnskap-om-fremtidens-arbeidsliv/id2554152/>

<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/57685a83163f42c1abb4d1a78c930e0a/kompetansebehovutvalg-mandat.pdf>

[https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/rapport-om-norges-kompetansebehov/id2588163/?utm\\_source=www.regjeringen.no&utm\\_medium=epost&utm\\_campaign=nyhetsvarsel%2031.01.2018&utm\\_content=Utdanning](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/rapport-om-norges-kompetansebehov/id2588163/?utm_source=www.regjeringen.no&utm_medium=epost&utm_campaign=nyhetsvarsel%2031.01.2018&utm_content=Utdanning)

<https://kompetansebehovsutvalget.no/>

<sup>(30)</sup> <https://www.nokut.no/nyheter/god-respons-pa-forste-nasjonale-undersokelse-om-studiekvalitet-for-fagskolestudenter/> and

<http://www.studiebarometeret.no/no/fagskole>

## 2.4. Continuous information and feedback loops in continuing VET in 2015-19

The country's priority for 2016-20 in this matter, as set by the Director General for vocational education and training, is to gain information on employer satisfaction with graduates from higher education and post-secondary vocational education and training, and on the employment situation of graduates from post-secondary CVET.

Skills Norway (*Kompetanse Norge*, former VOX) supplies the national authorities with feedback regarding lifelong learning, through statistics and publications. In February 2017, it published the *Kompass* report on how to ensure competences in times of rapid change, focusing on non-formal learning, skills for immigrants and future labour market needs.

Discussions in the National Council for VET in the first quarter of 2017 included the trade certificate at work (a newly proposed flexible pathway for adults to achieve a trade or journeyman's certificate while working).

In March 2018, the Government established an Expert committee on continuing education and training (*Ekspertutvalg om etter- og videreutdanning*). The mission of the Committee is to look into unmet needs in continuing education and training and assess to what extent the education system is able to meet needs from the world of work. A final report with assessments and proposals is to be sent to the Ministry of Education and Research in 2019 <sup>(31)</sup>.

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(<sup>31</sup>) <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dep/kd/org/styrer-rad-og-utvalg/ekspertutvalg-om-tilbud-og-ettersporsel-for-fremtidens-arbeidsliv/id2594469/>  
<https://www.kompetansenorge.no/evu/mandat/>  
<https://www.kompetansenorge.no/evu/>

## CHAPTER 3.

# MTD 3 – Access to VET and qualifications for all through more flexible/permeable systems, guidance and validation of non-formal and informal learning

### 3.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period <sup>(32)</sup>, Norway was in the course of exploring alternative options to improve its VET system. The certificate of practice (*Praksisbrev*) had been piloted since 2008 (Section 3.3.4.1). The 2013 Education Ministry white paper *On the right track – Quality and diversity in the comprehensive school system* <sup>(33)</sup> had also brought forward a range of suggestions, e.g. for setting up direct access from VET to HE; extended access to HE with a trade or journeyman's certificate; and more options for combining VET with general education study programmes.

Mechanisms to support adult education were in place. Since 2002, adults aged 25+ <sup>(34)</sup>, and with no upper-secondary education completed, had a right to upper-secondary education tailored to individual needs, along with the right to validation of prior learning. Adults also had a possibility to obtain a trade or a journeyman's certificate through a documentary scheme, the experience-based certification (*praksiskandidat*). Candidates had to document a minimum of five years of work experience in the respective field, and to take a multidisciplinary written exam, prior to signing up for the trade- or journeyman examination.

Different guidance services existed, including web-based self-serviced tools. Since 2008, counties had been funded to create partnerships on career guidance, which then led to establishing career centres for youth and adults. In 2011, the *Agency for lifelong learning* became the national coordinator of

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<sup>(32)</sup> This introductory section presents the 2015 state-of-play in the MTD as a baseline for the monitoring exercise. Most of the situation it describes has remained unchanged over the reporting period and is therefore still in place and relevant at the end of the reporting period. The next sections in this MTD focus on what has changed with respect to this 2015 baseline, and how.

<sup>(33)</sup> Meld.St 20 (2012-13).

<sup>(34)</sup> The age limit was removed in 2017.

guidance services, with aim of preventing early school leaving and youth unemployment.

A Norwegian qualifications framework (*Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring – NKR*) was also in place. It had been adopted in December 2011. It was referenced to the EQF <sup>(35)</sup> and self-certified against the QF-EHEA <sup>(36)</sup> in June 2014. It covered the qualifications awarded by publicly recognised and accredited education and training institutions. A report exploring the possibility of integrating non-formal qualifications was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2014.

Norway did not have a single national all-encompassing strategy for validation of prior learning (RPL) (*realkompetansevurdering*). Scattered mechanisms were in place at regional level for primary and secondary education, and in enterprises (e.g. the 2009-13 social partner agreements on documenting workers' competences).

### 3.2. Policy priorities for 2016-20

The country's priorities in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, are two-fold:

- (a) for young people: introducing the certificate of practice scheme (CPS) – a two-year practical education – as a permanent alternative to ordinary vocational training. CPS may be a goal in itself, or used as a building block towards a full craft and journeyman's certificate. After obtaining a certificate of practice, candidates may apply for an ordinary apprenticeship;
- (b) for adults:
  - (i) strengthen opportunities for young adults to complete upper secondary education and training;
  - (ii) make it easier for adults to combine education with work and other activities.

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<sup>(35)</sup> European qualifications framework.

<sup>(36)</sup> Qualifications frameworks in the European Higher Education Area.

### 3.3. Main actions taken in 2015-19

#### 3.3.1. VET-related priorities for the new government from autumn 2017 elections: *Jeløy-plattformen*

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

- (a) flexible pathways;
- (b) continue the process of increasing the number of apprenticeships through improved financial arrangements and closer cooperation with the county municipality and the world of work;
- (c) public agencies and underlying establishments shall have apprentices;
- (d) implement the renewal of vocational programmes;
- (e) introduce a new work-based and craft-oriented elective subject in lower secondary schools;
- (f) give the world of work greater influence on the content of vocational education;
- (g) ensure up-to-date and quality-assured equipment in vocational education and increase the grants for expensive equipment;
- (h) pursue the focus on continuing and further education of vocational teachers through the VET teacher promotion initiative;
- (i) strengthen job shadowing for vocational teachers and continue a measure aiming to strengthen natural science and mathematics in upper secondary education.

A few additional priorities were introduced in 2019 (*Gravavolden plattformen*):

- (a) YSK (VET and general education in four years) in all counties and more vocations in YSK;
- (b) longer apprenticeships for some vocations, in cooperation with the social partners;
- (c) more flexible pathways with an expanded possibility to combine work-based learning and school;
- (d) closer link between upper secondary school and training establishments.

Objectives for vocational colleges are to:

- (a) carry out a quality boost and ensure equality between vocational college students and other students;
- (b) promote closer cooperation between schools and the world of work, to increase quality and ensure work-based learning;



- (c) improve transition possibilities between vocational colleges and universities and other colleges;
- (d) increase the knowledge of vocational education in education guidance;
- (e) ensure a diversity of private and public vocational colleges.

### **3.3.2. Equal opportunity, equity, inclusion: broadening the rights to and within education and training**

The 2016 white paper *Skilled workers for the future* <sup>(37)</sup> contained 48 measures on how to make post-secondary VET more attractive as a profession-oriented fully equivalent alternative to higher education. Some of these measures were accepted by the Norwegian Parliament in May 2017, including the right to be part of a student welfare organisation, better transitions to study programmes at universities and university colleges, a new national admission system, new grant schemes, mapping and raising the competence of vocational college teachers, better knowledge about vocational education, and a development fund of NOK 46.1 million <sup>(38)</sup>.

Several of the measures have been implemented:

- (a) the right of students to be part of a student welfare organisation;
- (b) the transition from vocational colleges to university or university colleges has been improved;
- (c) new surveys have been introduced to increase knowledge about students and colleges;
- (d) a yearly development fund of around NOK 40 million has been introduced;
- (e) an education quality price of NOK 1 million has been set up.

Also, a new law for higher vocational education (EQF5) was adopted in 2018 <sup>(39)</sup>. Post-secondary vocational schools will now be categorised as higher vocational education schools. Their students will have strengthened rights. The law is intended to ensure equal rights for all students.

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<sup>(37)</sup> 48 tiltak som styrker fagskolene og fagskolestudentene, Meld. St. 9 (2016-2017) Fagfolk for fremtiden

<sup>(38)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/48-tiltak-som-styrker-fagskolene-og-fagskolestudentene/id2551747/>  
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/f34b56ba52454667a46049aa550b42bc/en-gb/pdfs/stm201620170009000engpdfs.pdf>

<sup>(39)</sup> <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2018-06-08-28>  
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/fagskoleloven/id426473/>

### **3.3.3. Guidance**

In April 2016, a national committee for lifelong guidance delivered a report on increasing the quality and accessibility of career guidance in schools. The report suggests equal rights to career guidance for apprentices as for pupils, and setting up an online platform for guidance in lower and upper secondary education. It also suggests opening career guidance centres for adults in all counties.

In Norway, skills policy and career guidance are closely connected. Skills Norway is responsible for both the Norwegian committee on skills needs and the development of professional career guidance. In 2019, Skills Norway will present a national quality framework for career guidance. Its work addresses quality standards, ethical guidelines and quality assurance for professional career guidance.

Partnerships between the PES and Education have been formed in all regional counties. These include career guidance centres for the general public outside education and training.

### **3.3.4. Permeability and flexibility**

#### *3.3.4.1. The certificate of practice*

The certificate of practice (*Praksisbrev*) is a new pathway introduced in 2016, having been piloted and evaluated since 2008. It is a two-year practical training programme carried out in a company. Subjects comprise core components (work-oriented Norwegian, maths and social science) along with local components geared towards local labour demand. Certificate of practice programmes are offered by counties: each county is obligated to offer at least one such programme. Certificates of practice are initially targeted at upper secondary school pupils who have low motivation for ordinary school and greater interest in practical work, and whose profile (weak grades and/or high absenteeism, despite neither learning difficulties nor special education needs) suggests high likelihood of underperforming/failing in regular programmes. However, the certificate of practice can also apply to adults, for example in the case of immigrants or low-educated adults who were previously unable to complete a trade or journeyman's certificate. After completing the certificate of practice, candidates can proceed towards a trade or journeyman certificate.

#### *3.3.4.2. White paper on low-skilled adults*

The white paper *From exclusion to new opportunities: coordinated efforts for adult education* was approved in the Council of State in February 2016. It targets low-skilled adults at risk of exclusion from the labour market. It aims at increasing

opportunities for training and recognition of prior learning. The white paper proposes three main measures.

### ***The Trade certificate at work***

This is a new pathway towards the trade and journeyman certificates. It is targeted at low-skilled adults in employment. The distinctive principle of the scheme is to provide workers with upper secondary education and training while on-the-job, so they can continue earning their living. They are exempted from some of the core subjects and from part of the written test when applying for the certificate. The model was successfully piloted in five counties from 2011 to 2014 and then positively evaluated. The scheme was on public consultation in May 2017 and was implemented as a new national pathway in 2018.

### **Modularising adult training**

Modules and options are 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. From 2017 to 2020, the Directorate for Education and Training is piloting modularised VET curricula for adults in a limited number of subjects. Each subject is organised into five to seven modules. Completing all modules is a condition for qualifying for taking the trade or journeyman exam.

### **European Economic Area recognition of foreign trade and journeyman certificates**

As one of the adaptations to the internal labour market (through the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement), the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT, has established a formal system for recognition of foreign trade and journeyman certificates aiming to address the problems of migrant workers from the European Economic Area. The procedure was established in 2016 <sup>(40)</sup>. Foreign certificates are assessed according to the scope, level and content of comparable Norwegian certificates. The procedure is open to a selected number of German, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish qualifications and is being developed to include more vocational qualifications and countries.

There are also a number of cooperation contracts and agreements between the Nordic countries, including within education and language. In June 2018,

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<sup>(40)</sup> The requirements for recognition were set out in October 2016 and the first applications were received in December 2016.

following the 2016 revised Reykjavik Declaration which introduced automatic approval of comparable qualifications from the Nordic countries, NOKUT launched the automatic recognition of higher education from the Nordic countries. People with higher education from a Nordic country can download a confirmation showing that the degree is automatically approved in Norway <sup>(41)</sup>.

#### 3.3.4.3. *Opening up VET to general education students*

In 2013, the white paper *On the right track: facilitating enrolment in VET* had pointed out that, while upper secondary VET students may change their pathway after the second year and continue with general education, there was no system allowing for general education students to move towards VET without having to apply to start VET studies from the beginning. Based on the conclusions of the white paper, the Directorate of Education and Training has piloted a model enabling learners to move to VET after completing a year of upper secondary general education <sup>(42)</sup>. Pilots were carried out in the Programme for building and construction. A reform proposal was set up and submitted to public consultation in 2017, and adopted in 2018. It is being implemented from the school year 2018/19 <sup>(43)</sup>. It is optional for county municipalities to establish this scheme.

#### 3.3.4.4. *Changes in the regulation for admission to higher education: Endring i regler for opptak til høyere utdanning*

After public consultation in 2017, changes in the regulation for admission to higher education were adopted on 3 January 2018 and published on 1 February 2018. Following the changes, requirements for Norwegian language proficiency have been waived for vocational college students, and direct access to higher education becomes possible after two years at vocational colleges <sup>(44)</sup>.

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<sup>(41)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/automatisk-godkjenning-av-utdanninger-fra-norden/id2604422/> and <https://www.nokut.no/automatisk-godkjenning-utd-fra-norden>

<sup>(42)</sup> Pupils who have completed one year at upper secondary general education have devoted many more hours to learning Norwegian, maths, science, English and social studies than first year pupils in vocational education. In one year, general education pupils learn the same as vocational learners in two years in these subjects. Consequently, these hours can now be used in the second year of upper secondary school to catch up with trade-specific programme subjects the vocational learners have learned in the first year.

<sup>(43)</sup> <https://www.udir.no/utdanningslopet/videregaende-opplaring/andre-varianter/overgang-fra-vg1-studiespesialisering-til-alle-yrkesfag-pa-vg2/>

<sup>(44)</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/25---18-endringar-i-reglar-for-opptak-til-hogare-utdanning/id2588338/> and <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2017-01-06-13>

#### 3.3.4.5. *Modular industry programmes for continuing training*

Design work for shorter and flexible industry programme courses for continuing training in higher vocational education was initiated in December 2018 (also see Section 3.3.4.2). 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. The education may be web-based, school-based and job-based. Higher vocational education schools are responsible for developing the study programmes and applying for accreditation. The project is supervised by the Ministry of Education and Research. Social partners and NOKUT (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) are involved. Piloting started in 2019. The budget is NOK 30 million <sup>(45)</sup>.

### 3.3.5. **Transparency, recognition, validation**

#### 3.3.5.1. *National qualifications framework* <sup>(46)</sup>

A seven-level learning-outcomes-based Norwegian qualifications framework (*Nasjonalt kvalifikasjonsrammeverk for livslang læring* – NKR) was adopted in December 2011. It was referenced to the European qualifications framework (EQF) and self-certified against the qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) in June 2014. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT has been appointed as the national coordination point (NCP). The NKR presently covers only qualifications awarded by publicly recognised and accredited education and training institutions. A working group was set up in 2013 to open up the framework to private and non-formal education, and a proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2014. In the reporting period, higher vocational education institutions (*fagskole*) have implemented the learning outcomes approach in descriptions of their programmes. Opening-up the NKR to non-formal qualifications is still under consideration. The Ministry of Education and Research adopted in November 2017 a regulation formalising the overall position and status of the NKR <sup>(47)</sup>. A range of stakeholders were involved <sup>(48)</sup>. The Ministry foresees evaluation of the NKR in 2019, coordinated by the NCP.

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<sup>(45)</sup> Click [here](#) for more information.

<sup>(46)</sup> Cedefop, 2017b.

<sup>(47)</sup> See [here](#) and [here](#).

<sup>(48)</sup> Including the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions, and the National Union of Students in Norway. A reference group was established with

### 3.3.5.2. *ECVET* <sup>(49)</sup>

Cross-country VET mobility is part of a general policy of internationalisation of the whole training system. Transfer of learning outcomes acquired abroad is possible on a case-by-case basis: there is no framework that makes transfer automatic. Legislation supports transfer of learning outcomes within the same area of qualification; transfer to other areas/qualifications is possible for specific programmes, where bridges have been set up by national authorities together with social partners. VET is not modularised, but those who leave before completion can get certificates of competence. Since 2013, tertiary level VET has had a credit-point system, with possibilities for conversion to the European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET). Units of learning outcomes and credits may be devised at local/provider level. In 2015, a public hearing was held to assess the possible implementation of ECVET. The results pointed to a number of possible actions, such as piloting ECVET for mobility or skills validation, and creating a forum for users to discuss and reach common understanding of it. Measures implemented are linked to the target groups that benefit from the use of ECVET principles. For young people who take part of their education abroad, ECVET tools are secured through the work of national ECVET experts coordinated by the Diku <sup>(50)</sup>. A project coordinated by the Directorate of Education and Training was initiated for adult education programmes, aiming for the modularisation of a range of curricula that can contribute to the validation of units of learning outcomes. A national body for the approval of foreign craft certificates was established in 2016 for foreign workers. This is managed by the Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT.

### 3.3.5.3. *Validation* <sup>(51)</sup>

There is no single all-encompassing strategy for validation of prior learning (VPL, *realkompetansevurdering*) at national level. However, there are laws and regulations on validation of prior learning for each level of education and training.

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representatives from: higher education, upper secondary schools, vocational schools, social partners, Competence Norway, the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, the Norwegian Association for Adult Learning, the Norwegian Directorate of Health, the Norwegian Association of Researchers, the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education and the Norwegian Ministry of Trade and Industry.

<sup>(49)</sup> Source: the ECVET users' group members.

<sup>(50)</sup> The Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education

<sup>(51)</sup> Cedefop, 2017b; Alfsen (2016).

The counties at regional level are responsible for validation of prior learning at primary and secondary level, and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has developed guidelines for the validation process. There are also validation mechanisms in enterprises, such as the Documenting workers' competences tool mentioned in the basic agreement between the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO) and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO).

In the reporting period, the main initiative relates to validation of skills for refugees and migrants. Measures have been taken to speed up the mapping and validation of skills and competences of refugees and other recent immigrants. The Ministry of Education and Research has allocated extra funding support from the 2016 budget. Norway coordinates the *Erasmus+* project VISKA (2017-20) on validation of prior learning for asylum seekers, immigrants and low-qualified adults. NOKUT (the Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) is working on possible ways for fast track assessment of higher education qualifications. It is participating in a pilot project with similar methodology, the European qualifications passport for refugees. This passport provides an assessment of higher education qualifications, upper secondary VET qualifications and post-secondary vocational qualifications based on available documentation and a structured interview.

### **3.3.6. Promoting VET participation through increased attractiveness**

In November 2018, new degrees for higher vocational education were introduced based on the work of the National Higher Vocational Education Council (*Nasjonalt fagskoleråd*) and following public consultation until September 2018<sup>(52)</sup>. The *Fagskolegrad* (professional degree) is delivered after one-year vocational school education (60 and 90 credits). The *Høyere fagskolegrad* (higher professional degree) is delivered after two or three-year higher vocational education (120-180 credits).

The new law for higher vocational education (Section 3.3.2) is also expected to increase VET attractiveness.

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(52) <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/horing-om-ny-forskrift-om-hoyere-yrkesfaglig-utdanning---forskriftfesting-gradsbetegnelser/id2606600/?expand=horings svar>  
and  
<https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2018-11-22-1776>

## CHAPTER 4.

# MTD 4 – Key competences in both IVET and CVET

### 4.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period <sup>(53)</sup>, most secondary VET programmes followed a model that entailed two years of education in school, followed by two years of formalised apprenticeship training. During the first two years, school-based VET subjects were divided into three main categories (common core subjects, common programme subjects and in-depth study project). Common core subjects (English, Norwegian, mathematics, gymnastics, natural sciences and social sciences) were the same for all VET programmes.

The 2006 'knowledge promotion' reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) of compulsory and secondary education defined five basic skills, which were set high on the political agenda. These skills were basic in the sense that they were fundamental to learning in all subjects, as well as a prerequisite for learners to show their competence and qualifications. They were oral expression, reading, written expression, numeracy and digital literacy. A framework for basic skills (a major element of the *Kunnskapsløftet* reform) defined the five basic skills, describing their function at different levels of compulsory and secondary education. It was a generic framework intended to serve as a reference for integrating the basic skills when developing and revising the national subject-specific curricula. The curricula described how to integrate the basic skills and how these contribute to developing learner competence and qualifications. Principles for assessment were described as well.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training also organised courses for regional and local school providers and offered general web-based guidelines supporting the work on school curricula. There were also subject-specific guidelines for teachers to develop learners' basic skills. The guidelines provided examples on how to break down the competence aims into learning

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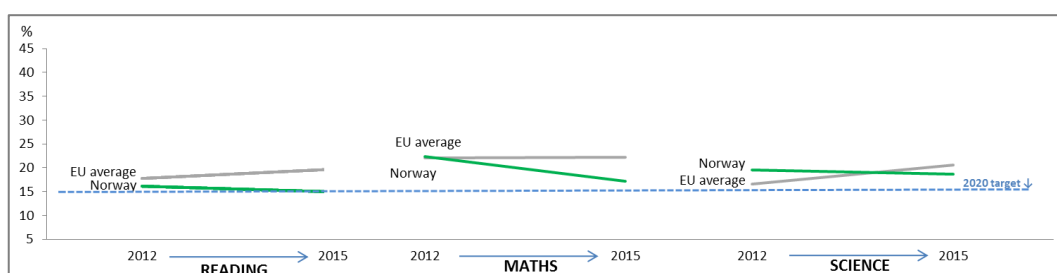
<sup>(53)</sup> This introductory section presents the 2015 state-of-play in the MTD as a baseline for the monitoring exercise. Most of the situation it describes has remained unchanged over the reporting period and is therefore still in place and relevant at the end of the reporting period. The next sections in this MTD focus on what has changed with respect to this 2015 baseline, and how.



targets; examples of teaching plans emphasising basic skills; and reflection questions for teachers on how to develop learners' basic skills.

The context of key competences in 2015 was mainly characterised by a decreasing share of young low achievers in reading, maths and science compared with 2012 (Figure 2). The share of low achievers in Norway was also lower than in the EU on average, where the trend was reverse.

Figure 2. **Share of 15-year-olds with low achievement in reading, maths and science**



NB: Low achievement means failing level 2 on the PISA (programme for international student assessment) scale.

Source: OECD, 2014; OECD, 2016.

As VET enrolled 50% of all upper secondary learners in the country<sup>(54)</sup>, this trend was likely to be reflected in the key competences trained for in VET programmes. This was happening against a background where VET dropout<sup>(55)</sup> had been of great concern to the educational authorities. Multiple measures had been implemented to strengthen the focus on the five basic skills, to aid facing high dropout rates.

#### 4.2. Key competences addressed in the reporting period

Table 2 outlines the key competences in initial and continuing VET that were addressed in the reporting period. A description of policies is provided in the following sections.

<sup>(54)</sup> Calculated from Eurostat table educ\_uoe\_enrs04; 2015 data.

<sup>(55)</sup> About 60% only of VET learners complete their upper secondary training successfully within five years.

Table 2. **Key competences addressed in 2015-19**

	IVET	CVET
Country language(s) and literacy	YES	YES
Foreign languages		
Digital competence	YES	YES
Maths	YES	YES
Science		
Technology		
Social and civic competences	YES	
Learning to learn		
Financial literacy		
Entrepreneurship competence		
Cultural awareness and expression		
Key competences as a package	YES	

NB: The list derives from the 2006 EU key competences framework for lifelong learning; it has been restructured and expanded with additional competences that can be considered key.

Source: Cedefop based on ReferNet input.

### 4.3. Key competences in initial VET

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to ensure more vocational-oriented and relevant teaching in the common core subjects in VET programmes, and more focus on basic skills' training.

A national commission mandated by the government presented in 2015 an official Norwegian report on the school of the future. The report proposed a new strategy for the renewal of subjects and competences in education and training, including VET. The report underlined that education and training had to contribute in developing learners' knowledge and competences in order for them to become active participants in an increasingly knowledge-intensive society. Changes were suggested, particularly renewing subjects to satisfy future competence needs in society and the labour market. Digital skills should be connected more closely to subject-specific competence. Digital competence should be integrated with other cross-curriculum competences. In April 2016, the government introduced a [white paper aiming at school subject renewal](#). Reading, writing, maths, communication and digital skills were suggested to remain as key competences and should be incorporated in curricula where relevant. It should be made clear which subjects are responsible for key competences, especially for digital skills and maths. Public consultation on the process was completed in June 2017, resulting in a process to renew all subjects. New curricula are under

development and will be implemented as of the school year 2020/21. One part curricula will describe values and principles on which the education should be based. Three interdisciplinary subjects will be prioritised: democracy and citizenship, sustainable development, and public health and coping. These themes will be prioritised in all subjects where relevant. The curriculum will get a new structure and will have three parts: subject-related information; competence aims; and assessment.

In March 2017, the government presented a white paper titled *Desire to learn, early intervention and quality in schools* that foresees timely support for all learners (including in VET) with difficulties in reading, maths or writing.

A digitalisation strategy for 2017-21 (*Fremtid, fornyelse og digitalisering*) was published by the Government on 25 August 2017. The strategy identifies overall perspectives, challenges, main goals, and key action areas: learners' learning; school content, competence, infrastructure, and VET. The focus for VET is on upskilling vocational teachers in line with technological change and schools' needs, and cooperation with businesses <sup>(56)</sup>.

#### 4.4. Key competences in continuing VET

For 2016-20, the country's priority in this area, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to increase the quality of provision in CVET.

The 2016 white paper *From exclusion to new opportunities: Coordinated efforts for adult education* (Section 3.3.4.2) supported the development of tools to map basic skills.

In March 2017, Skills Norway designed a tool on how to map key competences for young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), and for the public in general. The goal is relevant training for the target groups.

In April 2017, Skills Norway completed designing an online learning platform for literacy, numeracy and digital skills and started to produce content for it.

In 2018, Skills Norway initiated a pilot for adults, with low basic skills, where the participants combine basic skills training and preparation for a craft certificate.

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<sup>(56)</sup> [https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/dc02a65c18a7464db394766247e5f5fc/k\\_d\\_framtid\\_fornyelse\\_digitalisering\\_nett.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/dc02a65c18a7464db394766247e5f5fc/k_d_framtid_fornyelse_digitalisering_nett.pdf) and <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/mer-koding-og-teknologi-inn-i-skolen/id2568375/>

## CHAPTER 5.

# MTD 5 – Systematic initial and continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers

## 5.1. Baseline 2015

At the beginning of the reporting period <sup>(57)</sup>, VET teaching in Norway was faced with the difficulty to attract professionals from better paid sectors, and an ageing teaching force <sup>(58)</sup>. In addition, teachers' knowledge was usually limited to a specialisation, hence a need for CPD programmes enabling teachers to teach broader vocational areas.

Four main groups of teachers and trainers were at play in VET programmes:

- (a) general subject teachers;
- (b) VET teachers (providing formal school-based VET);
- (c) in-company training supervisors (*faglige ledere*);
- (d) in-company trainers (*instruktører*).

### 5.1.1. Access to VET school teaching: entry requirements and initial training

General subject teachers had to have formal qualifications in the relevant subject and in education (pedagogics and didactics).

VET teachers had to have a vocational/professional degree/qualification plus vocational 'practical pedagogical education' (including pedagogical theory, vocational didactics and supervised practice). Alternatively, they could have completed vocational teacher education (a comprehensive three-year bachelor programme covering both vocational training and pedagogy). Following a 2013 regulation, VET teacher education had particular focus on innovation and entrepreneurship (Cedefop, 2015). The national curriculum for VET teacher

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<sup>(57)</sup> This introductory section presents the 2015 state-of-play in the MTD as a baseline for the monitoring exercise. Most of the situation it describes has remained unchanged over the reporting period and is therefore still in place and relevant at the end of the reporting period. The next sections in this MTD focus on what has changed with respect to this 2015 baseline, and how.

<sup>(58)</sup> In seven out of the nine vocational education programmes, more than half of the teachers were aged 50+.

education also required that state-of-the-art technology be used and attention paid to training for adapting teaching to individual needs and supporting learners with learning difficulties and social/emotional problems.

#### **5.1.2. In-company trainers: entry requirements and initial training**

In-company training supervisors had to have one of the following qualifications:

- (a) trade or journeyman's certificate in the relevant trade or craft;
- (b) master craftsperson's certificate in the relevant craft;
- (c) relevant higher education in the trade or craft;
- (d) adequate educational background in those parts of the trade which, according to the curriculum, would be taught in the enterprise;
- (e) six years of experience in the trade or craft.

In-company trainers were not required to have a teaching certificate. Some trainers had not formalised their vocational skills, but operated solely based on skills developed through work practice. Formal regulations simply stated that the management of the training enterprise had to ensure that trainers had 'the necessary qualifications' (The Education Act of 1998).

#### **5.1.3. VET school teachers: main lines for CPD**

Counties were responsible for the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers. They were obligated by law to provide teachers with opportunities for competence enhancement. Though CPD was not compulsory for teachers, attending CPD activities (especially courses and workshops) was common practice. Four major CPD schemes were in place.

The *Competence for quality* scheme (*Kompeteanse for kvalitet*), a partnership between the *Norwegian association of local and regional authorities*, HE institutions, the employee organisation and the Ministry, offered vocational training and courses in didactics, with emphasis on use of ICT and practice.

The *Assessment for learning* programme (*Vurdering for læring*) aimed to encourage schools and training enterprises to develop an assessment culture and assessment practices. Focus was on improving teachers and trainers' understanding of assessment as a learning tool, and improving their assessment competence.

The FYR programme was introduced in 2011 with aim of promoting schools' understanding of the vocational relevance of theoretical common core subjects (general education components) in upper-secondary VET programmes <sup>(59)</sup>.

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<sup>(59)</sup> Between 2014 and 2016, nearly 3 000 teachers and school administrators participated in collaborative training sessions.

The *Work exchange* programme, piloted in 2010 <sup>(60)</sup> and all country authorities were part of the programme from 2013. It provided teachers, training supervisors and trainers with opportunities to take part in professional work in enterprises and schools. The aims were to increase the professional knowledge and experience of participants, strengthen collaboration between schools and working life, and enhance the coherence between school education and workplace training. A total of 1 032 teachers and trainers participated in this programme in 2014.

***In-company trainers: main lines for CPD***

County authorities were also responsible for ensuring correct and necessary competence for training in-company training supervisors and trainers.

## 5.2. Initial training for teaching/training staff in VET schools 2015-19

For 2016-20, the country's priorities in this area, as set by the Ministry of Education and Research, are:

- (a) to qualify teachers without formal teacher training;
- (b) recruit more VET teachers.

A national *VET teacher promotion* initiative was launched in October 2015, aiming to attracting new teachers to ensure sufficiency and quality of VET teaching staff. It builds on previous successful pilots. The programme is based on scholarships and flexible educational pathways for skilled workers. A scholarship scheme for non-qualified VET teachers who want to complete VET teacher education has been set up and is managed by the Directorate for Education and Training. Since 2016, those who are not yet employed in schools may apply for a scholarship aiming at becoming VET teachers. The school owners (county authority), based on their competence needs, apply on behalf of the students.

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<sup>(60)</sup> Based on the Norwegian Parliament's white paper No 20/2013 '*On the right quality and diversity in Norwegian education and training*'.

### 5.3. CPD for teaching/training staff in VET schools 2015-19

The country's priorities in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Ministry of Education and Research, are to:

- (a) expand opportunities for vocational teachers to improve their knowledge through developing new and more relevant courses;
- (b) provide informal training in enterprises, for example through work exchange programmes.

The 2015 *VET teacher promotion* initiative (Section 5.2) also provides for VET teacher CPD. Measures include:

- (a) giving vocational teachers the opportunity to develop their competences by creating new and more relevant courses;
- (b) supporting VET teachers with a technological background who lack teacher training in upgrading their qualifications, through scholarships and increased supply of pedagogical training (one-year programme in educational theory and practice).

CPD will be based on VET teacher competence needs surveys that will inform the development of new and more relevant CPD courses. Courses will be offered in didactics, technological developments, specific subjects/disciplines, learning assessment and also in common core subjects. In 2017, school owners (public and private) were invited to apply for scholarships for staff in teaching positions who want to undertake vocational teacher training to qualify to become certified teachers.

Links with the business world will be further supported, through work exchange and work experience schemes, and schemes that allow participation in CPD courses organised by enterprises. Work exchange allows teachers and trainers to take part in professional work in contexts other than their own, in order to obtain experience relevant for their regular work.

A survey of vocational teachers' competence needs was carried out in 2016 by the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU). The results showed that VET teachers need competence development in their discipline, didactics and new technological developments.

### 5.4. CPD for trainers in enterprises 2015-19

The country's priority in this area for 2016-20, as set by the Director General for Vocational Education and Training, is to provide CPD opportunities for trainers.

Increased competence development for VET trainers is part of the 2015 *VET teacher promotion* initiative (Sections 5.2. and 5.3). Measures include increasing the access of in-company trainers to visiting teacher/trainer schemes that allow better knowledge of curricula and school-based learning components. The initiative supports the improvement of training quality in enterprises by providing increased expertise in the use of curriculum, instruction and adapted training. The work exchange / work experience strand of the *VET teacher promotion* initiative also covers trainers. County councils, who are responsible for VET trainer CPD, offer various courses.





# Statistical overview: 2019 update

Table 3 updates the figures that were provided in Table 1. Although Table 1 may contain data for 2015, these are not systematically repeated here. In some cases, not repeating is due to breaks in time series, which prevent comparability. In other cases, values differ due to methodological changes.

Table 3. **Score on VET indicators in Norway and in the EU: 2015, last available year and recent change**

Indicator label	2015				Last available year				Recent change			
	NO	f	EU	f	Yr	NO	f	EU	f	Range	NO	EU
<b>Access, attractiveness and flexibility</b>												
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	50.1		47.3	ce	'17	49.7		47.8	ce	'15-'17	-0.4	0.5
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	32.7		28.3	ce	'17	67		27.9	ce	'15-'17	34.3	-0.5
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET		z	68.1	ce	'17		z	68.6	ce	'15-'17		0.4
Workers participating in CVT courses (%)	54.3		40.8		'15	54.3		40.8				
Workers participating in on-the-job training (%)	51		34		'15	51		34				
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	20.1		10.7		'18	19.7		11.1		'15-'18	-0.4	0.4
Enterprises providing training (%)	99.1		72.6		'15	99.1		72.6				
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	41.2		42	ce	'17	41		42.7	ce	'15-'17	-0.3	0.7
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	53.1		30		'15	53.1		30				
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)	39		33		'18	34.7		33		'15-'18	-4.3	0
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	13.7		6.9		'18	13.2		7.3		'15-'18	-0.5	0.4
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	12.9		4.3		'18	13.5		4.3		'15-'18	0.6	0
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	20.8		9.5		'18	21.8		10.7		'15-'18	1	1.2
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)					'16			11.4				
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)					'16	89.3		79.4				

Indicator label	2015				Last available year				Recent change			
	NO	f	EU	f	Yr	NO	f	EU	f	Range	NO	EU
<b>Skill development and labour market relevance</b>												
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)	<b>0.7</b>		0.5	ce	'16	<b>0.7</b>		0.5	ce	'15-'16	<b>0</b>	0
IVET public expenditure per student (1000 PPS units)	<b>13</b>		7.1	ce	'16	<b>12.7</b>		7.4	ce	'15-'16	<b>-0.4</b>	0.3
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	<b>0.9</b>		0.9		'15	<b>0.9</b>		0.9				
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	<b>0.5</b>		1	ce	'17	<b>0.5</b>		1	ce	'15-'17		0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	<b>34.3</b>		29.2	ce	'17	<b>32</b>		29.1	ce	'15-'17	<b>-2.3</b>	0
Short-cycle VET graduates as % of first time tertiary education graduates	<b>7</b>				'17	<b>5.8</b>		14.3	b ce	'15-'17	<b>-1.2</b>	
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)					'16	<b>68.7</b>		37.7				
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds)	<b>90.7</b>		77.2		'18	<b>91.7</b>		80.5		'15-'18	<b>1</b>	3.3
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)	<b>10.7</b>		5.4		'18	<b>14.8</b>		6.6		'15-'18	<b>4.1</b>	1.2
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)	<b>26.8</b>		23.7		'18	<b>25.2</b>		23.3		'15-'18	<b>-1.6</b>	-0.4
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)	<b>86.8</b>		83.7		'15	<b>86.8</b>		83.7				
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)	<b>62</b>		57		'15	<b>62</b>		57				
<b>Overall transitions and labour market trends</b>												
Early leavers from education and training (%)	<b>10.2</b>		11		'18	<b>9.9</b>		10.6		'15-'18	<b>-0.3</b>	-0.4
30-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	<b>50.9</b>		38.7		'18	<b>50.6</b>		40.7		'15-'18	<b>-0.3</b>	2
NEET rate for 18-24 year-olds (%)	<b>7</b>		15.8		'18	<b>6.7</b>		13.7		'15-'18	<b>-0.3</b>	-2.1
Unemployment rate for 20-34 year-olds (%)	<b>6.4</b>		12.9		'18	<b>5.1</b>		9.4		'15-'18	<b>-1.3</b>	-3.5
Employment rate of recent graduates (%)	<b>89.7</b>		75.9		'18	<b>90.7</b>		80.6		'15-'18	<b>1</b>	4.7
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	<b>17.3</b>		23.5		'18	<b>17</b>		21.9		'15-'18	<b>-0.3</b>	-1.6
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	<b>79.1</b>		70		'18	<b>79.2</b>		73.1		'15-'18	<b>0.1</b>	3.1
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds with lower level of educational attainment (%)	<b>60.5</b>		52.6		'18	<b>60.5</b>		56.1		'15-'18	<b>0</b>	3.5
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2030 (% of total)					'18	<b>68.6</b>	D	85.8	D			

EU refers to EU-28, unless otherwise specified.  
(D) Forecast made in 2018.  
(ce) Cedefop estimate based on available country data  
(b) Eurostat: 'break in time series'

(u) Eurostat: 'low reliability'.  
(z) Eurostat: 'not applicable'.  
(e) Eurostat: 'estimated'.  
(d) Eurostat: 'definition differs'.

Source: Cedefop (2020).

In 2017, 49.7% of all upper secondary students in Norway were enrolled in IVET. This percentage is 1.9 points above the EU average. It appears, however, that the percentage of upper secondary students in IVET is lower by 0.4 points compared to the situation in the country in 2015.

In 2017, 67% of all upper secondary IVET students were enrolled in a work-based learning setting which is substantially higher (34.3 points more) than in 2015. In contrast the EU average is 27.9 %.

In 2018, 19.4 % of adults participated in LLL activities, which is slightly lower (0.4 points less) than in 2015. The EU average is 11.1 %.

In 2018, the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) was 91.7%. It appears that the employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 years old) is higher by 1 point compared to the situation in the country in 2015. The EU average is 80.5 %.

# Conclusion

Since 2015, Norway has taken measures to increase the number of apprenticeship contracts, particularly through involving more enterprises. The follow-up of student transition to the labour market has been reinforced to inform the VET development strategy better. Steps have been taken to open further the access of all to VET and qualifications, through setting up new opportunities for adults to train and obtain qualifications, improving permeability and flexibility, and actively addressing the issue of skills validation for refugees and recent immigrants. Progress is also being made towards setting up an overall approach for quality assurance in VET and building a comprehensive national qualifications framework. Initiatives were taken to foster key competences in initial and continuing VET. A comprehensive 2015 initiative has been introduced to attract new VET teachers and improve the continuous professional development of VET teachers and trainers.

Changes in 2017-18 addressed all MTDs through the priorities which the new Government, appointed in 2017, announced for VET (Section 3.3.1). MTD-specific developments also took place. In MTD 1, a prize for the best public apprenticeship placement was awarded for the first time (Section 1.3.7.1). A new online and social media promotional campaign was launched (Section 1.3.7.2). In MTD 2, a committee to examine the Norwegian upper-secondary education system (Section 2.3), a national complaints board for tertiary VET (Section 2.2), and a committee for the anticipation of skills needs (Section 2.3) were established. In MTD 3, measures for more flexibility in admission to higher education have been adopted (Section 3.3.4.4). In MTD 4, a digitalisation strategy for 2017-21 was set out (Section 4.3).

Further developments in 2018 occurred in MTDs 2 and 3. In MTD 2, an expert committee was set up in March 2018 to look into unmet needs in continuing education (Section 2.4). In April 2018, the first national study survey on quality in higher vocational education was carried out (Section 2.3). In MTD 3, a new law was adopted in April 2018, raising the profile of post-secondary vocational schools (Section 3.3.2). A service for the automatic recognition of higher education from the Nordic countries was established in June 2018 (Section 3.3.4.2). The scheme for opening up VET to general education students reached the full scale implementation stage (Section 3.3.4.3).

In 2019 in MTD 3, the piloting of industry programme courses for continuing training in higher vocational education started (Section 3.3.4.5).

The actions carried out show that the main lines of the Riga conclusions and the country's policy priorities for 2016-20 are being addressed.

# Acronyms

AES	adult education survey
CPD	continuing professional development
CPS	certificate of practice scheme
CVET	continuing vocational education and training
DGVT	Director General for Vocational Education and Training
ECVET	European credit system for vocational education and training
EQAVET	European quality assurance in vocational education and training
EQF	European qualifications framework
GDP	gross domestic product
ISCED	international standard classification of education
IVET	initial vocational education and training
NEET	not in education, employment or training
NIFU	Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education
NOK	Norwegian krone
NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
NoU	official Norwegian report
NQF	Norwegian qualifications framework
PIAAC	programme for the international assessment of adult competences
PISA	programme for international student assessment
PPS	purchasing power standards
QF-EHEA	qualifications frameworks in the European higher education area
RPL	recognition of prior learning
SIU	Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education
STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
UDIR	Directorate of Education and Training
VAT	value added tax
VET	vocational education and training

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