



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Policy Plan

Languages Open Doors

A Strategy for Promoting Foreign Languages in
Primary and Secondary Education, and Training 2005-2009

Revised January 2007





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Open Doors!

Norway is a small language community and therefore needs many people with good linguistic skills. I will make every effort to reinforce the position of languages in schools and would like as many pupils as possible to choose a second foreign language in addition to English. I would also like pupils at all levels to become as proficient as possible in English. In addition I wish to stimulate measures to allow pupils to develop their mother tongue. Plurilingualism is an asset in a globalised world.

The *Knowledge Promotion* has given the pupils an opportunity to choose between several languages at lower secondary school. In addition to German, French, Russian or Spanish, or any other foreign language the school is able to offer, the pupil may choose in-depth studies in English or Norwegian. From the autumn of 2007 in-depth studies in Sami will also be possible. Recent statistics show that in the autumn of 2006 about 20,000 more pupils chose a second foreign language at lower secondary school compared to earlier years. In other words, roughly five out of six pupils choose foreign languages. By far the greatest majority of those who choose in-depth language studies choose English. In sum, this is an extensive national foreign language promotion designed to open doors for many people.

Earlier, many pupils have chosen not to continue foreign languages after the 8th and 9th grades. There may have been several reasons for this, *inter alia* the diffuse status of the subject and that it has had no significance for admission to upper secondary education. This has now changed. One major reason for pupils opting out may also have been the actual teaching practice that has mainly concentrated on learning about the foreign language, not communicating in it. In vocational education and training it is a special challenge to make the teaching of English topical and relevant for pupils. The key is adapted teaching that lets pupils learn in different ways. If pupils find foreign language teaching interesting and useful, we will, in a few years, be much better equipped to meet the communication challenges of the future.

Adapted language teaching presupposes teachers with good language skills and insight into teaching methods, and the shortage of qualified language teachers gives cause for concern. The large increase in the number of pupils now choosing foreign language tuition brings new challenges. I will therefore intensify efforts to increase the competence of teachers in practically oriented foreign language teaching, by providing teachers with a new further education programme from the autumn of 2007. This is only one of many good measures in *Languages Open Doors*.

I wish you all good luck with this extensive foreign language promotion!

Oslo, 20 December 2006



Øystein Djupedal
Minister of Education and Research

Foreword	5
Contents	6
Introduction	8
Chapter 1 Survey of Objectives and Measures	10
Chapter 2 Description of the Current Situation	14
1. <i>A national perspective</i>	14
The demand for foreign language competence in the community	14
The situation of foreign languages in primary and secondary education	16
Training, recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers	22
Teaching other subjects through foreign languages, the foreign language as the language of teaching	24
International programmes	25
Digital skills in foreign languages	28
Research and development work in Norway	29
2. <i>An international perspective</i>	30
The Nordic countries	30
The demand for foreign languages – the EU and the Council of Europe	30
The EU’s Action Plan for Language Learning	31
EU educational programmes	32
The Council of Europe’s activities to promote languages	33
Chapter 3 Objectives and Measures	38
1. <i>Greater diversity and breadth in foreign language teaching</i>	38
1.1 More schools offer teaching of foreign languages other than English at the primary level	38
1.2 More schools offer more foreign languages, also non-European languages	39
1.3 More adults are offered basic training in foreign languages	41
2. <i>Improved quality in foreign language teaching</i>	42
2.1 Foreign language teaching is differentiated and adapted to the pupils’ abilities	42
2.2 Foreign language teaching has a practical approach	43
2.3 More teachers make use of portfolios in teaching and assessment	44
2.4 More pupils and apprentices show increased digital competence in planning, carrying out and assessing the foreign language learning	45



<i>3 Increased recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers</i>	46
3.1 Increased recruitment to language studies of students who wish to become teachers	46
3.2 More further and supplementary teacher training in foreign languages	46
3.3 Wider supply of courses in foreign languages with didactics	48
<i>4 Increased knowledge about the demand for foreign language competence</i>	49
4.1 Increased knowledge in the education sector and the community about the value of learning foreign languages for the development of culture, democracy and mobility	49
4.2 Increased knowledge among parents and pupils about foreign languages and the consequences of choosing languages	50
4.3 Increased use of internationally acknowledged documentation tools for foreign language competence for pupils and apprentices and in working life	51
4.4 Increased knowledge about society's demand for other foreign languages than English	51
<i>5 Strengthened internationalisation in foreign language teaching</i>	52
5.1 Better use of existing bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries	52
5.2 More bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries	53
5.3 Better use of international cooperation programmes	53
<i>6 Increased research and development work in foreign languages</i>	54
6.1 More research in central aspects of foreign languages	54
6.2 More research and development work on foreign languages in teacher training institutions	54
Chapter 4 The Main Partners	56
The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education	56
The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)	57
The National Institute for Adult Learning (Vox)	58
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training	58
Network for Competence Development	59
References	60
Useful Links	62



Language Education in a Globalised World

Foreign language skills are becoming increasingly necessary as countries become linked by new media, and the boundaries are opened for moves, both for work and holiday purposes. Increased mobility and digital interaction mean that proficiency in more foreign languages and intercultural competence is necessary for communication and participation in many areas. All over the world English has developed from being a language for mediating between certain cultures and values reserved for an elite group, to being a skill generally agreed upon as one that most people should master. Learning a foreign language is also worthwhile, not only for its utility value, but because it gives us better insight into other cultures, into our mother tongue and into other languages that we know. Thus, our total language and cultural competence will increase and become a part of our personal development.

Internationally Norwegian is a language understood by very few people, so both depth and breadth in our national foreign language competence are important. The Council of Europe and the EU have agreed upon the objective that European pupils should, from an early stage, receive instruction in at least two foreign languages, and the Norwegian Government wants as many pupils as possible in secondary school to choose a foreign language in addition to English. The subject curricula for *English* and *foreign languages* in

the education reform called *the Knowledge Promotion* emphasises communication, culture and language learning. *English* is a common core subject shared by all pupils in primary and secondary education. The curriculum for *foreign languages* is also a common core subject, and pupils in lower secondary schools may choose a language at Level I that will be part of the admission criteria for upper secondary education and training. Level II is for pupils in upper secondary education and training and is based on instruction in the language at Level I. Circular F-003-06 from the Ministry of Education and Research contains more information about electives and transitional provisions.

Most people agree that it is practical to learn and know English, and Norwegian pupils consider English an important subject. However there are still many people in Norway who think that foreign languages in school are theoretical subjects. In 2003 a report from an expert group appointed by the Council of Europe pointed out that any subject can be made more or less theoretical or practical and that research has shown no reasons for claiming that some subjects are more theoretical than others.¹ The Government supports activities giving foreign language teaching a more practical approach, so that the pupils may use the language from the very first lesson. The most important thing about learning a language is acquiring skills in it, not knowledge about it.

¹ *Language Education Policy Profile for Norway, the Council of Europe/ The Ministry of Education and Research 2003 – 2004*

Norway has an important resource in the immigrant languages, both culturally and as a prerequisite for contact with the rest of the world. At the lower secondary level schools must offer at least one of four languages: German, French, Spanish or Russian. If schools have sufficient resources, they can offer additional languages, including non-European ones. Some schools have used language assistants, and so gathered experience in teaching the lesser taught languages. In a globalised world bi- and plurilingualism is a resource!

The Objectives and Structure of the Policy Plan

The Policy Plan *Languages Open Doors* (2005-2009) is being extended for 2007-2009 in a revised edition under the same name. The Policy Plan covers all foreign languages, from the global language of English to those languages seldom taught in Norwegian schools but which may often be of international importance.

The general objective of the Policy Plan is the same as in the first version:

Improved skills in more foreign languages for pupils, apprentices and teachers in primary and secondary education and training, and an increased interest in, and motivation for, language learning.

The six main objectives are also the same:

1. Greater diversity and breadth in foreign language teaching
2. Improved quality in foreign language teaching
3. Increased recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers
4. Increased knowledge about the demand for foreign language competence
5. Strengthened internationalisation in foreign language teaching
6. Increased research and development work in foreign languages

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the policy's objectives and measures. Chapter 2 is an updated description of the situation of the teaching of English and other foreign languages. Chapter 3 describes the various measures designed to meet the challenges specified in Chapters 1 and 2. During the period the Policy Plan has been in force, several of

the measures have been implemented. Some have been started and are being monitored, while others are about to be implemented. A description of the status of the measures is included for each of them. Chapter 4 presents the main partners in the work for promoting foreign languages in primary and secondary education.

Responsibility for Follow-up and Implementation

The revised version of *Languages Open Doors* (2007-2009) is to follow up measures from the first version and contribute to the realisation of the political objectives of the Government's *Soria Moria Declaration*. It is also connected to the White Paper no. 30 called *Culture for Learning* (2003-2004) and *the Knowledge Promotion*. *Languages Open Doors* must furthermore be seen in conjunction with the policy document *Competence for Development* which provides the basis for the rise in competence being implemented in primary and secondary education and training in the period of 2005-2008.

The administration of the Policy Plan is based on the general principles of responsibilities being shared between the various levels of the educational sector. The Plan is normative for decision-makers and for all those with responsibility at all levels, from the Ministry to individual teachers. The measures included in the Plan are to help disseminate good examples, and must be included in the planning documents of the institutions so as to ensure inclusion, coherence and continuity in all efforts from the primary level up to higher education and research.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has been given the main responsibility for following up and updating *Languages Open Doors*, including preparing status reports and evaluations of the plan's measures. The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education and the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) are central participants in the implementation of the strategy. Teacher training institutions, school owners and schools are also important when it comes to following up the Policy Plan's measures. Vox – the National Institute for Adult Learning – and NAFO – the National Centre for Multicultural Education – are also involved in some of the measures.

1 Survey of Objectives and Measures

Supplementary comments about objectives and measures are to be found in Chapter 3.

General Objective

Improved skills in more foreign languages for pupils, apprentices and teachers in primary and secondary education and training, and an increased interest in, and motivation for, language learning.

Main Objectives

<h1>1</h1> <p>Greater diversity and breadth in foreign language teaching</p>	<h1>2</h1> <p>Improved quality in foreign language teaching</p>	<h1>3</h1> <p>Increased recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers</p>
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Partial Objectives

1.1 More schools offer teaching of foreign languages other than English at the primary level	2.1 Foreign language teaching is differentiated and adapted to the pupils' abilities	3.1 Increased recruitment to language studies of students who wish to become teachers
1.2 More schools offer more foreign languages, also non-European languages	2.2 Foreign language teaching has a practical approach	3.2 More further and supplementary teacher training in foreign languages
1.3 More adults are offered basic training in foreign languages	2.3 More teachers make use of portfolios in teaching and assessment	3.3 Wider supply of courses in foreign languages with didactics
	2.4 More pupils and apprentices show increased digital competence in planning, carrying out and assessing the foreign language learning	

Measures

1.1.1 Start experiments with early start of second foreign language Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training	2.1.1 Survey the pupils' choice of foreign languages at lower secondary level Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training	3.1.1 Use networks to recruit students to teacher training in foreign languages Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, Network for Competence Development
1.1.2 Develop a European Language Portfolio for the primary level Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training	2.1.2 Survey correlation between English skills in primary and lower secondary education, and drop-out levels from vocational education and training Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training	3.1.2 Give information about and recruit students to choose languages and practical pedagogical education Responsible: The Directorate for Education and Training, universities and colleges, Network for Competence Development

4 Increased knowledge about the demand for foreign language competence

5 Strengthened internationalisation in foreign language teaching

6 Increased research and development work in foreign languages

4.1 Increased knowledge in the education sector and the community about the value of learning foreign languages for the development of culture, democracy and mobility	5.1 Better use of existing bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries	6.1 More research in central aspects of foreign languages
4.2 Increased knowledge among parents and pupils about foreign languages and the consequences of choosing languages	5.2 More bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries	6.2. More research and development work on foreign languages in teacher training institutions
4.3 Increased use of internationally acknowledged documentation tools for foreign language competence for pupils and apprentices and in working life	5.3 Better use of international cooperation programmes	
4.4 Increased knowledge about society's demand for other foreign languages than English		

4.1.1 Implement measures directed towards schools, universities and colleges to celebrate the European Day of Languages Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education	5.1.1 Continue existing and establish new schemes with foreign language assistants and language teachers from central cooperating countries Responsible: The Directorate, the Ministry of Education and Research, SIU	6.1.1 Continue existing and initiate new research programmes in central aspects of foreign languages in relation to practical training and teacher training Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, universities and colleges, school owners
4.1.2 Contribute to pupil activities connected with the role of languages in teaching democratic citizenship Responsible: The Directorate	5.1.2 Provide information about the value of teacher exchanges and language assistant schemes Responsible: The Directorate, SIU, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education	6.2.1 Initiate and strengthen research and development connected to international project cooperation within foreign languages Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, SIU

<p>1.1.3 Implement experiments with integrating foreign languages in the instruction of other subjects at the primary level Responsible: The Directorate</p>	<p>2.1.3 Start experiments for developing pupils' partial skills in the second foreign language in primary and lower secondary school Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, Vox</p>	<p>3.2.1 Continue and develop models and measures for increasing the competence of foreign language teachers Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, universities and colleges, school owners, Network for Competence Development</p>
<p>1.2.1 Start experiments with mother tongue as second language Responsible: The Directorate, the National Centre for Multicultural Education</p>	<p>2.1.4 Introduce good solutions for adapted education in foreign languages as one of the criteria for appointing demonstration schools Responsible: The Directorate</p>	<p>3.2.2 Publish an overview of competence development measures in foreign languages Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, universities and colleges, school owners</p>
<p>1.2.2 Start experiments with non-European languages as foreign languages Responsible: The Directorate, the National Centre for Multicultural Education</p>	<p>2.2.1 Prepare and offer supplementary teacher training courses in foreign language didactics for other foreign languages than English Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, The Directorate, the Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges, school owners</p>	<p>3.2.3 Further develop existing Internet-based supplementary and continuing education courses and develop new courses Responsible: Universities and colleges</p>
<p>1.2.3 Cooperate about resources between primary level, lower secondary level and upper secondary education and training and provide information about such cooperation Responsible: School owners, schools, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education</p>	<p>2.2.2 Provide guidance about learning practices that promote learning in foreign language teaching Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, school owners, schools</p>	<p>3.3.1 Extended offer of languages as electives in teacher training institutions and language programmes in the 5-year integrated teacher training system Responsible: The Directorate, universities and colleges, Network for Competence Development</p>
<p>1.2.4 Prepare information material for school counsellors in lower and upper secondary education Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education</p>	<p>2.3.1 Disseminate knowledge about <i>the European Language Portfolio</i> as a language teaching tool Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, school owners, universities and colleges</p>	<p>3.3.2 Participate in and develop international cooperation about primary and secondary education and supplementary and continuing teacher training for foreign language teachers Responsible: The Directorate, the Ministry of Education and Research, universities and colleges</p>
<p>1.2.5 Develop and make available paper-based and digital learning resources in some of the major immigrant languages Responsible: The Directorate</p>	<p>2.4.1 Disseminate knowledge about digital learning resources Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages</p>	
<p>1.3.1 Develop tools that make it possible for adults to learn foreign languages, also non-European ones Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, Vox</p>	<p>2.4.2 Further develop the use of ICT at school-leaving examinations and foreign language examinations and national English tests Responsible: The Directorate</p>	
	<p>2.4.3 Develop a common Internet website for foreign languages Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, The Directorate</p>	

<p>4.1.3 Reintroduce the language award <i>The European Label</i> Responsible: The Directorate , SIU</p>	<p>5.1.3 Implement experiments on the integration of foreign languages with other subjects in vocational education programmes Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education</p>	<p>6.2.2 Develop models for better interaction between research and practice in teacher training in foreign languages Responsible: The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges</p>
<p>4.1.4 Involve media providers in demonstrating the value of plurilingualism Responsible: The Directorate, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education</p>	<p>5.2.1 Establish contact with relevant target language countries in order to offer language scholarships for teachers of German, Spanish and Russian Responsible: The Directorate, the Ministry of Education and Research</p>	<p>6.2.3 Establish didactical school-oriented Master's studies Responsible: Universities and colleges</p>
<p>4.2.1 Cooperate with parents' councils nationally and locally about information material concerning foreign languages and choice of languages Responsible: The Directorate, the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education (FUG), school owners and schools</p>	<p>5.2.2 Continue and further develop bilateral agreements with countries in and outside the EEA for mutual exchanges within vocational education and training Responsible: The Ministry of Education and Research, the Directorate, SIU, Vox</p>	<p>6.2.4 Assess measures implemented in the policy plan <i>Languages Open Doors</i>, disseminate information about results and update the plan Responsible: The Directorate</p>
<p>4.3.1 Provide information concerning the documentation of language competence in the framework of the Europass scheme Responsible: The Directorate, SIU</p>	<p>5.3.1 Provide information about project funding and good practice in connection with internationalisation Responsible: SIU, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education</p>	
<p>4.4.1 Document the value of foreign languages for working life, culture and business life Responsible: Vox, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, the Directorate</p>		

2 Description of the Current Situation



1. A National Perspective

The demand for foreign language competence in the community

English has become the language of international cooperation. Today there are more than twice as many users of English as a foreign language as there are mother tongue users and users of English as a second or official language. Since World War II there has been a substantial global growth in the teaching of English. During the next 10-15 years the number of people learning English is expected to increase to nearly 2 billion.

A study published by the British Council (Graddol, 2006) describes the development of English from being a language which, in the countries of the British Empire, was associated with a social elite and the communication of British culture and values, to becoming almost a basic global skill. This development towards English as a *lingua franca* has enormous consequences for our perception of the language, for how we use it and therefore also for how we learn and teach English. World-wide we see a development in teaching models from being a method where English is treated as a foreign language, connected mainly with British and American cultures and with native language mastery

as a distant goal, to one where it is a global language with many international varieties that are mutually comprehensible for all users.

According to the British Council, Norway is in a transitional phase where we are passing from regarding English as a foreign language to using it as a second language (Graddol, 1997). There is a strong increase in the use of English in higher education and in various professional contexts. Academic publications in acknowledged journals today count more in the way of bonus or research grants than publication in other fora; in practice this means a preferential treatment of English as a publication language. 8 % of 1,032 companies who were asked about their use of foreign languages in Norwegian business life (Hellekjær and Kvam, 2006) stated that English was their official working language.

It may be tempting to think that this being so, we could get by with English alone. But the benefits of linguistic proficiency go beyond purely communicative skills. Language skills can break down barriers and create better contact, and will provide insight into history, literature, social conditions and not

least cultural codes, if the teaching is broad and not limited to learning isolated words and grammar by heart. Language studies are cultural studies and can provide insight into non-linguistic aspects which may in turn promote cross-cultural and international understanding.

Learning languages contributes to personal development, but also to the creation of values in society. Graddol (2006) shows that the slogan “English is not enough” is also applicable in the United Kingdom and the USA as well as in the rest of the global economy. In the survey “*Into the world with only English?*” Gaarder (2003) comments on the demand for foreign languages in Norway in this way: “One of them is the demand of export businesses. But there is also an important political and cultural dimension which is much more evident today than a few years back. It is a question of knowing *who* we are and *where* we stand[...] Norwegians are not only highly dependent on foreign trade, but they also have their roots in the diversified cultural tradition of Europe” (p. 67). Hellekjær and Kvam (2006) show that Norwegian firms are in great need of skills in the other foreign languages, but also that our English skills are not nearly good enough – and are especially poor in social settings which require cultural competence.

An encounter with another language contributes greatly to increased awareness and understanding of one’s own mother tongue, which in turn will lead to basic knowledge about the construction and structures of language. By working with languages we will increase our insight into the strategies used when learning languages. The strong position of English may also prove to be a platform for developing knowledge in both the second and the third foreign language. The better you are at the first foreign language, the easier it may be to develop skills in the second and third foreign languages. Skills may be the ability to read, to understand the language, not necessarily to speak or write it, at least not to begin with. Classroom experiments (Ulseth et al. 2003) have shown that pupils at all levels of primary and lower secondary education are both motivated for, and capable of understanding,

a lot of a foreign language which they have not yet learned systematically in school.

The Knowledge Promotion gives a lot of room for *language learning* at all levels in all languages. The teacher’s knowledge of language learning will therefore be of great significance in providing a good foundation for the teaching of other foreign languages. After *the Knowledge Promotion* it will be necessary to think about language teaching in a broader perspective, and in a larger context than simply instruction in the individual language.

The situation for foreign languages in Norway today is characterised by increased international cooperation in the educational and business sectors of Europe. Through the EEA Norway is an active participant in European educational policy. One of the main objectives of the Lisbon strategy² is to increase efforts in the knowledge sector, especially by developing quality and efficiency in education and research, and by removing obstacles for mobility for researchers, students, teachers, pupils and apprentices. Following up the Lisbon strategy in education and research is optional. It is up to each country to decide the means that are most appropriate for reaching the objectives. The starting point is nevertheless that the objectives of the EU are on the whole the same as the Norwegian ones. Norway’s participation in the EU’s educational programmes and national reports connected with European action plans and objectives in language teaching will be discussed later in this document. White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* says: “Norway cooperates and interacts with an increasing number of countries, not least the countries in the EU area. This means increased demands for knowledge of more languages, not least for communicative competence but also for the ability to find one’s way around the information society.”

² The EU’s strategy for making the EU the most competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world on a sustainable and social basis by 2010.

The Situation of Foreign Languages in Primary and Secondary Education

English

English was adopted as a compulsory subject in Norwegian schools in the 1960s, with tuition starting in the 5th grade. Since then, in line with international developments in the teaching of foreign languages, English has been started at an increasingly earlier age. Since the educational reform of 1997 (L97) most Norwegian pupils start English in the 1st grade.

The *Soria Moria Declaration* entails increased efforts in the subjects of Norwegian and English, and in instruction for pupils from minority language groups, one of the measures being an increased number of periods at the primary level. The Government wishes to give the pupils a broader basic competence and to make clearer demands for basic skills, amongst others in English. *The Knowledge Promotion* aims to make it possible to teach English in a way that develops the pupils' ability to "express themselves in writing and orally in a nuanced way that is appropriate for the context, with fluency, precision and cohesion" (*National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion*, English subject curriculum). Reading is also pinpointed as a separate basic skill. Attention is drawn to visual media and especially to films: the pupils are to be able to analyse, interpret and discuss films.

At the primary level the English subject curriculum is characterised by practical and aesthetic terms indicating that the pupils are meant to participate in English children's culture and literature through words, pictures, music and movement. The subject curriculum also stresses awareness of the similarities between English, the mother tongue and other languages, the structure of the language, text composition and use of digital media in language teaching.

It is uncertain how systematic English teaching is in the lowest grades. What we do know, is that the class teacher is also usually the English teacher in the first grades, and that most of them do not have any education in English. A survey undertaken by Drew (2004) comparing the situation of English in Norway with that in the Netherlands, points out that

the challenge facing Norway is how to exploit the potential inherent in an early start with the first foreign language. But in order to exploit the advantages of this early start it is imperative to have teachers who are well qualified to teach the lowest grades in both oral and written skills.

English is a compulsory subject in the course programmes both in the programmes for general studies and in vocational education programmes at the upper secondary level. The new elective subject offering *in-depth studies in English* at lower secondary school emphasises a broad range of texts and both traditional and more recent forms of expression such as music videos and digital genres. In the programmes for general studies the pupils can choose English as an optional programme subject.

Teacher competence in language learning is of decisive importance for how much pupils and apprentices learn. There is a clear correlation between how activities are planned and presented to the pupils and how much they learn. Teachers of vocational English especially need a comprehensive competence in how to plan the language activities as communicatively and usefully as possible for the pupils and apprentices. This applies both in more general language situations and in the more typically vocational settings.

One survey (Markussen and Sandberg, 2005) points out that there is a significantly larger percentage of pupils in vocational education who fail English than pupils in the programmes for general studies. Good subject proficiency for teachers in vocational English may help increase the number of pupils who complete their vocational education in upper secondary school.

Other foreign languages

On the introduction of a common, compulsory 9-year primary and lower secondary school (M74) the second foreign language (German, later French) became an elective subject. In the reform of 1997 (L97), the second foreign language became a so-called additional subject option, on a par with other subjects such as in-depth study project, in-depth studies in English and in-depth studies in Norwegian.

With *the Knowledge Promotion* in the school year of 2006-2007, pupils in the 8th grade must choose either a foreign language or in-depth studies in English, Norwegian or Sami (from 2007). This change will be implemented for the 9th grade from the school year of 2007-2008 and for the 10th grade in 2008-2009. At the lower secondary level schools must offer at least one of four languages: German, French, Spanish or Russian. If the schools have the necessary resources they can in addition offer other languages, also non-European ones.

The Government wants as many lower secondary pupils as possible to choose foreign languages. Foreign languages will receive a higher status as pupils will be assessed with marks in these subjects, and they will also be part of the admission criteria to upper secondary education. The subject curriculum in foreign languages as a practical subject will be maintained, so that the pupils are able to use the language from the very first lesson. There is no research to substantiate the claim that some subjects in themselves are more theoretical than

others; all subjects in primary and lower secondary education can be made more or less theoretical or practical. But Lindemann and Speitz (2002) showed that more than 60 % of the teachers in their survey were of the opinion that a second foreign language was not a suitable subject for all pupils, and many pupils dropped out. There are probably many factors at play here, but regarding German it seems, according to Minge (2006), as though monotonous teaching methods may have been a decisive factor.

The following tables show how subject selection has developed from 2000 to 2006. About five out of six pupils in the first year of *the Knowledge Promotion* reform have chosen a second foreign language, and Spanish is the most popular second foreign language. The demand for German in for instance trade and business has been pointed out. The distribution for the various counties shows great variations in the languages selected, but does not give grounds for drawing conclusions about how much is due to pupils' choices, and how much is due to the local structure of subjects offered.

The Development of Subject Choice in the Lower Secondary School (figures from the Information System for Primary and Lower Secondary Education GSI)

Additional subject options in the 8th, 9th and 10th grades 2000-2001	8th grade			9th grade			10th grade		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pupils following ordinary curriculum									
German	13 246	13 021	26 267	10 870	11 220	22 090	9 874	10 739	20 613
French	4 322	7 331	11 653	3 489	6 318	9 807	2 867	4 943	7 810
Finnish	5	1	6	34	4	38	1	12	13
Spanish	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other languages as second foreign language	291	321	612	276	262	538	199	204	403
In-depth language studies	1 859	1 803	3 662	2 061	2 111	4 172	2 109	2 289	4 398
In-depth study project	7 461	3 870	11 331	10 487	5 801	16 288	11 236	6 855	18 091

Additional subject options in the 8th, 9th and 10th grades 2003-2004	8th grade			9th grade			10th grade		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pupils following ordinary curriculum									
German	11 580	11 357	22 937	9 188	9 632	18 820	8 020	9 028	17 048
French	4 820	8 019	12 839	3 825	7 065	10 890	3 037	5 779	8 816
Finnish	8	39	47	19	25	44	5	6	11
Spanish	834	1 189	2 023	441	736	1 177	224	283	507
Other languages as second foreign language	105	147	252	162	184	346	148	170	318
In-depth language studies	1 932	2 152	4 084	2 226	2 648	4 874	2 015	2 487	4 502
In-depth study project	10 985	6 099	17 084	14 883	9 044	23 927	16 084	10 663	26 747

Additional subject options in the 8th, 9th and 10th grades 2005-2006	8th grade			9th grade			10th grade		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pupils following ordinary curriculum									
German	8 914	8 545	17 459	8 208	8 691	16 899	7 824	8 273	16 097
French	4 223	6 379	10 602	4 141	6 829	10 970	3 294	6 296	9 590
Finnish	11	10	21	17	15	32	17	26	43
Spanish	3 085	3 566	6 651	1 558	1 952	3 510	620	960	1 580
Other languages as second foreign language	138	132	270	179	228	407	144	208	352
In-depth language studies	1 242	1 337	2 579	1 967	2 202	4 169	1 854	2 368	4 222
In-depth study project	8 928	5 200	14 128	15 053	9 887	24 940	17 373	11 616	28 989

<i>Additional subject options in the 8th, 9th and 10th grades (L97) 2006-2007</i>	<i>8th grade</i>			<i>9th grade</i>			<i>10th grade</i>		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pupils following old curriculum									
German	0	0	0	5 028	5 242	10 270	7 123	7 581	14 704
French	0	0	0	2 416	4 068	6 484	3 496	5 982	9 478
Finnish	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	42	89
Spanish	0	0	0	1 750	2 220	3 970	1 321	1 789	3 110
Other languages as second foreign language	0	0	0	93	136	229	181	271	452
In-depth language studies	0	0	0	1 474	1 519	2 993	2 452	2 584	5 036
In-depth study project	0	0	0	10 205	6 516	16 721	16 131	11 058	27 189

<i>Foreign languages, including experiments and in-depth studies 2006-2007</i>	<i>8th grade</i>			<i>9th grade</i>			<i>10th grade</i>		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Pupils following new curriculum (incl. schools abroad)									
German	9 348	7 609	16 957	3 244	2 990	6 234	164	199	363
French	4 518	6 109	10 627	1 722	2 457	4 179	73	133	206
Spanish	9 637	10 635	20 272	2 211	2 582	4 793	62	67	129
Italian	0	0	0	26	32	58	0	0	0
Russian	34	45	79	12	19	31	5	6	11
Other languages	142	153	295	256	240	496	239	296	535
In-depth studies English	5 117	3 882	8 999	2 166	1 436	3 602	171	128	299
In-depth studies Norwegian	1 321	825	2 146	657	440	1 097	101	71	172
In-depth studies - others	166	136	302	99	59	158	2	0	2

**Other Foreign Languages and In-Depth Studies in Languages 8th Grade
Distribution by County in the School Year of 2006-2007 (figures as of 15.12.2006)**

	German	French	Spanish	Russian	Other languages	In-depth studies in English	In-depth studies in Norwegian	In-depth studies in other languages
Østfold	984	582	1 184	0	0	578	142	5
Akershus	1 660	1 656	2 664	0	0	956	120	0
Oslo	1 020	1 391	1 541	0	0	716	45	0
Hedmark	721	384	841	0	0	308	136	7
Oppland	742	383	704	0	85	279	148	0
Buskerud	1 124	575	612	0	0	634	105	0
Vestfold	767	672	932	0	0	495	108	0
Telemark	821	314	413	0	0	357	85	8
Aust-Agder	392	278	481	0	14	242	40	13
Vest-Agder	908	326	676	0	15	234	131	1
Rogaland	1 519	838	2 505	0	20	606	96	2
Hordaland	1 495	1 154	2 364	0	0	801	189	82
Sogn og Fjordane	768	158	275	0	23	227	44	1
Møre og Romsdal	1 174	463	891	0	5	623	150	0
Sør-Trøndelag	860	623	1 360	9	17	470	147	48
Nord-Trøndelag	405	222	850	0	0	267	50	2
Nordland	719	271	1 250	0	76	523	207	15
Troms	645	210	491	22	18	372	142	86
Finnmark	232	111	206	48	22	310	61	31
The whole country	16 956	10 611	20 240	79	295	8 998	2 146	301

The Knowledge Promotion entails that all pupils in programmes for general studies are to have one foreign language within the time frame allotted to common core subjects. In the programme for specialisation in general studies the pupils may, in addition, choose a foreign language as an optional programme subject. The Ministry of Education and Research's Circular F-003-06 concerning the position of foreign languages in *the Knowledge Promotion* states that "pupils who have completed level I in a foreign language in lower secondary school and continue to have instruction in the same language are to receive instruction at level II of the subject curriculum". As part of the transitional arrangements from L97 in the lower secondary school to *the Knowledge Promotion* in upper secondary education and training, pupils may nevertheless, on direct admission to programmes for specialisation in general studies, choose between continuing at level II in the foreign language they studied in the lower secondary school, taking level I of a new foreign language that they have not previously received instruction in, or beginning again at level I in the language they studied in lower secondary school.

In upper secondary education and training the most usual foreign languages are German and French but more and more pupils are applying to study Spanish, as is the case in lower secondary education. Updated statistics like the ones from the lower secondary level are not available. Some schools offer other languages, with Italian, Sami, Finnish, Japanese, Russian and Latin as the most usual ones. Vocational education programmes offer very few foreign languages apart from English.

Sami

Section 6-2 of the Education Act applies to pupils with Sami as their mother tongue. White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* states that at lower secondary schools outside Sami districts, if one or more pupils receive instruction in Sami pursuant to Section 6-2, sub-section 5, of the Education Act, then other pupils are also entitled to choose Sami instead of the second foreign language. The new opportunity of in-depth studies in English or Norwegian (from 2006) and Sami (from 2007) is an

alternative for pupils wishing to improve their competence in one of these languages instead of beginning a new foreign language. School owners decide which of the three specialisation opportunities the pupils are to be given and how this is to be organised.

Kven/Finnish

Pupils in the counties of Troms or Finnmark may receive instruction in Finnish as a second language (from the 1st grade) if their parents so wish. At lower secondary level the pupils can decide for themselves if they wish to continue with Finnish. In the 10th grade the pupils may take Finnish as a second language instead of the second-choice form of written Norwegian. This also applies to upper secondary education.

Other languages

During the school year of 2005-2006 Norway had 20,744 pupils from a minority language background in primary and lower secondary education (figures from GSI), and 17,438 pupils and apprentices in upper secondary education and training (figures from Statistics Norway (SSB) with a mother tongue other than Norwegian or Sami. This represents an average of 7 % of the total number of pupils. Pupils from a minority language background make up 21 % of the pupils in primary and lower secondary education in Oslo (GSI); the percentage decreases the farther north you go up the country. In Troms, for instance, only 2 % of the pupils are from a minority language background. The most widespread immigrant languages are Urdu, Arabic and Albanian. In some regions minority languages could be relevant as foreign languages in school.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research a group of experts appointed by the Council of Europe drew up a so-called *Language Education Policy Profile* for Norway (2003-2004). This profile describes plurilingualism in Norway as a highly positive aspect: the wealth of linguistic resources is illustrated by the fact that pupils learn two written varieties of Norwegian (or Kven/Finnish or Sami, if applicable), understand Danish and Swedish, and have an early start with English, as well as by the fact that there are school-leaving examination papers

in more than 100 languages for upper secondary pupils with other mother tongues. These experts were therefore surprised to find that the value of this linguistic wealth was not given more emphasis as a positive factor.

Exploiting plurilingualism in the classroom may be an important contribution to an increased linguistic interest in general and to motivation for language learning, as well as creating increased understanding and tolerance for pupils with a non-European language background (cf. Solfjeld 2004).

New subject curricula

The Knowledge Promotion was introduced at the start of the new school year in 2006 with new subject curricula in all subjects in primary and secondary education and training. For the first time in the history of Norwegian education the new curricula are to be common core subject, so as to ensure and clarify progression and continuity between the different school levels. Academic progress is expressed through competence aims, and five basic skills – being able to express oneself orally and in writing, being able to read and do arithmetic and digital competence – have been incorporated in all subjects.

Training, recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers

Generally speaking, Norwegian foreign language teachers have little or no formal competence in the subject. A person with an approved generalist teacher training has the qualifications necessary for employment in primary and lower secondary school. It is up to the school owner to decide which subjects are relevant for the individual teacher. There are, in other words, no formal requirements that a teacher must have specialised in English or another foreign language in order to be able to teach it. A report from Statistics Norway (Lagerström 2000) shows that many English teachers in primary and lower secondary education lack formal qualifications in English:

- 67 % at the lower primary level
- 49 % at the upper primary level
- 20 % at the lower secondary level

With regard to English, Drew (2004) sees a correlation between teacher competence in primary school and the fact that Norwegian pupils reach a high linguistic level in oral skills but have much poorer results in written skills.

There is relatively little reliable material about the qualifications of French and German teachers in lower secondary school. A survey of the situation of the second foreign language at a selection of schools with pupils at lower secondary level (Lindemann and Speitz 2002) gives an indication: 16 of the German teachers asked (i.e. 14.4 %) had no formal qualifications for the subject they taught. 13 of these 16 teachers worked in small schools. In addition it should be mentioned that 60 % of the German teachers and 46 % of the French teachers in the survey from 2001-2002 were 50 years or more of age, significant figures with respect to the supply of teachers and recruitment in the years to come. The following diagram provides an overview of formal qualifications in French and German for teachers in the survey:

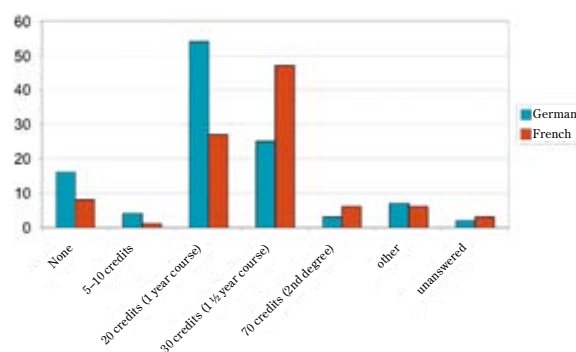


Figure 1 Extent of German and French qualifications at university/college level (number of teachers)

The National Councils for French and German consider 60 ECTS (previously 20 credits) a minimum qualification for being able to teach a foreign language. In upper secondary education at least 60 ECTS of specialisation are required for being able to teach the subject.

One of the objectives of the restructuring of study programmes at Norwegian universities and colleges was to strengthen teacher training in languages. Examples of this are the five-year integrated teacher training programmes at the University of Oslo, the University of Bergen, the University of Tromsø and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim. This teacher training education started in 2003 (Oslo and Trondheim, Bergen 2004), and it is too early to say whether these programmes are sufficient to meet the demand for foreign language teachers. The clear growth in pupils choosing Spanish will in particular pose a challenge for teacher training institutions. In the country as a whole there are many providers of basic Spanish for teachers, most of them at Bachelor level. There is currently little interest for German but a lot of interest for Russian.

In the most recent *Framework Plan for Generalist Teacher Training* (April 2003) the number of compulsory subjects was reduced, thereby allowing for more elective subjects, such as for example English in the 3rd or 4th year of teacher training. Over the last few years the number of students choosing English in the 3rd or 4th year of teacher training has increased, with most of them choosing a year's course (60 ECTS). The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) has made a half-way report on the evaluation of the generalist teacher training programmes, showing that in the academic year of 2005-2006 243 students were admitted to 30 ECTS-courses in English and 86 to 60 ECTS-courses in English. This may be taken as a sign that teacher training students see that they must have an increased linguistic competence in English if they wish to perform well as English teachers in primary and lower secondary education. There are few courses in other foreign languages for generalist teachers.

The problem of little or no formal qualifications for foreign language teachers is also a social question. Norway has areas where the population is thinly spread and several age levels coexist in the same class for all subjects in small schools, and here it is necessary to allow teachers to teach subjects in

which they do not have formal qualifications. Schools in towns and built-up areas also have the opportunity to make use of non-qualified employees.

Continuing and supplementary education

In 2002 an Internet-based continuing and supplementary course for English teachers was started by the Ministry of Education and Research through the agency of the Central Body for Flexible Teaching in Higher Education (SOFF, now called Norway Opening Universities, NOU). In 2002-2003 230 teachers participated in this programme which comprised 13 courses from ten regional university colleges.

The colleges registered a significant number of requests for this kind of Internet-based study programmes. The requests came from teachers with many years' practical experience in schools and expressed a clear wish for increased linguistic competence and insight into more updated methods in the teaching of English. The flexibility offered by an Internet-based study programme enabling one to combine education and work, and thereby use one's workplace actively in one's education, seems to satisfy a great demand.

In 2005 the colleges which had carried out Internet-based continuing education were appointed by the Ministry of Education and Research to update and further develop the project called the *Development of National Further and Continuing Education in English with Emphasis on the Use of ICT*. This entailed preparing study plans for the primary and lower secondary levels plus collecting and adapting course material for Internet instruction based on *the Knowledge Promotion*. The work was coordinated by Sogn og Fjordane University College and involved six regional colleges. These study plans have been made available to colleges and universities wishing to offer continuing education in English to teachers at different levels of primary and lower secondary education in accordance with *the Knowledge Promotion* (see the website of Sogn og Fjordane University College). Material for the Internet-based course is meant to be made available on a separate website during the autumn of 2006.

Other foreign languages

A student taking a generalist teacher training may choose other foreign languages than English in their 3rd or 4th year, but only a handful of colleges offer such studies today. Vestfold University College, for example, has expanded the courses on offer in practical foreign languages by providing optional subjects for 60 ECTS in German, French and English respectively for teacher training students. Students choosing this kind of subject will often have to move to another institution in order to finish their training. Colleges with departments for several foreign languages are able to provide foreign language courses combining two foreign languages at the same time, for example English/German or English/French over two years, providing the departments with mutual benefits. Besides, the two languages share aspects that can make the instruction both more rational and motivating as well as interesting for the students. *The Knowledge Promotion* encourages this sort of study model.

Continuing and supplementary education in other foreign languages than English has generally speaking not been given high priority and has lacked a cohesive national plan for enhancing competence. As part of the follow-up of *Competence for Development – Policy for Competence Development in Primary and Secondary Education 2005-2009* earmarked financial funding has for 2005 and 2006 been channeled through the County Governors' offices for continuing education courses in the second foreign language: 20 million NOK in 2005 and 25 million in 2006. The school owners have not however been limited by these sums, as they were granted 280 million in 2005 and 335 million in 2006 for competence development within areas they themselves have prioritised. The total sum for the second foreign language is not known. In 2005, 905 teachers completed supplementary education for up to four days in the second foreign language (2,589 in English) while 261 completed supplementary education of one week or more (155 in English). 1,211 teachers started supplementary education giving ECTS (260 in English).

In 2002 the Ministry of Education and Research allocated funding through SOFF for developing and testing of continuing and supplementary education courses aimed at teachers of the second foreign language in primary and secondary education and training. PROFFT (a programme for French and German in schools) offers a module-based continuing education (60 ECTS) and a further education course in language didactics (30 ECTS). This is a joint project between seven different colleges and universities. The courses are organised as a combination of Internet studies, gatherings and stays in the target language area. Competence enhancement and continuing education are linked to the teachers' daily activities and to development work.

At the end of the experimental period in the spring of 2005, 22 of 28 French teachers and 13 of 26 German teachers had passed the 60 ECTS programme. In addition, many teachers had passed some modules in both the 60 and the 30 programme. 54 teachers participated in the 30 ECTS programme. In the autumn of 2005 60 ECTS programmes in both French and German were started up again, this time with 48 participants. In addition, in the autumn of 2006, 52 teachers attended the first year of the 60 ECTS programme in Spanish. In the autumn of 2006 work was started on developing study plans for a 60 ECTS programme in Russian. This programme is intended for teachers who wish to acquire teaching qualifications in Russian and will start during the spring of 2007.

Teaching other subjects through foreign languages, the foreign language as the language of teaching

The concept *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL) is in Norway also known as bilingual teaching. Instead of using Norwegian as the language of instruction, a foreign language is used. Norway has experimented using both English, German and French as the language of instruction in several subjects.

Experiments with CLIL have shown improvements in reading skills and that the perspective provides opportunities for strengthening both language and content skills, whatever the study programme. In primary and lower secondary school one has also seen that pupils benefited from the increased variation provided by CLIL (Hestnes, 2006).

Experiments with CLIL on the teacher training programme at NTNU, where teacher training students from the USA and the Netherlands have completed their main practical training at schools in Trondheim, show similar results. Both pupils and teachers benefit greatly both linguistically and culturally from the instruction and from their contact with teacher training students from abroad (Hestnes, 2006).

International programmes

In an international educational perspective it is important to have agreements and schemes providing Norwegian pupils, apprentices, students and teachers with the opportunity to complete their basic education, partial and degree courses, and continuing and supplementary courses abroad. In this respect there are currently many opportunities for Norwegian students and teachers, but not that many for pupils.

Universities and colleges must make it possible for students who wish to take parts of their courses or study periods abroad. The new freedom of choice in generalist teacher training provides greater opportunities for taking parts of the course abroad, *inter alia* through the NordPlus and the EU programmes. Very few students take advantage of these opportunities. The EU programmes also make it possible to have a multi-national cooperation between kindergartens and schools and individual scholarships for teaching staff.

Apart from the TROLL agreement from 1986, which was an agreement about financial, industrial and scientific cooperation between Norway and France, and the German authorities' scheme dating from about the same time, there have not been any schemes giving Norwegian schools financial aid to

strengthen their skills in specific foreign languages. Over the years TROLL has made it possible for almost 6,000 Norwegian pupils and teachers to practice their French in authentic surroundings, but the scheme does not include any demands for reciprocity. The TROLL agreement has also had a scholarship scheme which has provided financial support for supplementary training for more than 500 Norwegian French teachers.

In upper secondary education we find *United World Colleges* (UWC), an international movement working to promote peace and understanding through education. In 2006, 38 young Norwegian people were awarded a place at one of nine schools where the education is equivalent to the last two years of upper secondary school. The pupils live with young people from all parts of the world and get their *International Baccalaureate* (IB) when they finish. There are also IB classes at several schools in Norway – in Oslo, Nesbru, Stavanger, Bergen, Lillestrøm and Trondheim. The language of instruction in these classes is English, and the schools offer an education which meets the admission criteria at most universities abroad.

Since 1918 Norwegians have been allowed to take the three-year upper secondary education (*lycée*) and French *baccalauréat* in Rouen. In the autumn of 2006 the schools in Bayeux, Lyon and Rouen admitted 22 Norwegian pupils. The French-Norwegian Centre in Caen offers language courses for students, Bachelor studies in French language, literature and culture, French as a tool for students and researchers, and one-year courses for teachers and teacher training students. Norway is also a participant in a global bilateral French language assistant programme where a few French post-graduate students of French as a foreign language spend one year as language assistants in primary and secondary education.

The Norwegian study centre in York provides further and continuing education for English teachers and cooperates with a number of educational institutions at university and college level in Norway. Many educational institutions offer a two-week study

period at the study centre as an integrated part of their English course. It is also possible for Norwegian students to take an English specialisation (previously the 30 ECTS specialisation) and parts of their Master's degree at the Norwegian study centre. In cooperation with the University of Trier in Germany, NTNU offers a year's course (60 ECTS) in German as continuing education for teachers and teacher training students. The Institute for Modern Foreign Languages at NTNU has classes in literature and grammar, while the University of Trier is responsible for the instruction in practical German and cultural knowledge.

Russian

Within education and research strong academic and institutional ties have been established between institutions of higher education in the Barents Region. This has also had a positive effect on the development of business and community life. In the last few years the Barents cooperation has been directed towards the objectives in the all-European Bologna Process³ and has placed most emphasis on the significance of student and teacher mobility. Norwegian-Russian student and pupil exchanges are funded through several channels, especially in the north, but there are also opportunities for pupils in the south of Norway.

Barentsplus is a scholarship scheme meant to stimulate cooperation between universities and colleges in Norwegian and Russian parts of the Barents Region, providing funds for the exchange of teachers and students between North Norway and North-West Russia. *Barentsplus Junior* is an exchange programme giving Norwegian and Russian young people aged 16-19 the opportunity of spending a year in North-West Russia and in North Norway respectively.

The Norwegian University Centre in St. Petersburg is a national joint effort between the Universities of Tromsø, Trondheim (NTNU), Bergen and Oslo. Besides promoting and aiding research cooperation

between Norway and Russia, the Centre is also open to Norwegian students studying in Russia. The Norwegian-Pomor University Centre at the Pomor State University in Archangel is a key institution for student exchange in North Norway. The Centre has more than ten years' experience of receiving students of Russian who come to Russia for short or long stays.

The Norwegian – Russian upper secondary school in Moscow, which is a project at Skedsmo Upper Secondary School, provides Norwegian pupils who have chosen Russian as a subject, with a unique opportunity to complete their Norwegian upper secondary education through a relevant stay abroad. Most of the school's pupils are Russian, the language of instruction is Russian and all the teachers are Russian.

Finnish/Sami

The project called *Without Borders in the North* has as its main objective increased cooperation between border areas in Norway and Finland within the educational sector, health and social services, technical sector and business and industrial development. In the educational sector the County Governor of Finnmark is responsible for helping to promote development measures for kindergarten and school cooperation across the border, and for language teaching in Finnish and Sámi.

Foreign languages in European school partnerships

When introducing an international dimension in education, foreign languages become a central and necessary tool – and an educational challenge. *Comenius*, which is a sectorial programme under the new EU programme for lifelong learning (*The Integrated Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, LLP*, see below), has as its objective to improve the quality of and strengthen the European dimension in education. In the new programme's transversal programme four key activities are to be found, one of which is the promotion of foreign languages. SIU is responsible for the programme which facilitates

³ In 1999 ministers of education from 29 countries and heads of university from the whole of Europe met to discuss the further development of higher education in Europe. The vision of developing a European area for higher education by 2010 was established in the ministers' declaration from the meeting, the so-called Bologna Declaration. The development is called the Bologna Process.

multinational school cooperation, institutional cooperation, network cooperation and initial and supplementary training for students and teachers. Language learning and increased cross-cultural understanding are general objectives for *Comenius*. Practically all *Comenius* projects are cross-disciplinary. This means that other teachers than those teaching foreign languages and other pupils than those following special language programmes also have to learn how to make themselves understood by foreign colleagues and people of the same age. The pupil, the student and the teacher all find their communicative skills put to the test both in real and in virtual contexts.

In international partnerships mobility is an important and necessary ingredient. Scholarships for supplementary education, study trips, planning sessions where pupils may participate, teacher and pupil exchanges and the use of language assistants have clearly helped create a new and renewed interest in learning and teaching languages.

Courses in languages that do not have a large place in Norwegian schools, e.g., Italian, Dutch and Portuguese, have been started as a result of initiatives from foreign language assistants visiting Norwegian schools. Norwegian language assistants have come back from stays abroad with increased competence in the foreign language they are qualified to teach. In addition they have often acquired a new language in which they sit examinations and bring with them when they start to work as foreign language teachers.

Some fifty *Comenius* schools give instruction in other subjects through English, German and French. The schemes for language assistants, scholarships for supplementary education for all types of teachers and teacher exchanges where foreign teachers take part in or take over the tuition for shorter periods, have in many cases given new life to bilingual teaching and impulses for pedagogical rethinking.

eTwinning – school cooperation on European culture and languages using ICT

eTwinning is part of the EU's *eLearning Programme 2004-2006*, in which Norway is a participant. The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) has been responsible for running the *eLearning Programme* in Norway, while the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has been responsible for *eTwinning*, which is the part of the programme that applies to primary and secondary education and training. *eTwinning* allows a structure for paired cooperation between schools in Europe using ICT. The objective is to strengthen cooperation between schools, create opportunities for pupils and teachers to increase their knowledge and skills in ICT and to stimulate an interest in European culture and language. Via the portal <http://www.etwinning.net/> schools can register and gain access to, amongst other things, partner searches, online communities and other tools. 281 Norwegian schools have registered on *eTwinning* and are taking part in 59 projects with partner schools from 23 European countries. 18 of these projects have foreign languages as their theme. From 2007 *eTwinning* will be continued within the *Comenius* part of the EU's new programme for lifelong learning.

Non-traditional organisation and work methods in foreign language teaching

In the European Year of Languages 2001, SIU carried out the survey called *Languages in International School Cooperation*. The aim was to find out if the cooperation Norwegian schools have been having for years with European schools has led to an increased interest in known and unknown languages – and how this interest is manifested. 225 schools took part in the survey. Nine out of ten schools report that both the teachers and the pupils have become interested in the languages of the partner schools but only rarely has this interest resulted in more and systematic language courses. However, both lower and secondary schools that have integrated internationalisation into their long-term plans report that they have a steady increase in applications to foreign language courses. The survey documents that English is today's undisputed *lingua franca*.

Language instruction becomes different and more dynamic in schools taking part in international partnerships. The pupils have the opportunity to practise the language or languages they are taught, and they come into contact with, and develop an interest in, other languages and cultures. This may have an influence on later choices. Schools working on an international level have also learnt to think creatively and find solutions to problems and challenges as they arise. Half of the schools that have been appointed as demonstration schools are either taking part or have taken part in *Comenius* projects. A survey SIU carried out in the spring of 2006 (SIU, 2006) confirms and reinforces the claim that having international contacts and partners in other countries is useful and important for language learning.

International programmes for vocational education
The *Leonardo da Vinci* programme, the sectoral programme for vocational education and training, is part of the new EU programme for lifelong learning. Experiences over the last ten years prove that mobility is important in creating motivation for learning more foreign languages.

Digital skills in foreign languages

The introduction of digital skills as one of the five basic skills in all subject curricula in *the Knowledge Promotion* represents a significant change in how to plan and organise the teaching of foreign languages. This focus on digital skills is also demonstrated in the *Programme for Digital Competence 2004-2008* (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004).

The ability to use digital tools in English and other foreign languages provides opportunities for cooperation, encounters with authentic language and the use of language in authentic communication settings. Linguistic competence is often a pre-requisite for making use of digital tools. At the same time the use of digital tools can help develop linguistic competence. Source criticism, intellectual property

rights and protection of personal privacy are central aspects of digital contexts which are also part of English and foreign languages.

ICT in foreign languages is not only a tool for receiving and producing information, but also a cultural tool that influences and changes language and communication (Crystal 2001; Kern, Ware, & Warschauer 2004; Lund 2004; Warschauer & Kern 2000). This entails *inter alia* the following:

- We can establish Internet-based language communities and maintain them until they have served their purpose and can be closed down.
- We have new opportunities for intercultural learning, for building linguistic identities and for exercising competence in virtual environments.⁴
- New genres such as e-mail, threaded discussions and various types of chatting emerge.
- Language is increasingly being used multimodally, i.e. in complex texts. This means that language material can be presented electronically and include both text, sound and film.
- Using e.g. wiki-techniques or communal writing, written texts can become more a result of cooperative processes. More pupils would have the chance to influence the written form of the text, look for solutions together and learn from each other.
- Teachers are increasingly becoming designers of learning settings using both co-localised and Internet-based contexts to develop rich language situations.

A number of new user cultures are therefore in the process of developing. Our very understanding of what it means to be linguistically competent is changing. This is an extremely rapid development. Even though English at the moment has a unique position, at the same time we can see that Internet-related arenas are increasingly plurilingual, both as multilingual versions and as a result of integrated translation services. The percentage of Internet

⁴ The project ICT in Multicultural Schools has involved three schools in central east Oslo and can demonstrate good results in the use of ICT in flexible and customised teaching in a multicultural learning environment; cf. References.

users with English as a mother tongue has gone down from over 50 % in 2000 to about 30 % in 2005 (Graddol, 2006). It is interesting to note that it is in particular languages like Chinese, Arabic, Portuguese and Spanish that are increasing their popularity, both on the Internet and otherwise.

Research and development work in Norway

From 1985 some of the research into foreign language didactics has been carried out in the network called *Nordic Conference and Workshop on developing autonomous language learning* (1985-) where the participants are teachers and modern language researchers. The core of this research and development is the development of pupil autonomy (insight into learning) in pupils, teachers and teacher training students (various papers published in conference reports by *inter alia* Anne Brit Fenner, Rita Gjørven, Svein Johansen and Turid Trebbi; for a selection cf. "References").

Of more recent research one could mention Drew's survey of teacher training students in English didactics (Drew, 1997). Drew points out that the students' written skills are much poorer than one would have wished when they begin their studies, and that their studies do not succeed in developing these skills to an adequate level.

In his dissertation Lehmann (Lehmann, 1999) points out how pupils quickly reach a certain level in English and then stagnate in their linguistic development. Many are very poor in the kind of written English required in higher education and in working life. The pupils also tend to overestimate their own performance.

Hellekjær (Hellekjær, 2005) has made similar findings with regards to reading skills in English. The pupils' own impressions are not compatible with their achievements in tests. This state of affairs lasts into higher education and may hinder their ability to use course literature written in English. Like Drew and Lehmann, Hellekjær points out the importance of ensuring good language learning in schools to equip the pupils for further studies and lifelong learning.

In a study of English teachers practising in ICT-rich environments Lund (Lund, 2004) points out that fundamental changes are taking place in the classroom. ICT suspends limitations in time and space and provides opportunities for a number of new genres, registers, conventions and forms of expression. Thus the subject changes with the pupils' and teachers' relationship to both the subject and the communication setting. Integrating new communicative practises in schools will be of decisive importance when it comes to equipping pupils to meet both learning and working situations in the 21st century.

Researchers at the Institute of Practical Education at the University of Bergen and at the Institute for Teacher Training and School Development (ILS) at the University of Oslo have developed and carried out several projects within the PLUTO-project which are directed at the use of ICT in teacher training and the use of portfolio assessment.

Several second degree and Master's dissertations in English, concerned with practical field work, have been completed or are in the process of being completed at ILS at the University of Oslo, for instance concerning English teachers' views on methods and their perception of roles, the use of Norwegian in English lessons, ICT in teacher training, a practical approach to the second foreign language and autonomy in foreign language learning. Trondheim Municipality, Sør-Trøndelag County Council, Sør-Trøndelag University College and NTNU are cooperating on a project where R&D projects in schools, combined with further education courses, will together contribute to school development, strengthening R&D competence in teacher training and increasing competence in schools. Individual projects concentrate for instance on writing as a basic skill in all subjects from pre-school to upper secondary school, adapted education focusing on assessment and varied working methods and learning.

2. An International Perspective

The Nordic countries

Article 8 in the Helsinki Agreement of 1962 states the following: “Educational provision in the schools of each of the Nordic countries shall include an appropriate measure of instruction in the languages, cultures and general social conditions of the other Nordic countries”. This is repeated in the Nordic Cultural Agreement which in Article 3 ascertains that the parties to the agreement shall amongst other things work to “promote education in the languages, cultures and general social conditions of the other Nordic countries”. The Nordic cultural cooperation understood broadly is based originally on the many linguistic and cultural bonds that tie the countries together.

During the last few years the Nordic linguistic community has been challenged at many levels. Neighbourly understanding is at best variable and internationalisation is exerting strong pressure on each of the Nordic languages. Based on this, the Nordic Council passed as early as 2003 a recommendation to the Nordic Council of Ministers to present a proposal from the Council of Ministers as to how language policy in the Nordic countries can be organised considering increased internationalisation, and with the aim of supporting the Nordic languages as complete languages supporting the Nordic communities. In a follow-up the Nordic ministers of education and research passed a declaration of Nordic linguistic policy which was set forth as a Proposal from the Council of Ministers to the Nordic Council.

On 2 November 2006 the Nordic Council supported the Proposal from the Council of Ministers about the *Declaration on Nordic Linguistic Policy*. The declaration provides a basis for collected, long-term and efficient linguistic policy efforts, and by their decision the Ministers have signalled a clear intention to realise the objectives of the declaration, even though it is not judicially binding. According to the declaration a Nordic linguistic policy should have as its objectives:

- That all inhabitants of the Nordic region should be able to read and write the language or languages which support and identify the community in which they live
- That all inhabitants of the Nordic region should be able to communicate with each other, first and foremost in a Scandinavian language
- That all inhabitants of the Nordic region should have basic knowledge about linguistic rights and the language situation in the Nordic countries
- That all inhabitants of the Nordic region should be proficient in at least one language of international scope, and should have a good knowledge of one other foreign language
- That all inhabitants of the Nordic region should have general knowledge about what language is and how it functions

In accordance with this the Declaration identifies four main areas for continuing language policy cooperation:

1. Linguistic understanding and knowledge
2. Parallel language competence, both between English and the Nordic languages, and between the Nordic languages
3. Multilingualism and plurilingualism
4. The Nordic region as a linguistic pioneer

The Nordic ministers of education and research have decided to start their follow-up to the Declaration by taking an initiative to clarify and prioritise existing and planned language policy efforts in the Nordic Council of Ministers, giving priority to linguistic understanding.

The demand for foreign languages – the EU and the Council of Europe

For both the EU and the Council of Europe it is an objective that all citizens should be able to use at least two languages in addition to their own mother tongue (the objective of “mother tongue plus two”). The arguments supporting this principle are increased trade and mobility, but also cultural awareness, openness and tolerance.

Much emphasis is placed on an early learning of two foreign languages in school as a basis for developing plurilingualism within a lifelong perspective. It is not only a practical, functional necessity, but also a basic element of learning about democracy (*Education for Democratic Citizenship*). Being able to understand and participate in European and international processes, and understand the international society, should not be hampered by a lack of linguistic skills.

There is a concept, nationally and internationally, that so-called “weak” pupils or pupils with learning disabilities should concentrate on learning their first language or other subjects. A report from the EU Commission (2005)⁵ which concerns adapted education for pupils with *special educational needs*, SEN, shows however that the percentage of pupils who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities varies significantly from country to country, depending on the criteria used and other complex considerations. That means that there are grey zones and groups of pupils who pass through their education without their special needs being discovered.

With respect to foreign language learning, the report shows that pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from instruction in foreign languages: the greatest benefit is not first and foremost the communicative competence in a new language, but the pupils’ personal and social development. The report emphasises that for everyone to learn more languages is therefore a question of how learning and assessment are adapted and which resources are used.

In this connection Ostad (Ostad, 2005) demonstrates how children with Down’s syndrome master plurilingualism. In a bilingual home setting they can learn to understand and express themselves in both languages in an appropriate manner and experience mastery through language learning. A survey of schools that introduced the syllabuses of *the Knowledge Promotion* (Bergem et.al., 2006) reports

good results with a particular methodology approach in German for a group of pupils who would normally have been given exemption from assessment with grades in the second foreign language. The scheme is described as resource intensive.

The EU’s Action Plan for Language Learning

The EU Commission’s *Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity in Europe (2004-2006)*⁶ was completed in the autumn of 2003 and has been followed up by the Member States during this period. Every single country has submitted a report about national follow-up of the Action Plan.

This plan has three main issues:

- How can one ensure lifelong learning of foreign languages at all levels of education and for all citizens?
- How can one ensure good foreign language didactics (good learning environments in school, designated language classrooms, recruitment of language teachers, using a foreign language as a medium of instruction in other subjects, testing language skills, etc)?
- How can one develop language-friendly environments (building awareness of the importance of learning foreign languages, awareness of the importance of learning various minority languages etc)?

The Action Plan has included efforts both at European and national levels. At the national level the authorities are encouraged to implement measures to improve their own education system regarding foreign language learning, and to highlight good examples that may motivate more and improved foreign language learning.

The Action Plan contains good examples from various European countries showing how one can succeed at more and improved foreign language learning. These have been a source of inspiration for the

⁵ *Special Educational Needs in Europe. The Teaching and Learning of Languages*, European Commission 2005.

⁶ *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity. An Action Plan 2004-06*, European Commission 2003.

authorities in various countries when drawing up a policy for promoting foreign language learning. The final report in 2006 concerning the actions of the participating countries was connected to the following issues:

- Making an early start with foreign language teaching to help the objective of “mother tongue plus two other languages”
- Emphasis on active skills in the foreign language as opposed to passive knowledge of the language
- Studies abroad as part of all types of higher education
- Foreign language teaching for learners with special educational needs
- The range of languages on offer
- Teaching coherent language competence and transfer value when learning different languages (the “language-friendly school”)
- The quality of language teacher training, also with respect to methods and living in the country whose language they teach
- Ensuring an adequate supply of language teachers
- Methods for testing language skills
- Increased awareness of the benefits of language learning

The EU’s new *Lifelong Learning Programme, 2007-2013, LLP* (see below), is to continue working towards the objectives of the Action Plan and support foreign language learning both generally and in the form of special programme activities.

The indicators from the survey made by Eurydice (the information network on education in Europe) of foreign language teaching in Europe (see “International School Surveys” below) also provide a basis for comparison and information about how the different countries, including Norway, have followed up the common European recommendations.

EU educational programmes

The introduction of the EU educational programmes *Socrates*, *Leonardo da Vinci* and *Youth for Europe/Youth* has had a great impact on strengthening the European dimension in Norwegian schools. For the first time in European history educational cooperation is now possible both in general academic studies (*Socrates*), vocational education and training (*Leonardo da Vinci*) and non-formal education (*Youth for Europe/Youth*). The *Socrates* sub-programme called *Comenius* addresses itself to teachers, pupils and students at all levels of the educational system, from kindergarten to teacher training. It is structured so as to encourage cooperation across educational levels and motivate re-thinking in the interaction between schools and teacher training. (Experiences from these programmes in Norway can be found in “International programmes” under “National perspective”.)

The third generation of the EU’s educational programmes, *The Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013)*, is to replace and develop the *Socrates* and *Leonardo da Vinci* programmes in an integrated programme for lifelong learning. The new programme includes the four sectoral programmes *Comenius*, *Erasmus*, *Leonardo da Vinci* and *Grundtvig*. The foreign language dimension is strengthened both as a key activity and as an element of all the sub-programmes. *The Youth in Action Programme* will carry on as a parallel to the *The Lifelong Learning Programme*.

Even though Norway is not a part of the European Union, through the EEA we participate in the programmes with the same rights and obligations as the member states. The contents of White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning and the Knowledge Promotion* are in accordance with the intentions inherent in the programmes. Therefore, there are clear parallels between Norwegian and European educational policies.

The EU Commission’s *Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity in Europe (2004-2006)* and *The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)* emphasise the importance of plurilingualism in an

extended community which depends on good interaction in order to achieve the ambitious objectives of the Lisbon Process. Learning several foreign languages is a central objective in the Lisbon Process, which has amongst other things resulted in the appointment of an expert group for foreign language learning with members from 30 European countries, including Norway.

In 2005 the European Commission presented its Proposal for Recommendation concerning a European reference framework for defining key competence in education in each member state. The Recommendation was first discussed in the European Parliament in September 2006. The Council is expected to make a decision in November and the Recommendation should therefore be finalised during 2006.

The Recommendation aims to establish a common European framework that identifies and defines the key competences necessary for personal fulfilment, active citizenship, social equality and employability in a knowledge society. The recommendation is to support the member states' work on defining such competences and, in addition, to provide a platform for further activities at European level within the framework of *Education and Training 2010*.

The recommendation identifies and defines eight key competences:

1. The ability to communicate in the mother tongue
2. Competence in foreign languages
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
4. Digital competence (ICT)
5. Learning competence (learning to learn)
6. Social competence, and the ability to function in the community (active citizenship)
7. The ability to make initiatives and entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness and the ability to express oneself

The Council of Europe's activities to promote languages

Communicative competence

With its 46 member states the Council of Europe has for a long time been a powerful agent in European language policy. The aim of the Council of Europe has been to promote activities that can contribute to an improved and more varied language teaching in Europe as part of a democratic education for "European citizenship". From the preparation of a basic vocabulary and grammar for French in 1957 via models for describing linguistic functions and threshold levels for different languages in the 1970s and 1980s, the work has led to the development of the concept *communicative competence* at the beginning of the 1980s.

Ever since the 1970s Norway has participated in the Council of Europe's work on developing a common European approach to foreign languages and communicative competence. The syllabuses for English and foreign languages in *the Knowledge Promotion* reflect this through their use of concepts like "strategies that are used to learn foreign languages", "strategies that help us understand and be understood", "communicative skills" and "language functions". According to the Council of Europe optimal communicative competence is the ability to:

- master grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (linguistic competence)
- interpret and express an appropriate language in various contexts (sociolinguistic competence)
- understand and, oneself, achieve coherence in speech and writing (discursive competence)
- use appropriate alternative communicative methods to compensate lack of skills (strategic competence)
- use one's knowledge about other cultures when interpreting texts and in interaction with others (socio-cultural competence)
- use one's linguistic competence (social competence)

The European Framework for Languages

Under the aegis of the Council of Europe work was started in 1991 on developing *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (hereafter referred to as the *Framework*) which was published in 2001, the European Year of Languages. The *Framework* is based on earlier work describing threshold levels defining the basic level for language (*Waystage*), functional level (*Threshold level*) and advanced level (*Vantage*).

To measure pupils' linguistic development in a life-long learning perspective the *Framework* includes descriptive scales within various language levels and different competence levels and language activities. The main objective of the *Framework* is connected to the individual person's language learning in a social and communicative perspective. The descriptors make it possible to compare language skills across the boundaries of Europe. It is a European objective that the descriptors of the *Framework* are open and available for the language learner so that language pupils of all ages are able to assess their own linguistic competence with the help of "can do" statements, can set themselves new and realistic goals, and evaluate and document their own linguistic development over a certain period.

Most European countries have been involved in the Council of Europe's work on the *Framework*. A survey of the use of the *Framework* was carried out by the Council of Europe in 2005 with respondents from 37 European countries, Egypt and Mexico (Council of Europe, Language Policy Division 2005). The *Framework* has been used most extensively in teacher training, assessment, curriculum development, the development of teaching aids and in communication between language pupils, teachers, parents and others. The greatest benefits have been in the areas of assessment and curriculum development. Amongst other things feedback also points to the necessity of clarifying connections between the evaluation process and the instruction, making cultural competence visible and adaptation to national grading systems.

The European Language Portfolio

For several years Norway has been involved in the Council of Europe's development of the *European Language Portfolio*. This *European Language Portfolio* is part of an international cooperation project on common assessment and documentation schemes. Scientifically and methodically the *Language Portfolio* is based on the *Framework*.

The *Language Portfolio* is an educational tool designed to give pupils, students and others who have learnt, or are in the process of learning, a foreign language the opportunity to document their language skills and make reflections about their own language learning. The *Language Portfolio* is used to document what the language learner can do in various languages and how she/he has acquired this knowledge. All the languages the learner has acquired to some degree are to be mentioned in the portfolio, whether the language has been learned in school or in another way. That means for instance that plurilingual pupils, pupils from a minority language background and pupils receiving mother tongue instruction will all be able to have their languages skills documented, and that the value of plurilingualism may become more discernible for others.

Experiences from a number of countries (including Finland, Sweden and Ireland) show that the *Language Portfolio* can help improve the quality of foreign language teaching, raise the status of languages and provide a basis for a common European perspective on language teaching.

In the *Europass* scheme for describing skills for work or education abroad, language competence is documented by the use of the self-assessment part of the *European Language Portfolio* (cf. measure 4.3.1). This assessment is based on the *Framework*.

A Norwegian language portfolio for lower and upper secondary education and a portfolio for adult immigrants have been completed. The language portfolio for pupils aged 13-18 has been made available for schools at <http://skolenettet.no> and

www.fremmedspraksenteret.no. This Language Portfolio consists of three parts. *The Language Passport* sums up the owner's knowledge and skills in the foreign language(s). *The Language Biography* gives an overview of when, where and how the owner has learned the various languages. It is used to set intermediate learning goals and final goals and has check-lists for self-assessment of skills. *The Language Dossier* is to contain samples of the owner's work.

In the autumn of 2006 the implementation of *the Language Portfolio* for pupils aged 13-18 started at selected secondary schools around the country. A handbook for teachers is being developed and the teacher training institutions are also aware of the implementation process. A language portfolio for grades 3 – 7 is being tried out at selected schools from the autumn of 2006 and will be nationally available from the autumn of 2007.

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)
The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) was established in Graz in 1994 and is a Council of Europe institution. The purpose of ECML is to promote language learning and teaching in Europe by amongst other things aiding the exchange of information as well as research and development in foreign language learning and teaching.

In 1999 the Centre was given permanent status and currently a total of 33 of the Council of Europe's 46 member states participate in its activities. A new medium-term programme for the ECML's work is being prepared. Most of the activities are organised in Austria, but some also take place in other countries. Seminar topics at ECML reflect the linguistic policy priorities decided by the Council of Europe. ECML has a large documentation department from which people who are interested may order material and publications issued by the ECML or other agencies of the Council of Europe.

To follow up the efforts and development work of the Council of Europe the ECML offers various types of activities, including workshops connected to running projects, conferences, regionally organised efforts and meetings for experts, as well as so-called *network meetings*. The target group for the seminars at ECML may for instance be teacher trainers, people involved in developing teaching plans, evaluation methods and curricula, and foreign language teachers. Norway may send one participant to each seminar.

As of 1 September 2006 the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education in Halden has taken over some of the functions concerning the Graz Centre from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. The Centre for Foreign Languages is now a contact point for the Council of Europe's Centre.

International school surveys

The survey of English in the 10th grade "English in Europe 2002"

Very little documentation exists from a comparative perspective of the English knowledge and skills of pupils after ten years of school, but the European English survey which has been reported in *English in Europe 2002* (Ibsen, 2004) and *The Assessment of Pupils' Skills in English in eight European Countries 2002* (Bonnet et al., 2004) shows that Norwegian pupils do well compared with European pupils. The average score achieved by pupils is 68 out of a possible 100 for pupils in the tenth grade who have followed L97 from the 5th grade, i.e. have had six years of English. The highest achieved result for the test group was 97 % correct answers, while the poorest result was 4 % correct answers - a relatively large spread, primarily within each class. Girls had significantly higher scores than boys in the test. Pupils with elective languages scored significantly better on the English test than pupils without elective languages and pupils with French scored significantly better than pupils with German.

Figure 2 provides a survey of the test results as country profiles. All countries have high scores in reading comprehension, lower scores in linguistic competence and lowest in written production, while the countries vary greatly in listening skills. Spanish and French pupils clearly have the poorest results in oral comprehension, which may be explained by the two countries broadcasting dubbed films. There is a big division between the best results for Norway and the poorest for France, as much as 40 %. Norway (73 %) and Sweden (72 %) have significantly better scores than the other countries in oral comprehension.

The pupils were relatively good at assessing their own linguistic proficiency and there was a significant correlation between test results and self-assessment ($r=0.56$). The survey also shows that the 15-year olds are distinguished by high motivation for learning English both in and outside school, primarily to be able to use the language for improved understanding of media, films, music and people met when travel-

ling abroad. Norwegian pupils believed they had learned 34 % of their English through media, 52 % at school and the rest (approx. 14 %) through other contact with English.

It emerged from the survey that using the foreign language in the classroom was the school factor that correlated best with good results. As to activities outside school, the survey shows that reading books in English correlates positively with the test result.

Findings from the teacher questionnaires show that there are surprisingly significant similarities in Europe as regards the English teacher. Most of the teachers are well-qualified, experienced women who work hard but feel unappreciated by society. Another similarity in Europe is that the teachers do not avail themselves of their opportunities for having contact with English speakers from other countries, organising exchanges for pupils and teachers and using the Internet in an authentic manner.

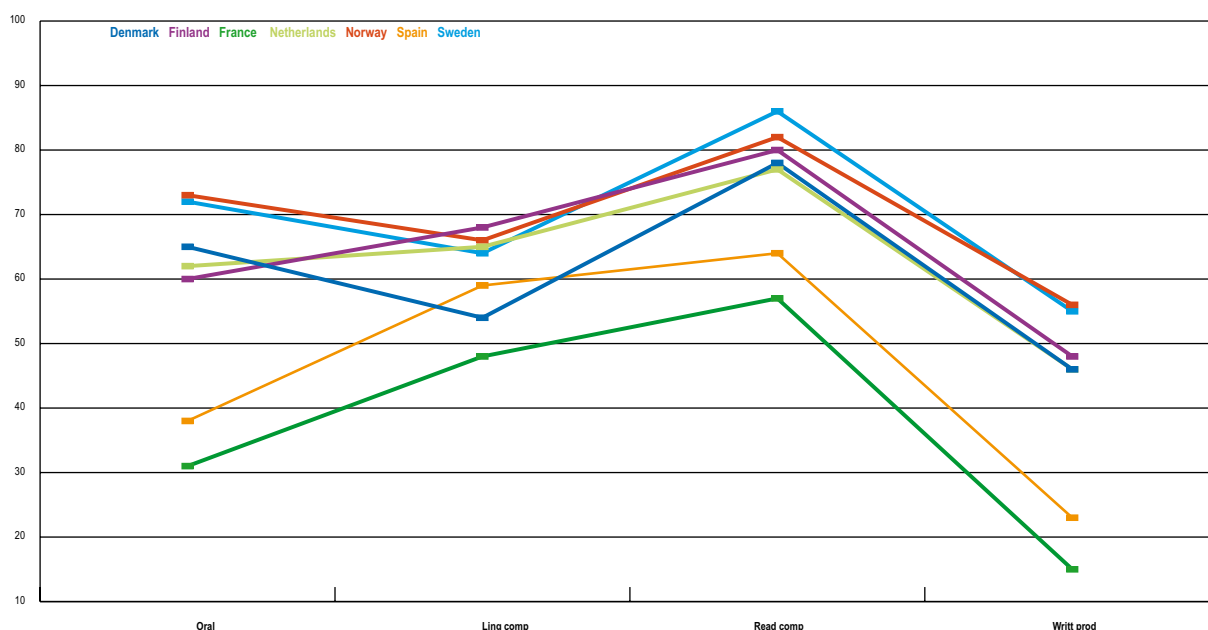


Figure 2. Competence profiles for oral comprehension, linguistic competence, reading comprehension and simple written production for seven participating countries.

White Paper no.30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* states that quality development in schools requires schools to be in a position to recruit competent, committed and motivated teachers and school leaders and to have the resources that allow them to keep and develop their human resources. According to the English survey Norwegian teachers of English have the lowest participation rate in Europe in continuing and supplementary education lasting at least one week. The teacher questionnaire's open part, dealing with future challenges, made it clear that the Norwegian teachers of English need and want to increase their competence.

The Eurydice survey "Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2005 Edition"

At the March 2002 Barcelona European Council, the Heads of State or Government called for a sustained effort to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age. They also called for linguistic competence indicators to be established in this field. The Eurydice survey *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2005 Edition* (available in English, French and German) follows up this commitment and also links with the objectives in the EU Commission's *Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity (2004-2006)*. The survey mentions 37 indicators as a basis for regular reports from Norway and the other participating countries, with the next report due in 2007.

Two of the indicators apply to locally decided instruction in foreign languages. In a majority of the participating countries, individual schools may freely introduce a compulsory second foreign language in addition to the nationally defined minimum required basic education in their countries. About ten countries have also started pilot projects in foreign language teaching for ages where such teaching is not compulsory, corresponding to pre-school and primary stages in Norway.

English is the most common foreign language in basic education in all European countries except Belgium and Luxembourg. The percentage of pupils learning English has increased since 1998, especially

in Central and Eastern Europe where this has affected the position of German. German is the second most common foreign language in one third of the countries, especially in the Nordic countries (where Spanish is increasing its percentage substantially) and in Central and Eastern Europe. French is the second most common foreign language in German speaking countries and in Southern Europe.

At the stage corresponding to Norwegian lower secondary school, six countries have an average foreign language per pupil ratio of 2 or more. The average in general academic upper secondary education is between 1 and 1.9 in a majority of the countries, with ten countries having 2 or more. The percentage of teaching periods for foreign languages at the stage corresponding to lower and upper secondary school varies between 9 and 34 %. According to the survey Norway had 10 %.

In most European countries there is foreign language instruction at primary school level by generalist teachers. Seven countries require specialised education in languages for teachers at this level, while more than half of the countries have corresponding requirements for the lower secondary stage. Stays in the target language country as part of language teacher education is usual in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and compulsory in Luxembourg and Scotland.

The EU survey of foreign language competence in 2007

The EU has decided that in 2007 there is to be a survey to document European young people's competence in foreign language. There are two main reasons for this survey. First of all there is political agreement within the EU concerning the principle "mother tongue plus two", i.e. a recommendation that all pupils in basic education are to learn their own mother tongue and at least two foreign languages. A survey of foreign language competence may have positive effects for fulfilling the principle "mother tongue plus two" in the various European countries. Secondly, it is highly necessary to ensure more and improved documentation of foreign language competence in Europe.

3 Objectives and Measures

The measures in the Policy Plan are designed to help meet the challenges described in Chapter 2. The authority listed first is the one with the main responsibility for the measure.



General Objective

Improved skills in more foreign languages for pupils, apprentices and teachers in primary and secondary education and training, and an increased interest in and motivation for language learning.

1 Greater diversity and breadth in foreign language teaching

1.1 More schools offer teaching of foreign languages other than English at the primary level

1.1.1 Start experiments with early start of second foreign language

Action

White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* made it possible to start other foreign languages than English at the primary level: "The schools that want to and that have the necessary competence to start even earlier with instruction in the second foreign language, may therefore do so" (page 48).

Experiments with an early start in a second foreign language began in 2005. These experiments include providing schools with guidance and supervision, as well as documentation and formative evaluation, so that results and good practice may be made available

to as many as possible. The findings are being published on the website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and through relevant networks.

Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

Time frame

2005–2007

Status

Twelve schools in the municipalities of Tromsø, Bodø, Bergen, Trondheim, Hå and Oslo are taking part in an experiment with an early start in a second foreign language at the primary level from the start of the school year of 2005. The languages offered are German, French and Spanish.

The experiment is being evaluated by Telemark Educational Research (TFN). The evaluation task has two components. Partial Report 1 was published in April 2006 and gives an overview of

experiences and research from a number of early-start projects in and outside Norway and presents success factors for early language learning. Phase 2 of the evaluation will follow up and document work done by the schools and their experiences with early start.

Support and information functions for this trial are being maintained by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages on a closed Internet forum via the College's server.

1.1.2 Develop a European Language Portfolio for the primary level

■ Action

During 2005-2006 a Norwegian language portfolio for the primary level (e.g. for 4th to 7th grades) was made to support the learning of English as first foreign language and early start of second foreign language. This *language portfolio* will be tried out at a limited selection of schools during the school year of 2006-2007 and will thereafter be offered nationwide.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

2005-2007

■ Status

Telemark Educational Research (TFN) is developing a language portfolio for the 3rd to 7th grades. This is to be tried out at a selection of schools from the autumn of 2006 and be offered nationwide from the autumn of 2007.

1.1.3 Implement experiments with integrating foreign languages in the instruction of other subjects at the primary level

■ Action

The term *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)* is in Norway also known as bilingual learning. This is instruction in a foreign language in other subjects than the foreign language. At the primary level it would be natural to include the practical and aesthetic subjects. Experiments will be started in conjunction with early start at primary stage, cf. 1.1.1, from the autumn of 2005.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

2005 – 2007

■ Status

Integrating foreign languages in other subjects is included in the guide to methods offered to schools taking part in the experiments with early start of the second foreign language, cf. measure 1.1.1. Experiences and evaluation will be made available in the final report for the Early Start Project in the autumn of 2007. The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and the German School in Oslo have launched a joint project connected with the introduction of bilingual learning in history in the 6th grade from the school year of 2006-2007. This project emphasises developing and documenting methodology and making available material that may have transference value for Norwegian schools. They are also planning to cooperate with Norwegian schools throughout the project.

1.2 More schools offer more foreign languages, also non-European languages

1.2.1 Start experiments with mother tongue as second language

■ Action

The Soria Moria Declaration emphasises the importance of making a thorough review of language teaching offered to children from minority language backgrounds. Amongst other things a survey will be made of how mother tongue instruction is ensured.

Experiments with the mother tongue as second language for pupils from minority language backgrounds will be started in the school year of 2007-2008. These experiments will include guiding and following up schools, as well as documentation and formative evaluation. Results are to be published to let as many people as possible benefit from the development work and good practice.

- Responsible
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO)
- Time frame
2007–2009
- Status
A new measure

1.2.2 Start experiments with non-European languages as foreign languages

- Action
Circular F-003-06 *Introduction of the Knowledge Promotion – concerning Foreign Languages* states about the lower secondary stage: “School owners are to offer foreign language instruction in at least one of the four languages: German, French, Spanish or Russian according to the *Curriculum for Foreign Languages* at Level I. They may in addition offer other languages, also non-European ones, following the same curriculum. School owners determine which foreign languages to offer the pupils and how to organise the teaching.”

Experiments are to be started with instruction in non-European languages at the lower secondary level or with an early start at the primary level. These experiments will include giving schools guidance and following them up, as well as documentation and formative evaluation, so as to let as many people as possible benefit from the development work and good practice. Results are to be published on the foreign languages website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and via relevant networks.

- Responsible
The Directorate for Education and Training, the National Centre for Multicultural Education
- Time frame
2007–2009
- Status
A new measure

1.2.3 Cooperate about resources between primary level, lower secondary level and upper secondary education and training and provide information about such cooperation

- Action
White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* states that schools “are to offer pupils instruction in German, French, Spanish or Russian, and, if they have the opportunity to do so, also in other languages, amongst which non-European languages” (page 48).

Schools develop local or regional solutions for sharing teacher resources between primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels. They are encouraged to use and further develop digital teaching materials so that more pupils may be offered more foreign languages. Examples of good practice will be documented. This collection can be accessed at the foreign languages website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages.

- Responsible
School owners, schools, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages
- Time frame
Current
- Status
On its website the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages provides information about useful local and regional solutions and is currently making a survey of the work in this area.

1.2.4 Prepare information material for school counsellors in lower and upper secondary education

- Action
Information material is to be prepared so that school counsellors in lower and secondary education and training are provided with clear information about national foreign language efforts and about the value of foreign language skills for future studies and vocational education and training.
- Responsible
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages

- Time frame
2006
- Status
The brochure called *Languages Open Doors – Choosing Foreign Languages in Lower Secondary School* has been prepared by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in cooperation with the Directorate for Education and Training and made available in both a paper and an Internet version as of March 2006.

1.2.5 Develop and make available paper-based and digital learning resources in some of the major immigrant languages

- Action
It is necessary to value the linguistic resources represented by those from minority language backgrounds. More pupils will therefore have the opportunity to have their parents' language or their own mother tongue as a subject in addition to Norwegian and English.
Funds will be provided for developers of teaching aids for several of the major languages that are today being spoken by many children and young people from minority language backgrounds.
- Responsible
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
- Time frame
From 2005
- Status
On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research the Directorate for Education and Research has initiated three projects concerning the development and production of teaching aids in three big minority languages: Urdu, Somali and Turkish. The teaching aids will be issued by Solum Forlag (publishers) during the period of 2007-2009. These teaching aids aim to let pupils from minority language backgrounds become resources for others wishing to learn the language in question.

A report will be published in 2007 about further efforts concerning teaching aids in some of the major immigrant languages. Relevant topics will be choice of language based on *inter alia* the size of the language group, standardisation of language,

teacher competence and the needs of business and industry, and what is required of teaching aids. The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and the National Centre for Multicultural Education will be central partners in this work.

1.3 More adults are offered basic training in foreign languages

1.3.1 Develop tools that make it possible for adults to learn foreign languages, also non-European ones

- Action
Ordinary education is not available for all groups of adults.
Tools are to be developed to facilitate learning, also distance learning, assisted by digital teaching resources, so that more adult pupils may be offered instruction in more foreign languages, cf. 1.2.5.
- Responsible
The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Vox
- Time frame
From 2006
- Status
In cooperation with private actors Vox is experienced in development work in this area. Existing offers for adults in vocational and general language teaching are to be made known on the website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages.

2.1 Foreign language teaching is differentiated and adapted to the pupils' abilities

2.1.1 Survey the pupils' choice of foreign languages at lower secondary level

Action

It is an objective that as many pupils as possible choose foreign languages at lower secondary school. It is therefore important to gain knowledge about what pupils choose at lower secondary school and the reasons for their choices, and for any altered choices. Taking as a starting point the available statistics of how pupils choose (and make new choices) between foreign languages and in-depth language studies, the pupils' motivation for choice and reasons for altered choices will be surveyed. The results of this survey will be published in a separate report.

Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

Time frame

2006 - 2009

Status

A new measure

2.1.2 Survey correlation between English skills in primary and lower secondary education and drop-out levels from vocational education and training

Action

The Soria-Moria Declaration emphasises the role of schools as instruments for social equalisation. Completed upper secondary education and training will give the pupils a broad basic competence that makes them well equipped for further studies or work. There is a clear correlation between examination results and/or overall achievement grades in the 10th grade and pupils' and apprentices' average grades in vocational education programmes in upper secondary education and training. A socially

equalising factor could therefore be to ensure that teachers of vocational English are competent and so, among other things, increase the completion rate in vocational education programmes in upper secondary education and training.

A qualitative survey is to be made of the correlation between pupils' English grades at the school-leaving examination after the 10th grade and the reasons for dropping out of vocational educational programmes. This survey is to be published in a separate report and will include suggestions for measures for improving teacher competence in vocational English.

Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

Time frame

From 2006

Status

A new measure

2.1.3 Start experiments for developing pupils' partial skills in the second foreign language in primary and lower secondary school

Action

It is a main challenge to organise foreign language teaching so that all pupils can have the best possible learning yields. The teaching of partial skills such as oral comprehension and speaking can contribute towards adapted education for the individual pupil and so hinder drop-out (cf. inter alia the report *Special Educational Needs in Europe* published by the EU Commission in 2005).

Experiments are to be started with groups of pupils where the teaching places more emphasis on oral skills and relevant forms of assessment of foreign languages in primary and lower secondary education.

Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Vox

Time frame

2006 - 2008

■ Status

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training are cooperating with the company ARM Lingua on the project called *Use of Mobile Phones in the Teaching of German*. German has been chosen for this joint project because of the methodology traditions of German as a school subject and because it is difficult to recruit pupils to German.

The project providing language courses via mobile phones and the Internet is being started to find out if the use of these media influences the pupils' motivation and progress in language learning. It is also meant to promote adapted education. Oral comprehension and oral production are stressed in the project. The first motivation tests show that many pupils say their choice of German is a negative choice, either because the school does not offer other languages, or because other language groups were fully booked (especially the case when the pupil has had Spanish as his/her first choice).

2.1.4 Introduce good solutions for adapted education in foreign languages as one of the criteria for appointing demonstration schools

■ Action

Schools and training establishments can be appointed as demonstration schools and companies. These schools should be able to document results in accordance with new curricula and development work, evaluation of learning yields, competence development, the learning environment and school leadership and organisational development.

Training establishments must document goal-oriented and good training routines, good supervision of professional learning yields and progress, a safe and inclusive operational and working environment, good and distinct leadership and in-depth study projects.

When appointing demonstration schools, priority will be given to schools and training establishments that systematically and actively contribute to increasing and developing the quality of foreign language teaching.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

2006 – 2009

■ Status

If this scheme is extended, when the time comes for it to be advertised again the Directorate for Education and Training will consider how to follow up this measure.

2.2 Foreign language teaching has a practical approach

2.2.1 Prepare and offer supplementary teacher training courses in foreign language didactics for other foreign languages than English

■ Action

A practical approach in foreign languages means that the teaching is to focus on developing the pupils' language skills in accordance with the prevailing foreign language subject curriculum.

A national supplementary teacher-training course in foreign language didactics is being developed with the main emphasis on methods for communicative language teaching and adapted education in other foreign languages than English. This course will receive national funding and will be organised regionally in cooperation with local colleges and universities from the autumn of 2007.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges, school owners

■ Time frame

2007-2009

2.2.2 Provide guidance about learning practices that promote learning in foreign language teaching

■ Action

A practical approach to foreign language teaching means that the pupils learn to communicate in different ways and at different language levels, including using digital media.

Schools will receive guidance material including examples of good practice showing methods that promote learning.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, school owners, schools

■ Time frame

2006-2007

■ Status

A brainstorming for teachers has been launched by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages to gather good examples of working methods for foreign language teaching which promote learning. The best ideas have been given expert follow up and funding so that teachers can try them out in their own classes.

Two contributors have received financial support to implement their projects, for beginners' German for pupils with special educational needs and the use of art in language teaching respectively, from August 2006. The projects were presented to teacher training students, teachers and teacher trainers at the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages' conference Languages Open Doors in November 2006. Documentation can be accessed at the website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages.

2.3 More teachers make use of portfolios in teaching and assessment

2.3.1 Disseminate knowledge about the European Language Portfolio as a language teaching tool

■ Action

In the school year of 2005-2006 *the Language Portfolio* for the lower secondary level was introduced through further education courses for teachers, school networks and teacher training institutions. The introduction of *the Language Portfolio* and the experiences of teachers and pupils are to be documented by formative evaluation at selected schools over two years. Information about this measure and its results will be disseminated at a national conference

about *the European Language Portfolio* connected to measures for raising teacher competence, amongst other things based on development work under the aegis of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz.

Schools are to be motivated to start using *the European Language Portfolio* as a didactic tool and as a tool for documenting the pupils' language learning.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, school owners, the Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges

■ Time frame

The Language Portfolio is to be used from 2006, followed by formative evaluation for two years.

■ Status

The Language Portfolio for the age-group 13-18 has been completed and can be accessed on the websites of the Directorate for Education and Training and the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages. The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages and the Directorate for Education and Research are cooperating on the implementation of *the Language Portfolio*, and during the period of 2006-2008 a project group will be responsible for introducing this and trying it out at schools all over the country. The project group is also responsible for disseminating information to school leaders, school owners and county educational authorities concerning measures and results, amongst other things through the Network for Competence Development and a national conference in 2007.

2.4 More pupils and apprentices show increased digital competence in planning, carrying out and assessing the foreign language learning

2.4.1 Disseminate knowledge about digital learning resources

■ Action

Pupils have different learning styles and learning strategies. Digital resources and tools can be useful both in teaching partial skills and in the work leading to broad linguistic competence.

Useful resources are to be documented and made accessible on the website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages

■ Time frame

From 2006

■ Status

The Centre is constantly on the outlook for resources and software that support communication, and will make them accessible on their website. Information about new learning resources will be spread in a regular newsletter.

2.4.2 Further develop the use of ICT at school-leaving examinations and foreign language examinations and national English tests

■ Action

One of the objectives in *the Programme for Digital Competence 2004-2008* about the use of ICT at school-leaving tests and examinations is to stimulate an increased use of digital resources.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

2005-2008

■ Status

In the spring of 2006 school-leavers in the 10th grade were offered an examination in English with ICT, as were pupils who completed the foundation course in upper secondary education. A total of 60 schools (approx. 1,300 pupils) chose this form of examination. All school-leaving

examinations and tests in all foreign languages can be taken digitally. Through the project *The Digital School*, and as parts of the systems for carrying out and administering tests (PAS/PGS) are ready, conditions will be adapted so as to make it easy and convenient for schools to use digital media when organising school-leaving tests/examinations. During oral examinations in foreign languages schools may allow pupils to make an oral presentation where they among other things use digital media. Schools are increasingly availing themselves of this opportunity.

2.4.3 Develop a common Internet website for foreign languages

■ Action

The number of Internet sites that are relevant for foreign languages has increased immensely. However it is difficult to keep fully abreast of development in this area, making it necessary to coordinate central Internet resources for foreign languages.

A common Internet website is to be developed to build up and mediate contents that are relevant for foreign language teaching.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, the Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

2006

■ Status

The website of the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages is currently offering teachers, teacher training institutions, parents and others information about Internet resources, research and development work, and courses in supplementary and continuing education, and so on. They have had external help with the website's design and functionality. The pages are updated daily and all subject-related links are checked for quality assurance. The website is to be restructured during the autumn of 2006 and information will be linked even more clearly to the new subject curricula.

3.1 Increased recruitment to language studies of students who wish to become teachers

3.1.1 Use networks to recruit students to teacher training in foreign languages

Action

Universities and colleges must ensure that they educate enough foreign language teachers. Educational institutions that train foreign language teachers must seek good recruitment to the teaching profession through active information aimed at pupils in upper secondary education and training.

Existing networks should be involved in preparing information material and starting campaigns to reach young people and provide good information about the teaching profession.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Network for Competence Development

Time frame

Current

Status

Within the framework of the Network for Competence Development a network of specialists in foreign language didactics has been established. This network has been given definite tasks concerned with disseminating information and following up measures in Languages Open Doors.

3.1.2 Give information about and recruit students to choose languages and practical pedagogical education

Action

White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* encourages an early start for the second foreign language (cf. measure 1.1.1). At the primary level very often class teachers without formal qualifications in English teach the subject and an in-depth language specialisation would increase the quality of the teaching and the pupils' learning yield. The age structure of teachers means that there must be a comprehensive recruitment of new language teachers.

Universities and colleges are being encouraged to motivate teacher training students to choose in-depth language specialisation and to recruit students with an education in foreign languages to take practical pedagogical education. The universities are being encouraged to motivate students who want to study languages to choose the new five-year integrated teacher training study programme.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, universities and colleges, Network for Competence Development

Time frame

Current

Status

The websites utdanning.no and norgesuniversitetet.no both provide information about courses being offered. The Directorate for Education and Training is cooperating with the Network for Competence Development to find other appropriate information channels.

3.2 More further and supplementary teacher training in foreign languages

3.2.1 Continue and develop models and measures for increasing the competence of foreign language teachers

Action

Central elements in competence development should be building up the teacher's linguistic competence, use of ICT in foreign language teaching, facilitating a practical approach, adapted teaching and pupil assessment in foreign languages, developing teaching competence by amongst other aids *the European Language Portfolio* and new forms of assessment.

Based on needs reported by school owners the teacher training institutions are to cooperate with school owners on developing flexible, module-based supplementary and continuing education courses leading to formal competence.

- Responsible
The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges, school owners
- Time frame
2005-2008
- Status
The websites utdanning.no and norgesuniversitetet.no both provide information about courses being offered. The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages has established contact with subject coordinators at the offices of the educational authorities in most counties. In cooperation with the Network for Competence Development the Centre for Foreign Languages will publish a national overview of good courses and other relevant information for foreign language teachers. In addition the Centre is aiming to establish an overview giving a short presentation of experts who can give courses in the various counties in different subject areas.

3.2.2 **Publish an overview of competence development measures in foreign languages**

- Action
Since 2001 relevant national and local courses in foreign language teaching have been developed. It is important that teachers and school owners obtain an overview of available courses in basic, supplementary and continuing education. A good overview of current offers would make it possible to assess the need to develop new courses.
An overview is to be made specifying in more detail emphasis on languages and subject didactics, which courses use ICT, and whether it is a national course, etc. The university and college sector and school owners are to be involved in drawing up requirements specifications for what kind of information such an overview should include. The overview is to give information about providers and contact information, and should be published on a common website for foreign languages.
- Responsible
The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, universities and colleges, school owners

- Time frame
Annually
- Status
The Centre has contacted different types of providers in order to establish an overview of the courses on offer, and will finish the overview during 2006.

3.2.3 **Further develop existing Internet-based supplementary and continuing education courses and develop new courses**

- Action
In order to ensure a national boost of teacher competence in foreign languages it is important to make good courses available to teachers all over the country. Internet-based studies are flexible and can be followed wherever one may live. Internet-based supplementary and continuing education courses in languages should include didactics and promote an active, conscious and critical use of ICT in language teaching.
PROFFT is a national project that has developed flexible studies in German and French with the three elements of language, didactics and ICT, and has provided useful experiences. Similar studies in other foreign languages such as Spanish and Russian are being developed. One stimulation measure could be to integrate a stay abroad into the course.
- Responsible
Universities and colleges
- Time frame
2005-2008
- Status
PROFFT has extended their courses on offer to include Spanish, and they are also working on a plan for Russian language studies. A continuing education course for foreign language teachers from the autumn of 2006 has been organised in 10 modules of 10 ECTS each. The project also represents competence development for the parties involved – the University of Oslo (administration), the University of Bergen, the University of Tromsø, The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, Agder University College, Østfold University College and Finnmark University College.

3.3 Wider supply of courses in foreign languages with didactics

3.3.1 Extended offer of languages as electives in teacher training institutions and language programmes in the 5-year integrated teacher training system

Action

In Norway universities and colleges are responsible for training foreign language teachers. The document called *Competence for Development. Policy for Competence Development in Primary and Secondary Education and Training 2005-2008* states that “[i]t is the task of universities and colleges to provide a relevant initial teacher training that will motivate teachers for lifelong learning [...] and ensure that their own academic staff have the necessary professional competence and insight into the reform and the challenges it poses for primary and secondary education and training” (page 11).

Universities and colleges are encouraged to develop more courses in different languages with didactics.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, universities and colleges, Network for Competence Development

Time frame

Current

Status

The Directorate for Education and Training has been in contact with the Network for Competence Development to follow up the measure.

3.3.2 Participate in and develop international cooperation about primary and secondary education and supplementary and continuing teacher training for foreign language teachers

Action

As part of their work on the Quality Reform the university and college sector has entered into agreements with foreign universities concerning student exchanges and coordination of educational programmes.

These agreements are meant to ensure that universities and colleges can exchange students with countries in the target language area. The study programmes are to be organised so that all those who wish to do so are given the opportunity to participate in this kind of exchange. In some subjects a stay abroad may become a compulsory part of the education. Where the study programmes have been adapted to accommodate stays abroad teacher training students may apply for financial support from the Erasmus programme.

Colleges and universities are encouraged to continue making international cooperation and student exchanges possible, amongst other reasons in order to provide competence in relevant languages and cultures.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Ministry of Education and Research, universities and colleges

Time frame

Current

Status

The University of Gothenburg, the University of Växjö, the University of Copenhagen, the University of Århus and Østfold University College have established a network with the objective of preparing a study plan with module descriptions for a Master's degree. A lot of the tuition on this course will be Internet-based. It may start in the autumn of 2007.

The Directorate for Education and Training has been in contact with the Network for Competence Development for further follow-up of this measure.

4.1 Increased knowledge in the education sector and the community about the value of learning foreign languages for the development of culture, democracy and mobility

4.1.1 Implement measures directed towards schools, universities and colleges to celebrate the European Day of Languages

Action

Following the success of the European Year of Languages, the Council of Europe and the EU are promoting an annual European Day of Languages on 26 September to mark the linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe.

All schools, universities and colleges in Norway are to receive information about the purpose of the European Day of Languages, with a call to observe it. In addition there will be a competition with a prize for the best event organised by schools in celebration of the day.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education

Time frame

Annually

Status

In cooperation with the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, the Directorate for Education and Training sent a letter to universities and colleges and primary and secondary education and training institutions with suggestions as to how the European Day of Languages in 2006 could be celebrated, while launching a competition and requesting feed-back about events organised. The winning contribution from Bodø Upper Secondary School demonstrated a wide variety of activities showing the languages offered by the school and the linguistic diversity among the pupils. There were also short publicity films at cinemas in the largest towns and cities.

This effort will be continued with a view to broader involvement from primary, secondary and tertiary education and training, and with information also aimed at the general public.

4.1.2 Contribute to pupil activities connected with the role of languages in teaching democratic citizenship

Action

Education for democratic citizenship has been an important part of the work of the Council of Europe for a long time. One of the objectives of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education was to help young people and adults to play an active part in democratic life and to exercise their rights and responsibilities in society, and amongst other things it emphasises international cooperation and cultural and linguistic skills. Support is awarded to teaching methods that promote active pupil participation.

The connection between learning languages, intercultural competence and democratic citizenship is to be clarified and further developed in primary and secondary education and training. This applies both in a national perspective, e.g. with respect to minority languages in Norway, and an international one, e.g. concerning how pupils understand international events and processes using more languages and cultural lines of approach.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training

Time frame

2005-2007

Status

In cooperation with schools an essay competition for pupils in upper secondary education and training has been organised focusing on democratic understanding and the Council of Europe's activities for counteracting terrorism. The Directorate for Education and Training will contact the National Centre for Multicultural Education at Oslo University College regarding further follow-up of this measure.

4.1.3 Reintroduce the language award *The European Label*

Action

The language award *The European Label* was launched by the EU in 1998 to encourage new initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning. The purpose of *the European Label*

has been to show the significance of language teaching and linguistic competence, and to contribute to innovation in language teaching in the participating countries in the EU and on Iceland and in Norway.

The European Label is awarded by national juries in accordance with criteria that are partly joint European and partly fixed at the national level. In Norway awarding *the European Label* was the responsibility of the Norwegian Board of Education. Being given publicity in Europe and contact with winning projects and professional environments in other countries has meant a lot to earlier Norwegian winners.

The European Label is awarded annually to one or more projects which are relevant for primary and secondary education and entails a travel grant or funds to finalise or disseminate information about the project. Schools, institutions, organisations and individuals are eligible for the award.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, SIU (from 2007)

■ Time frame

From 2006

■ Status

The Directorate for Education and Training and the Leonardo office of the National Institute of Technology have been responsible for the 2006 call for projects. A jury comprised of representatives from the Directorate for Education and Training, the Leonardo office, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education and the Swedish member of *the European Label* Network have given the award for 2006 to *Wenn jemand eine Reise tut, so kann er/sie was erzählen - A Compendium and Digital Game*. The game aims to train receptive and productive oral skills in German in foreign language teaching through the use of digital media. The winning project has been used in the so-called PROFFT programme which offers teachers Internet-based continuing education, and in the German studies of the teacher training course at Østfold University College. The jury's decision was based on European and national criteria in addition to the EU Commission's priorities for the European Label Campaign in 2006 and 2007: "Initial and in-service language teacher training" and "Diversification of the languages on offer".

4.1.4 **Involve media providers in demonstrating the value of plurilingualism**

■ Action

Today, English is the dominant foreign language of broadcast programmes. Cultural expressions from other language communities than the Anglo-American ones are not easy to perceive and so schools and society lose an important source of motivation and help for learning other foreign languages than English.

National television channels, the cable networks and other media providers are to be involved in a dialogue about possible measures for expanding the cultural references for programmes and channels. Embassies and the export trade will also act as national partners.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education

■ Time frame

2007

■ Status

The Directorate for Education and Training has clarified the obligations of broadcasters with respect to programme profile and documentation of actual distribution of air time. The broadcasting companies are to ensure that at least 50 percent of broadcasting on television apart from news broadcasts, sports, entertainment programmes with competitive elements, advertisements or teletext, are to be used for broadcasting European programmes. This question has been raised in the media in the autumn of 2006 and the Directorate for Education and Training will follow it up through contact with the Norwegian Media Authority.

4.2 **Increased knowledge among parents and pupils about foreign languages and the consequences of choosing languages**

4.2.1 **Cooperate with parents' councils nationally and locally about information material concerning foreign languages and choice of languages**

■ Action

When giving advice and support to pupils concerning their language choices and language

learning parents need broad information. Parents who master different relevant European and non-European languages could also prove to be resources which schools could make use of.

National and local parents' councils are to be involved in disseminating information about language choices and surveying linguistic resources among parents.

■ **Responsible**

The Directorate for Education and Training, the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education (FUG), school owners and schools

■ **Time frame**

From 2006

■ **Status**

The brochure *Choice of Foreign Languages in Lower Secondary School* is a joint production from the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education and the Directorate for Education and Training, and was issued both in hard copy and on the Internet from March 2006.

4.3 Increased use of internationally acknowledged documentation tools for foreign language competence for pupils and apprentices and in working life

4.3.1 Provide information concerning the documentation of language competence in the framework of the Europass scheme

■ **Action**

The new *Europass* was launched in Luxembourg on 1 February 2005. *Europass* is designed to motivate mobility and lifelong learning in an extended Europe by providing a coherent system for documenting skills and qualifications. The self-assessment part (the Language Passport) of the *European Language Portfolio*, which is based on the European Framework, is meant to be part of the *Europass* (cf. 2.3.1). *The Portfolio* is to strengthen motivation for improving one's ability to communicate in more languages and document the owner's language skills so they can be easily understood and compared internationally.

The Norwegian website for *Europass* will

provide information and offer guidance about the use of the Language Passport.

■ **Responsible**

The Directorate for Education and Training, SIU

■ **Time frame**

Current

■ **Status**

As one of the five parts of *Europass* a Norwegian version of the *Europass* Language Passport has been developed. This Language Passport is to help describe language skills in a systematic and comprehensible way in a common European format. The Norwegian *Europass* website www.europass.no provides information and advice about how to use the Language Passport. The Language Passport can be filled in electronically on the website in any of the languages of the affiliated countries. As of June 2006 1,500 people had logged in on the *Europass* website to download the Norwegian instructions about the Language Passport.

4.4 Increased knowledge about society's demand for other foreign languages than English

4.4.1 Document the value of foreign languages for working life, culture and business life

■ **Action**

A survey is to be made in relevant trades and business sectors to document the value of and the need for foreign language proficiency in Norway. The Vox-barometer, which is a semi-annual survey of learning in the working community, could be a useful tool in this context. It would be best if Vox conferred with the social partners about the survey's contents and target groups.

■ **Responsible**

Vox, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, the Directorate for Education and Training

■ **Time frame**

From 2005

■ **Status**

The value of and the need for foreign language proficiency has been documented by a broad survey carried out by Vox in the autumn of 2005, commissioned by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education. An interim report, *English is Not Enough: An Interim Report about the Use of*

Foreign Languages in Norwegian Business and Industry in 2005, was published in May 2006 and was met with interest and editorial comments from the media. The survey received 1,032 answers from middle and top management in Norwegian

import and export companies and is the first large survey of its kind to be carried out in Norway. The interim report is being followed up by a more comprehensive analysis to be published in the spring of 2007.

5 Strengthened internationalisation in foreign language teaching

5.1 Better use of existing bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries

5.1.1 Continue existing and establish new schemes with foreign language assistants and language teachers from central cooperating countries

Action

International projects or schemes for teacher exchanges and receiving language assistants may lead to the improvement of foreign language proficiency and increased interest for both teachers and pupils. This kind of scheme could also promote learning in other subjects through the use of different foreign languages (see 5.1.3). Schools can apply to be hosts for language assistants through the *Comenius* programme.

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Ministry of Education and Research, SIU

Time frame

2006-2009

Status

Work is now in progress on establishing agreements with educational institutions in relevant target language countries in a permanent and stable scheme for exchanging future language teachers as language assistants.

The French Cultural Centre and the Directorate for Education and Training are bilaterally administering a scheme for using French language assistants in primary and secondary education.

The Directorate for Education and Training is working with the Goethe-Institut with a view to establishing a scheme for language assistants from Germany in primary and secondary education.

Contact has been made with the federal German education administration regarding a programme for German language assistants in Norway as part of the German-Norwegian cultural agreement.

Following up this measure must be seen in connection with the introduction of the EU's new *Lifelong Learning Programme* from 2007, and any changes which might be made in Norwegian primary and secondary education and training.

5.1.2 Provide information about the value of teacher exchanges and language assistant schemes

Action

To provide information about good project results and good projects, amongst other places on a national foreign languages website (see 2.4.3).

Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training, SIU, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages

Time frame

From 2006

Status

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages has been in contact with the institutions that are responsible (SIU, the Leonardo office) and published updated information on the Centre's website.

5.1.3 Implement experiments on the integration of foreign languages with other subjects in vocational education programmes

Action

The concept *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)* is in Norway also called bilingual learning. This is instruction in a foreign language in a subject other than the foreign language itself. Experiments with CLIL in vocational education

programmes are to be conducted as part of preparing pupil exchanges with target language countries.

■ **Responsible**

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages

■ **Time frame**

From 2006

■ **Status**

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages has developed a concept as to how to integrate foreign languages with other subjects in vocational education programmes, and many schools have expressed an interest in taking part in the project. Plans, experiences and other relevant material about a content and language integrated learning approach (CLIL) are currently being published on the website. The Centre and the Directorate are working together to initiate a pilot project at a number of schools in the autumn of 2006.

5.2 More bilateral agreements with relevant target language countries

5.2.1 Establish contact with relevant target language countries in order to offer language scholarships for teachers of German, Spanish and Russian

■ **Action**

Enter into agreements with educational institutions in relevant target language countries in order to ensure professional study plans, stays providing practical in-service training and efficient use of grants, and a training and supplementary education that is in line with national objectives for foreign language education. The Directorate for Education and Training and the Ministry of Education and Research are to help make stays abroad a compulsory part of the training of foreign language teachers, and to make this kind of scheme easy to administrate.

■ **Responsible**

The Directorate for Education and Training, the Network for Competence Development, the Ministry of Education and Research

■ **Time frame**

From 2006

■ **Status**

The Directorate for Education and Training has registered and mediated wishes and possible

solutions regarding exchange schemes for initial, continuing and supplementary training of German teachers. The Directorate for Education and Training will take an initiative for an updated survey of offers in internationalisation.

5.2.2 Continue and further develop bilateral agreements with countries in and outside the EEA for mutual exchanges within vocational education and training

■ **Action**

Various support schemes giving individual schools the opportunity to engage a language teacher for two to nine months are to be considered. This type of scheme will be a supplement to the EU programmes administered by SIU.

Experiences from bilateral and mutual mobility programmes like the Norwegian-German *Do it!* are to be shared with other countries in and outside the EEA area.

Enter into agreements with institutions in relevant target language countries that ensure development both in language and subjects through good study programmes, practical work experience abroad and efficient use of grants for people in vocational education and training.

Promote the development of bilateral mobility programmes within the EEA funding schemes, which apply to the ten new member states in addition to Spain, Portugal and Greece.

■ **Responsible**

The Ministry of Education and Research, the Directorate for Education and Training, SIU, Vox

■ **Time frame**

From 2006

■ **Status**

SIU is working to promote the development of bilateral mobility programmes within the EEA funding schemes.

5.3 Better use of international cooperation programmes

5.3.1 Provide information about project funding and good practice in connection with internationalisation

■ **Action**

Provide information on the websites of SIU and

the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education about the various project funds that could be relevant for Norwegian applicants. In connection with the introduction of the EU's new *Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)*, guidance of, and information to, Norwegian applicants is to be strengthened. Making good practice known could help ensure that participation in the programmes yields professional and academic learning benefits.

- Responsible
SIU, the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages
- Time frame
2007
- Status
The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages has contacted responsible institutions to gather and publicize available information.

6 Increased research and development work in foreign languages

6.1 More research in central aspects of foreign languages

6.1.1 Continue existing and initiate new research programmes in central aspects of foreign languages in relation to practical training and teacher training

■ Action

Increased efforts in research and development work are necessary in order to develop and improve the contents, teaching aids and methodology in foreign language teaching.

Adapted education and pupil assessment in foreign languages, the use of digital media, developing the pupil/teacher roles, promoting intercultural understanding, use of portfolios and "new languages" (e.g. Spanish and Russian) and new programmes for foreign languages in teacher training, will be key areas for research and development work.

Universities and colleges, working with school owners, are to be encouraged to establish research programmes and initiate research and development work in central aspects of foreign language teaching.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, universities and colleges, school owners

■ Time frame

From 2005

■ Status

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education has initiated a project on the spreading of

culture through the medium of German as a school subject, dealing with how German culture and how the perception of Germany is mediated through teaching. The German embassy, the Goethe-Institut and the German School all contribute expertise and adaptation in a development project started in the spring of 2006. The objective is to trigger more projects, both large and small, for example on the spreading of culture through literature or culture and language.

6.2 More research and development work on foreign languages in teacher training institutions

6.2.1 Initiate and strengthen research and development connected to international project cooperation within foreign languages

■ Action

New and efficient teaching methods are necessary in a society where mobility and exchanges are becoming more and more usual. In Norway there has been little research into the use of foreign languages in an international context. In a Nordic context support is given to research and development through *Nordplus Language*.

Joint projects are to be initiated between specified professional circles, universities and colleges (transversal language programmes and *Comenius* in the EU's new *Lifelong Learning Programme*), between schools (*Comenius*) and between schools and universities and colleges.

Research and development work is also to be initiated through the eLearning and school

partnership programmes (*eTwinning*) which are also EU programmes. In the new *Lifelong Learning Programme eTwinning* is integrated in *Comenius*.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, SIU

■ Time frame

2006-2009

■ Status

281 Norwegian schools have registered on *eTwinning*. Norwegian schools are taking part in 59 projects with partner schools from a total of 23 European countries. 18 of these projects have foreign languages as their topic. The distribution of project languages (several of the 59 projects use more than one language): English: 50 projects, Scandinavian languages: 16, Spanish: 4, German: 3, Italian: 1 and Polish: 1 project. Reports are not compulsory in this programme. In 2006 Iglemyr School, Norway, won a prize for educational creativity in the use of ICT and English in its project for creating a virtual learning environment for the pupils.

6.2.2 Develop models for better interaction between research and practice in teacher training in foreign languages

■ Action

White Paper no. 30 (2003-2004) *Culture for Learning* says: "The Ministry will give priority to the practically-oriented research and development work in teacher training" (p. 101). *Competence for Learning. A Strategy for the Development of Competence in Primary and Secondary Education 2005-2008* emphasises that "[i]t is the responsibility of universities and colleges to [...] undertake research and development work in cooperation with school owners [and] to help disseminate the results of research and development work to relevant parties" (p. 11).

Relevant areas for research are adapted education and individual assessment in foreign language teaching, guidance of new foreign language teachers and portfolio assessment in teacher training and in schools.

The university and college sector, in cooperation with school owners, are to develop joint research projects and establish channels for disseminating research and results connected with foreign language teaching at all levels and with the training of foreign language teachers.

■ Responsible

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages, Network for Competence Development, universities and colleges

■ Time frame

From 2006

■ Status

Funding has been applied for from the Research Council of Norway for the project *Adapted Education in the Second Foreign Language*, administered by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Language. This project is part of the umbrella project *The Teacher as Co-Researcher*, initiated by Østfold University College.

6.2.3 Establish didactical school-oriented Master's studies

■ Action

There is currently very little research related to foreign language teaching in schools. One measure that could stimulate and promote this kind of research would be a Master's degrees in didactics.

Universities and colleges who train foreign language teachers are encouraged to develop didactical school-oriented Master's degrees with emphasis on the second foreign language.

■ Responsible

Universities and colleges

■ Time frame

2006

■ Status

From the autumn of 2006 Østfold University College is discussing the establishment of a Master's degree in didactics.

6.2.4 Assess measures implemented in the policy plan Languages Open Doors, disseminate information about results and update the plan

■ Action

Measures which have been implemented are to be assessed, and current measures are to be assessed regularly.

■ Responsible

The Directorate for Education and Training

■ Time frame

Current

■ Status

The Directorate for Education and Training has started work on external assessment assignments by inviting tenders.

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education was established 1 June 2005 as a part of Østfold University College. The Ministry has delegated responsibility for following up the Centre to the Directorate for Education and Training. In administrative matters the Centre relates to Østfold University College, with which the Centre also has close academic cooperation.

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education is to be a national resource centre for the teaching of foreign languages in primary and secondary education and is to ensure that the teaching of foreign languages is of a high quality, adapted to each pupil and given a practical, varied content. The Centre is to help Norway become a country whose inhabitants have a high level of proficiency in many foreign languages, both European and non-European.

The Centre's target groups are pupils, foreign language teachers in primary and secondary education and in teacher training, students, researchers and developers of teaching aids. In order to give foreign languages a positive position in the community as a whole, other important target groups will be parents, the media and the general public.

The Centre is to cooperate with the relevant professional circles both nationally and internationally.

There are several priority areas in the Centre's mandate:

- The main task for the Centre is to improve foreign language proficiency for teachers and pupils. Its work is to be based on research and experimental and developmental projects in close contact with students and teachers.
- The Centre is to emphasise developing working methods, contents and examples of teaching material that can help develop linguistic competence and motivation for foreign languages in all relevant target groups. It is especially important to help ensure that teaching in the second foreign language is adapted to all pupils, and that the teaching is based on a practical approach.
- The Centre is to be a resource for colleges and universities with regards to teacher training and continuing and supplementary training measures.
- The Centre is to systematize and give information about good practice. In addition the Centre is to help disseminate information and experiences from national and international research, and experimental and developmental work in the foreign language field. Special emphasis is to be put on establishing a separate website for the dissemination of information. Other relevant measures are courses, seminars, visits to the Centre and the development of material.
- The Centre is to help the promotion of positive attitudes to language learning and creating an understanding as to why Norway, being a small country, needs both depth and breadth in its national foreign language proficiency.
- The Centre is to give advice to the Ministry of Education and Training and the Directorate for Education and Training with regards to developing curricula and pupil assessment in foreign languages. The Centre is to help create good progression and coherence throughout the education system, and help municipal and county school owners with information and competence development.
- The Centre is to promote the perspective of equality in foreign language teaching with respect to gender, socio-economic differences and multi-cultural environments.

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)

SIU is an administrative agency under the Ministry of Education and Research with its own Board of Directors. The Centre is a service and cooperation organisation with the mission of promoting internationalisation, cultural communication and international mobility in higher education and at all levels of education and training. The centre is charged with the important task of coordinating national measures according to official Norwegian policy within the field of internationalisation.

The centre shall

- be a national office for international programmes and initiatives within higher education which are established by the Ministry, other public ministries and agencies, on their own initiative, or in which the Norwegian authorities decide to participate, such as the EU programmes. The centre shall also be able to run international programmes for levels of education other than university and college levels, and to manage educational programmes which include basic education, company training and adult education.
- be a contracting party for other ministries and agencies who want to carry out projects within international higher education and research cooperation, including development cooperation, and assume the operational responsibility for new programmes.

SIU is the Norwegian National Agency for the *Lifelong Learning Programme*, the EU's cooperation programme for all education in Europe. The programme supports European cooperation throughout the educational sector, from kindergarten to university, including vocational and professional education and training, and provides opportunities for establishing contacts all over Europe. A total of 31 European countries are participants in the programme, which includes a number of sectoral programmes:

- *Comenius* (kindergartens, schools and teacher training)
- *Erasmus* (higher education)
- *Leonardo da Vinci* (vocational and professional education and training)
- *Grundtvig* (adult education)
- In addition there are four transversal programmes: *Policy Development* including *Arion* (study visits for decision-makers in the educational sector), *Languages*, *ICT* and *Dissemination of Results*

The National Institute for Adult Learning (Vox)

Vox is an agency of the Ministry of Education and Research and

- acts to promote increased participation in social and working life by raising the competence level of adults, with special emphasis on basic skills, adults' rights and total qualifications.
- works to improve adults' skills in reading, writing, arithmetic and the use of ICT.
- is responsible for the curriculum in Norwegian and Social Sciences for adult immigrants and cooperates with other services on initial education.
- administers funds for educational organisations and distance learning organisations and awards grants for educational development work in the same organisations.
- administers funds for learning projects which reinforce basic skills.
- has top competence regarding adults' rights to primary and secondary education and documentation of total qualifications.
- surveys and disseminates new knowledge about how adults learn.
- arranges conferences and courses on how adults learn, and initiates networks for the sharing of experiences and development.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training was established on 15 June 2004 and is responsible for the development of primary and secondary education. The Directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research.

In this capacity the Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations. The Directorate is also responsible for managing the Norwegian Support System for Special Education (Statped), state-owned schools and the educational direction of the National Education Centres. The Ministry of Education and Research has also given the Directorate the responsibility for following up the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education.

The Directorate is responsible for all national statistics concerning primary and secondary education and on the basis of these statistics initiates, develops and monitors research and development.

The objective of the Directorate is to ensure that all pupils and apprentices receive the high quality education they are entitled to. The Directorate's main tasks are:

Analysis and assessment

Goal-oriented quality development requires the teacher, school and school owner to have knowledge about the current situation. The website skoleporten.no is designed to help them achieve this. At skoleporten.no one can find the Pupils' Survey, grading statistics, national tests, comparative analyses, international tests and research. This is a system for quality assessment which will be the most important national tool for assessing and analysing quality and for deciding and implementing policy.

Development, guidance and support

Through the quality assessment system development work at school, the school owner and national level will become more goal-oriented and strengthened. The responsibilities of the Directorate for Education and Training for competence and development will continue and be strengthened.

Supervision and administration

The overall objective of supervision is quality assurance and development. The national quality assessment system is an important part of the basis for an efficient and goal-oriented supervision.

The administration of financial instruments will be delegated to the Directorate, including subsidies (and grants to independent schools). The Directorate for Education and Training will be given the responsibility for preparing regulations, for example concerning curricula and rules for the assessment of individuals.

Disseminating knowledge and user participation

The Directorate for Education and Training will facilitate the sharing of experiences and a constant improvement in the cooperation between the different parties in the educational sector. The Directorate is to ensure that teacher training institutions play a more active and more goal-oriented role in future educational development. The County Governor, who is answerable to the Directorate in educational matters, will continue to help build good networks for the school owners.

Network for Competence Development

18 networks have been established in different subjects and transversal areas given priority in the *Knowledge Promotion* and the follow-up to *Competence for Development – Strategy for Competence Development in Primary and Secondary Education 2005-2008*. These networks form part of the Network for Competence Development and are coordinated by national centres, universities and colleges. The networks receive their commissions from the Directorate for Education and Training, and the assignments and grants are given on the condition that financial and result reports are submitted to the Directorate.

The National Network for English and Foreign Languages is jointly coordinated by the Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education, Sogn and Fjordane University College and the Programme for Teacher Training at NTNU.

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Useful Links

The Norwegian Centre for Foreign Languages in Education

<http://www.fremmedspraksenteret.no/>

European Centre for Modern Languages

<http://www.ecml.at/>

European Label

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm>

European Language Portfolio - Council of Europe

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/portfolio/Default.asp?L=E&M=/main_pages/welcome.html

Eurydice on the Internet:

<http://www.eurydice.org>

Council of Europe

<http://www.coe.int>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/CADRE_EN.asp

Language Education Policy Profile for Norway

www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Profile_Norway_EN.pdf

Promoting language learning and linguistic diversity. An action plan 2004-06.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/doc/official/keydoc/actlang/act_lang_en.pdf

SIU

<http://siu.no/>

Programme for French and German in Schools (PROFFT)

<http://profft.no/>

Troll Scholarships

http://www.fylkesmannen.no/fmt_fagomrade.asp?tgid=100&gid=19484&amid=1030064

United World Colleges (UWC)

<http://www.uwc.org/>

The Norwegian Study Centre in York

<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/nsc/>

eTwinning

<http://www.skolenettet.no/etwinning>

Published by:
The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research

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E-mail: publikasjonsbestilling@dss.dep.no
Fax: + 47 22 24 27 86
Publication number: F-4188E
Design: Magnolia Design as
Photo: © Kerstin Mertens/Samfoto
Printed by: Interface Media 03/2007
Impression: 1000

