



# World TVET Database Norway

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## Contents

Abbreviations .....	4
1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation .....	5
2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems .....	7
3. Governance and financing .....	9
4. TVET teachers and trainers.....	12
5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks.....	13
6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges .....	15
7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions.....	15
8. References and further reading .....	16

## Abbreviations

CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CVTB	County Vocational Training Board
EQF	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
GDP	Gross domestic product
MOER	Ministry of Education and Research
NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
NQF	Norwegian qualifications framework for lifelong learning
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QF-EHEA	European qualifications framework for higher education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VOX	Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning

## TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

<a href="#">Accreditation</a>	<a href="#">Non-formal education</a>
<a href="#">Adult learning/education</a>	<a href="#">Qualification</a>
<a href="#">Apprentice</a>	<a href="#">Quality</a>
<a href="#">Apprenticeship</a>	<a href="#">Quality Assurance</a>
<a href="#">Apprenticeship agreement</a>	<a href="#">Quality control</a>
<a href="#">Competence/y</a>	<a href="#">School-based education/training</a>
<a href="#">Curriculum</a>	<a href="#">Skills</a>
<a href="#">European qualifications framework for lifelong learning</a>	<a href="#">Social Partners</a>
<a href="#">Guidance &amp; Counselling</a>	<a href="#">Teacher</a>
<a href="#">Higher education</a>	<a href="#">Teacher In VET</a>
<a href="#">In-company training</a>	<a href="#">Tertiary Education</a>
<a href="#">Informal Learning</a>	<a href="#">Trainer</a>
<a href="#">Job</a>	<a href="#">TVET</a>
<a href="#">Knowledge</a>	<a href="#">Upper secondary education</a>
<a href="#">Labour market</a>	<a href="#">Vocational qualification</a>
<a href="#">Lifelong Learning</a>	<a href="#">Work experience</a>
<a href="#">Low-skilled person</a>	<a href="#">Workplace learning/training</a>
<a href="#">National Qualifications Framework</a>	

# Norway

Population:	5,211,000 (2015)
Youth population <sup>1</sup> :	683,000 (2015)
Median population age:	39.1 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010-2015) <sup>2</sup> :	1.27%



Data © OpenStreetMap Design © Mapbox

## 1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

### TVET mission

The TVET system, including apprenticeships, is an integral part of the Norwegian education system. The government views TVET as a central means for achieving national goals in areas such as economic, regional and employment/labour market policies. Education and training including TVET are considered a public responsibility. TVET is available all over the state so as to ensure an equal education for all. Equal access to high quality education is a fundamental political principle. There are no school fees at any level including higher education in the public education system. Only a small share of pupils and students attend private education.

The government recognises the major role of social partners, accordingly the formulation and implementation of TVET policies are shared between public authorities and the social partners such as employers and employees' organisations and trade unions. This cooperation is institutionalised through the Vocational Training Act. It is also expressed through procedures for representation in central bodies and active participation in preparatory, implementation and control tasks within the field.

### TVET strategy

Reform is an ongoing process associated to TVET national policy in Norway, for instance, a comprehensive curriculum reform was introduced in 2006 so-called 'The Knowledge Promotion Reform' (*Kunnskapsløftet*). New national curricula were developed for each subject in both school-based and apprenticeship-based education and training. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*) managed this process through a broad and open process. Each Subject Curriculum were developed by a curriculum team and been subject to a broad consultation process (electronic questionnaires, seminars, meetings) that has involved schools, school owners and the social partners.

The government works to promote participation among low-skilled students in upper secondary TVET. For example since 2000, through 'the training candidature scheme' (*lærekandidatordningen*), low-skilled students are given the possibility of obtaining a specially adapted qualification of a lower degree. As opposed to the apprentice (*lærling*) who signs an

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<sup>1</sup> Population aged 14-25

<sup>2</sup> All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

apprenticeship agreement (*lærekontrakt*), the training candidate (*lærekandidat*) signs a training contract (*opplæringskontrakt*) which will lead to a competence exam (*kompetanseprøve*) as opposed to the trade or journeyman's certificate (*fag- og svenneprøve*). As of the 1st of January 2012, there were 1476 training candidates in Norway.

The Norwegian strategy towards TVET attempts to bridge the general and vocational divide and particularly the gap between the vocational schools and the apprenticeship system. The most important reform in this regard is "Reform 94" in 1994, which encompassed rights, structure and content.

## TVET legislation

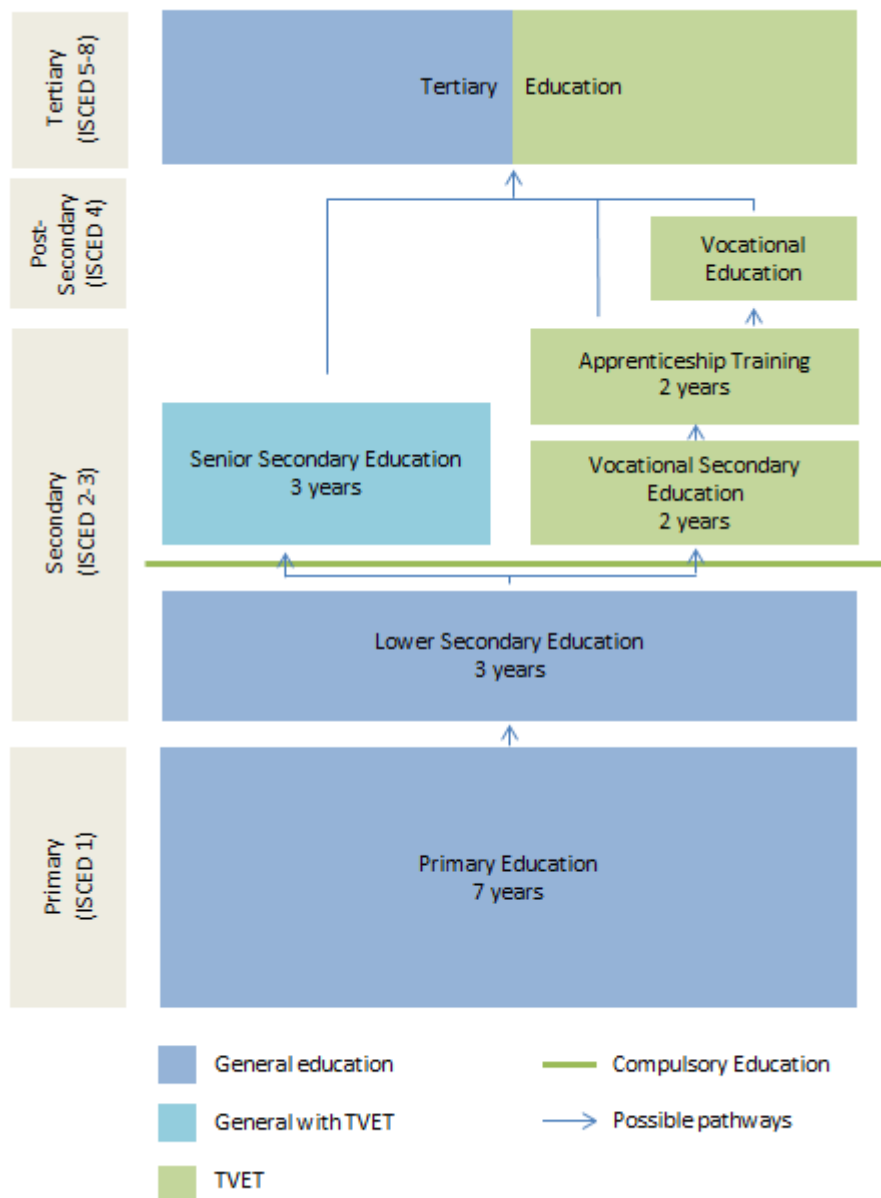
Reform 94 produced changes in several aspects of TVET. At the upper secondary level, both the act regulating education and training in schools, and the act regulating apprenticeship training were revised and harmonised with the aim of achieving a more uniform education and better coordination between education in school and training at work. The following acts regulate the current TVET system:

- Act of 17 July 1998 no. 61 regulates the county authorities' responsibility for public upper secondary education and training, objectives and scope, organisation and division of responsibilities, financing and content of education and training delivered by both public and private institutions.
- Act relating to Post-secondary Vocational Education and Training (*lov om fagskoler* 2003, latest amendment December 2010) regulates public and private post-secondary vocational education and training at ISCED 4 level, with courses and programmes of 6 months' to 2 years' duration. Education and training under this law are not part of higher education.
- The Adult Education Act (*Lov om voksenopplæring* – 1976, latest amendment 2003) regulates different types of adult training that is not covered by the Education Act. Education and training for adults is provided by a variety of public and private institutions. Among the most important are private adult learning study associations (*studieforbund*), labour market training, work based training and distance training.
- The Act relating to Master Craftsman Certificates (*Lov om mesterbrev*, 1986) establishes the framework for the master craftsman certificate (*mesterbrev*). It stipulates that only a person awarded the certificate is entitled to call him or herself a master craftsman (*mester*).
- The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (*Lov om universiteter og høyskoler* 2005, latest amendment 2009) applies to all higher education, both state and private. The Act regulates organisational and management aspects, provides for the recognition of study programme, examination and certification, for quality assurance as well as for the learning environment for students.

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CEDEFOP (1999). Vocational Education and Training in Norway. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.  
CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

**2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems**



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

## Formal TVET system

All young people leaving compulsory school have a statutory right to attend three years of upper secondary education. Since 1976, general and vocational education and training were subject to the same law, under the same roof. Thus, today nearly all upper secondary schools provide both general education and vocational training, often in the same building. Students may choose from twelve programmes categorised as three general studies programmes and nine TVET-programmes. The TVET-programmes are as follows:

- Technical and Industrial Production
- Electrical Trades
- Building and Construction
- Restaurant and Food Processing Trades
- Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry
- Health and Social Care
- Design, Arts and Crafts
- Media and Communication
- Service and Transport

The upper secondary TVET leads to the trade- or journeyman's certificate (*fag- og svennebrev*). The majority of upper secondary TVET students are in the age group 16-21.

Upper secondary TVET normally includes two years at school with practical training in school workshops and short work placements in industry, followed by two years of formalised apprenticeship training and productive work in an enterprise or public institution. During the last two years, the apprentice is engaged in one year of training and one year of productive work. This is known as the "2+2 model". However, not all TVET programmes follow the 2+2 model. A few programmes are entirely school-based. Another small group of programmes follow a "1+3-model", with one year in school followed by three years of apprenticeship training.

The first year in upper secondary TVET consists of general education and introductory knowledge of the vocational area. During the second year, TVET students choose specialisations and the courses are more trade-specific. While in school, students participate in practical training in workshops and enterprises through the subject In-depth study project (*prosjekt til fordypning*). The two-year apprenticeship takes place with an employer (or employers) and follows the national curriculum.

In Norwegian higher education, all vocationally-oriented courses and programmes are part of the ordinary higher education system. There is no formal or other distinction between vocational and non-vocational higher education.

The Tertiary Vocational education (*fagskole*) at ISCED 4 is an alternative to higher education and is based on upper secondary education and training or equivalent informal and non-formal competence. Higher Education entrance Qualification is not required. The education consists of vocational courses lasting from half a year to two years.

The institutions of the tertiary TVET level (ISCED 4) have developed through one of the following four main paths:



- county post-secondary technical colleges building on vocational secondary education, often leading to qualifications as master craftsmen or certificates for seamen;
- state funded private schools originally recognised as "secondary education without parallel to public provision", several of which are in art, culture or Bible studies;
- state and county funded programmes in health and social studies;
- other private provision, generally developed through training needs resulting from new and emerging technologies and demands in the labour market since the 1980s, particularly in media, design, communication, administration, logistics and ICT.

The Act on Postsecondary (tertiary) Vocational Education No. 56 of 20 June 2003, revised in 2007, regulates short (e.g. six months' to two years' duration) vocational training courses and programmes at the postsecondary non-tertiary level. In this Act, the term vocational denotes programmes leading to qualifications that can be immediately used in working life without further training. As a consequence of the 2007 revision, all providers must document quality assurance systems, and it is also possible to obtain institutional accreditation for programmes within a defined field of study, rather than having to apply for recognition programme by programme.

## Non-formal and informal TVET systems

The folk high schools are mostly boarding schools and are run by different types of organisations, independent foundations, counties and Christian organisations. Folk high schools provide young people and adults with general courses but do not organise any formal examinations.

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## 3. Governance and financing

### Governance

Norway enjoys a high degree of decentralisation amongst the three administrative levels: state, county and municipality.

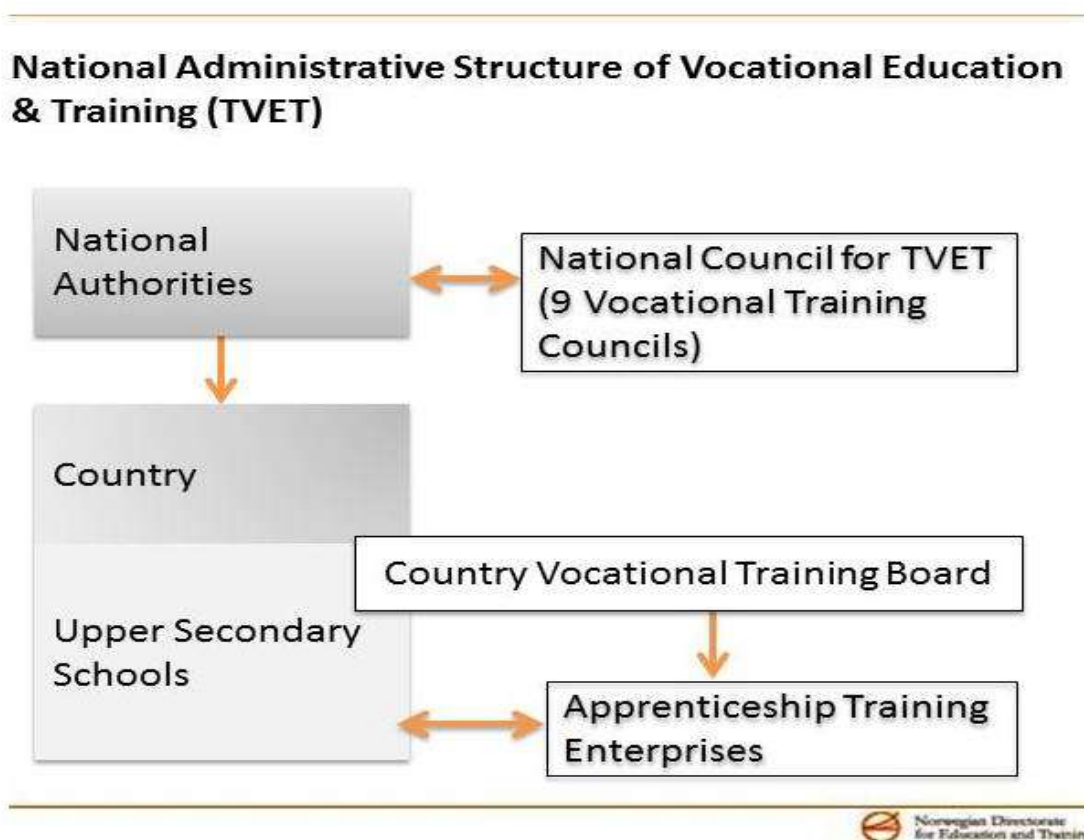
The municipalities (*kommuner*) are responsible for primary and lower secondary education.

- While county authorities (fylkeskommuner) are responsible for public upper secondary school, their associated tasks include: operational responsibilities for the development of curricula, examinations and quality control, running of schools, the intake of students, and the appointment of teachers.
- The Ministry of Education and Research (Kunnskapsdepartementet) (MOER) has overall responsibility for national policy development and administration of education and

training at all levels, from kindergarten to higher education, including adult education. Higher education falls directly under the responsibility of the Ministry.

- For post-secondary (tertiary) vocational training ("fagskole", ISCED 4), the situation is slightly more complicated as the counties are responsible for most of the public funding, most schools are private, and a few schools are funded directly by the Ministry.

The figure below shows the governance structure for upper secondary TVET and how the advisory tripartite bodies are organised accordingly:



Scheme extracted from CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

The Directorate of Education have responsibility for the continuous curriculum development. For this purpose it makes extensive use of expert groups from both school and companies that provide upper secondary education. When the need for a new qualification is identified a tripartite group is set down to write vocational profiles (*kompetanseplattform*). This will make the basis for developing the subject curricula. The Directorate appoints teams for curriculum development consisting of professionals (most often suggested by the employer and employee organisations) and TVET teachers. Also, the Directorate has recently developed a follow-up system for curricula called SOL (System for *oppfølging av læreplan*). The system aims is to get a more holistic and systematic knowledge about the state of affairs with regards to the curriculum.

## Social partners

The TVET national policy is built on a close cooperation between public authorities and the social partners on a formal and informal basis. The formal basis for the role of the social partners in TVET at upper secondary level is to be found in the International Labour Organisation Convention 142 (of 23 June 1975) which Norway ratified in 1976. The convention establishes that the employers' organisations and trade unions shall influence and participate in the framing and development of vocational guidance and training.

The social partners have representatives in all important advisory and decision-making bodies at state and county level:

- the National Council for Vocational Training (*Rådet for fagopplæring i arbeidslivet – RFA*);
- the 20 national Vocational Training Boards (*Opplæringsråd*) which represent the expertise in different sectors and recognised occupations;
- the Vocational Training Committee (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnda*) for each county; and
- the examination boards (*prøvenemndene*) in each county and the national appeals boards (*ankenemndene*).

Through this representation, the social partners are directly involved in, among others, the framing of structure and content of recognised occupations, the development of curricula and framing the trade and journeyman's examination. The participation of pupils, apprentices and students in the preparation of education and training is, moreover, stated in the acts concerning education and training.

## Financing

Norway spends considerable resources on its education system, including TVET, relative to many other countries. For instance, Norway spends more than the OECD average in Education per student. In 2008, Norway spent 5 per cent of its GDP on primary and secondary education and training as a whole, whereas the OECD countries spent only 3.8 per cent on average.

There is varied spending of resources because of differences in geography and demographic structure. This gives rise to substantial differences in the spending of resources among different municipalities and country authorities.

There are no school fees at any level, including higher education, in the public education system. The finance comes from country authorities for public upper secondary schools while MOER is responsible, include finance, for tertiary education.

Only a small share of pupils and students attend private education. The Financial Support to Students and Pupils Act (*Lov om utdanningsstøtte til elever og studenter-1985*, latest amendment 2005) states that all registered students on formally recognised study programmes, at both public and private higher education institutions may receive grants and subsidised loans from the State Educational Loan Fund (*Statens lånekasse for utdanning*) for subsistence costs.

### *Sources:*

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.  
Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2012). The Education Mirror, Analysis of Primary and Secondary Education and Training In Norway. Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

## 4. TVET teachers and trainers

There are three main groups of TVET teachers and trainers at the upper secondary level:

- TVET teachers who provide formal school-based education and training;
- Trainers (instruktører) and training supervisors (faglige ledere) in enterprises; and
- TVET training facilitators who are involved in non-formal and informal workplace training.

The formal qualification requirements for TVET teachers are specified in national regulations. In principle, there is no difference between teachers in TVET and other teachers. Both groups must have two sets of formal qualifications: in the relevant subject and in teaching. TVET teacher education programmes follow the general degree system, with a three-year Bachelor's degree and a two-year Master's degree. To become a qualified TVET teacher, one must either complete vocational practical-pedagogical education or vocational teacher education.

Vocational practical-pedagogical education (consecutive model) is a 1-year programme (2-year for part-time study) for students who already possess a vocational/professional degree or other qualification. The main fields of study are pedagogical theory, vocational didactics and supervised teaching and training practice. Admission requirements are:

- qualification as a skilled craftsman/worker, or a bachelor's degree in a specific profession; and
- two years of occupational experience; and
- two years of further studies (technical, vocational, managerial); and
- general matriculation qualifications or recognition of non-formal qualifications.

Vocational teacher education (concurrent model) is a comprehensive 3-year bachelor programme that covers both vocational training and pedagogy and qualifies for the teaching of specific subjects in years 5 – 7 in primary school, and in lower and upper secondary school. It is also available as a part-time study. Admission requirements are:

- an upper secondary vocational qualification and two years of relevant work experience
- general matriculation qualifications or relevant non-formal qualifications, e.g. long work experience

All teacher education programmes for the lower and upper secondary levels (grades 8 – 13) including those for TVET teachers are at present undergoing revision as part of the

implementation of the Norwegian National Qualifications Framework of 15 December 2011, following both the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in the Bologna Process and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF).

Trainers (*instruktører*) in enterprises are vocationally skilled, but not required to have a teaching certificate. Training supervisors (*faglige ledere*) in enterprises or other workplaces with apprentices must ensure that the training meets the requirements set by the Education Act. They must have one of the following qualifications:

- trade or journeyman's certificate in the relevant trade or craft
- master craftsman's certificate in the relevant craft
- relevant higher education in the trade or craft
- adequate educational background in the parts of the trade which, according to the curriculum, will be taught in the enterprise
- six years of experience in the trade or craft

There are no formal qualification requirements for training facilitators that deliver training outside formally approved education institutions. Still, TVET training personnel involved in non-formal and informal workplace training often have a formal vocational qualification. Some training facilitators have not formalised their vocational skills, but perform solely on the basis of skills developed through work practice.

Enterprises that provide apprenticeship training must be approved by the county authority. Formal regulations simply state that the management of the institution must ensure that training personnel have "the necessary qualifications" (Education Act).

Teacher training for pre-primary, primary and secondary education was regulated by the Teacher Training Act of 1973, repealed in 1998. Provisions concerning teacher education are now under the Education Act of 1998 (e.g. teacher qualifications requirements), and in part under Universities Act of 2005. Following the Report to the Parliament (*Storting*) No. 11 (2008-2009), White Paper on Teacher Education (The Teacher-The Role and the Education), in May 2009 MOER appointed a National Curriculum Committee in order to propose national guidelines for a new teacher education programme.

### *Sources:*

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

UNESCO-IBE (2012). World Data on Education VII Ed. 2010/11. Norway. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

## 5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

### Secondary vocational education

Secondary TVET mainly leads to either a trade certificate (Fagbrev) for industrial and service trade or a craft or journeyman's certificate (Svennebrev) for traditional crafts. Graduates must pass the journeyman's examination, through which apprentices demonstrate their vocational skills and explain and justify the methods they have chosen to use to solve the test assignments.

Holders of a trade or journeyman's certificate may pursue further studies at a Vocational College (fagskole) at ISCED 4 and can also qualify for higher education. (ISCED 4) have developed through four main paths mentioned in section 2 and leads to qualifications as master craftsmen or certificates.

## National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

NQF gives a view of the Norwegian educational system and its levels of qualifications. NQF is a contribution to facilitate the work on lifelong learning and is to be used as a transparency tool for comparison of Norwegian qualifications with qualifications from other countries, via the European qualifications framework (EQF) and/or the European qualifications framework for higher education (QF-EHEA).

## Quality assurance

The County Vocational Training Board (CVTB) provides advice concerning strategies for quality development in the vocational education system in the county, and evaluates the system of quality assurance. The Board is also responsible for securing the attainment of qualifications in vocational education and promotes cooperation between schools and the regional labour market. Other public bodies at the state and countries levels are involved in quality control for primary and secondary schools as well.

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) was established in 2002, operative as of 1 January 2003. It is an independent agency with the task of carrying out external quality assurance of higher education and tertiary vocational education in Norway. It performs this task through a variety of mechanisms:

- Accreditation of higher education institutions;
- Accreditation of higher education programmes and courses;
- Revision of accreditation;
- Evaluation of internal quality assurance in higher education institutions;
- Evaluation of specific types of educational provision or defined aspects of such;
- Recognition of tertiary vocational education; and
- General recognition of foreign qualifications.

All courses must be accredited by NOKUT and an up-to-date list of recognised courses can be found on NOKUT's website.

As a consequence of the 2007 revision, all providers must document quality assurance systems, and it is also possible to obtain institutional accreditation for programmes within a defined field of study, rather than having to apply for recognition programme by programme.

### *Sources:*

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Norway VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

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## 6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

### Current reforms and major projects

A new version of the Social Contract on TVET (*Samfunnskontrakten*) was signed by MOER, the Ministry of Government Affairs, the social partners and the regional authorities in April 2012. A majority of pupils starting upper secondary education starts studying one of the nine vocational programmes. However, only few of them complete with a trade or journeyman's certificate. To meet the future needs for competences in the labour market, the Social Contract for TVET is a major initiative aiming to increase the number of pupils completing vocational education at upper secondary level. The contract's three main objectives are:

- a 20% increase in the number of apprenticeship contracts by 2015;
- increase the number of adults formalising their competence by a craft or journeyman's certificate; and
- increase the number of apprentices that completes an apprenticeship and pass the exam.

The partners who have signed the contract are expected to take on some of the following measures:

- increase financial support on different levels, including world skills and similar events;
- develop statistics that describe the needs for future competences in the labour market;
- develop guidelines for company based training;
- motivate employees to formalise their competence and train others; and
- develop strategies for recruiting youth for vocational education.

### Challenges

Ensuring enough apprenticeships for TVET learners is a recurring challenge in the Norwegian TVET system. Should the pupil be unable to find an apprenticeship place, the upper secondary school is obliged to provide a year of practical training organised by the school.

The government introduces 'The national grant scheme for apprentices' as an incentive for companies to secure apprenticeship training. Each training company receives the same amount for every apprentice they provide training for.

### *Sources:*

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Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2012). The Education Mirror, Analysis of Primary and Secondary Education and Training In Norway. Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

## 7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

### UNEVOC Centres

- [Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences \(HIOA\)](#)

### TVET Institutions

- Ministry of Education and Research
- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
- National Parents' Committee for Primary and Secondary Education
- Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning
- The employers' organisations
- Trade Unions

## 8. References and further reading

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### Further reading

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### **Web resources**

Webpage of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

Webpage of the [Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences \(HiOA\)](#).

Webpage of the [National Parents' Committee for Primary and Secondary Education](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning \(Vox\)](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#).

Webpage of the [Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund](#).