

**THE DEVELOPMENT AND STATE OF THE ART OF
ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION (ALE)**

**NATIONAL REPORT OF NORWAY
BY
THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

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0. Introduction

Norway is a country with a well regulated labour market, investment in a highly educated, skilled and adaptable workforce, high wage level and relative small differences in income. There is a strong agreement between the social partners and the Government about social justice and equity within the Norwegian education system and a common desire to raise the general level of competence for the entire population. To reach this goal there is a commitment to develop frameworks for providing opportunities for all to be educated and to be a part of the knowledge society.

Adult learning and education includes a multitude of learning activities, such as formal adult education on primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level, non formal learning in folk high schools and adult education associations/organisations, distance education institutions and various work place learning. Moreover, adult learning for the larger part takes place outside the formal education system, most often in the form of skills development in the workplace or local based community and cultural learning.

Learning and education for adults has primarily aimed at the two purposes; "filling the gaps" of lacking previous basic education and bringing on further learning and education.. In this report we have had focus on "filling the gaps".

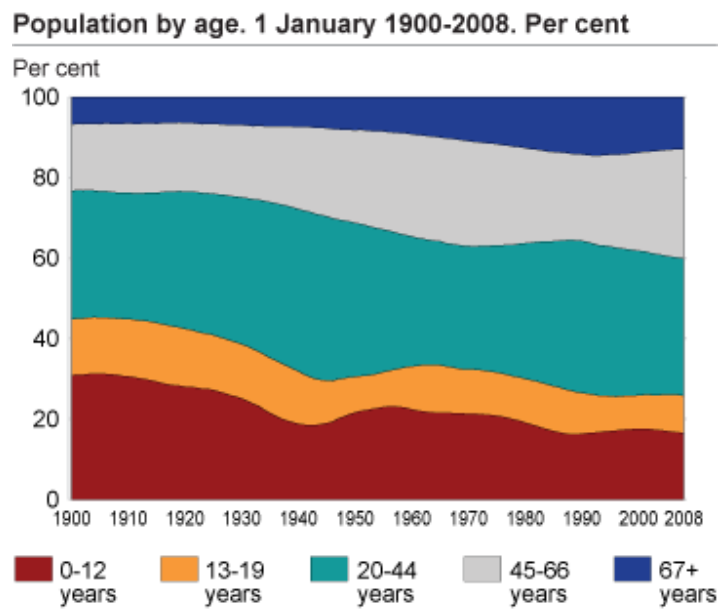
The Ministry of Education and Research is the responsible for the report. However Vox - Norwegian Institute for Adult Learning has been given the task of writing the report. Vox - Norwegian Institute for Adult Learning has made the report in cooperation with the Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (VOFO). This report has been written based on already existing documentation and reports; the method has been desk research only.

An outcome of CONFINTEA V in Hamburg 1997 was to put forward an "Agenda for the future", followed by mid term conferences in many regions of the world. Some discussions and decisions from CONFINTEA V can be seen in i.e. the Adult Learners' Week Movement, initiated by the United Kingdom in Hamburg. Adult Learners' Weeks (ALW) are organised annually in 35 – 40 countries around the world, and the movement also organises a big International Adult Learners' Week Conference. This conference has been organised i.e. in South-Africa, England and Norway. The ALW movement has been important to focus on the rights and opportunities for adult men and women around the world to learn – both basic skills and further education and training.

I. General Overview

I.1 Population

The Kingdom of Norway consists of the mainland and the arctic islands of Svalbard and Jan Mayen, and covers approximately 387 00 km². The country's main characteristics are its long coast line of 25 148 km, including fjords, and its long stretched shape that holds a population of 4 737 200 residents¹.



Compared with other European countries, Norway is a small country, with few inhabitants, low population density and a decentralised settling. But every year we see a net flow of relocations to the most central parts of the country. The trend in recent years has been increasing out-migration from the least central municipalities and a noticeable increase in in-migration to the most central municipalities. The average population density is approximately 14.3 persons per km².

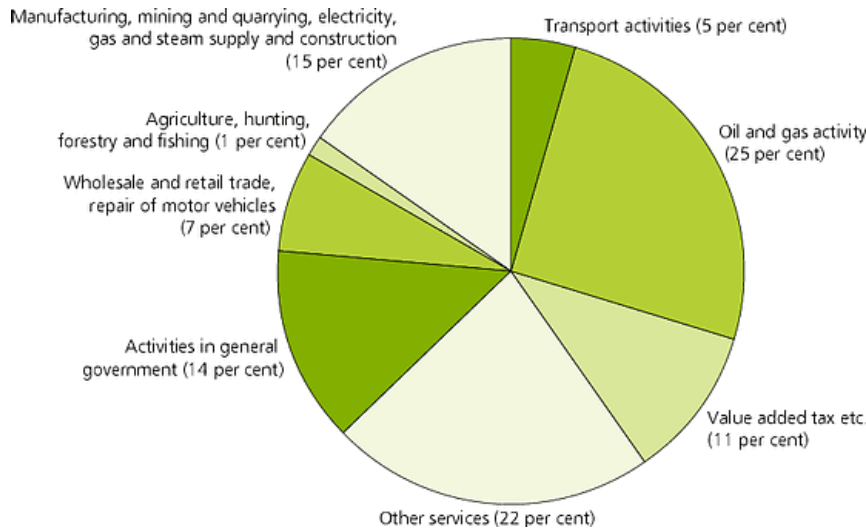
I.2 Public administration

The country consists of 19 counties, which are divided into approximately 431 municipalities. Both the counties and municipalities represent political and administrative units the Storting has delegated decision-making powers to these units within certain areas, such as public health service, transport and education and training. The county governor is the State representative and ensures that the regional and local activities are in accordance with national political decisions and goals.

¹ http://www.ssb.no/folkemengde_en/

1.3 Gross Domestic Product

The last years have been good years for the Norwegian economy, with strong growth in gross domestic product (GDP) for mainland Norway, domestic demand and employment.



Gross domestic product, by main activity. 2006. Per cent

In 2007 GDP for Mainland Norway rose by 6 per cent, according to preliminary figures from the National Accounts. This is the strongest growth since 1971, and follows several years of high growth rates. GDP for Mainland Norway, measured in constant prices, was 20 per cent higher in 2007 than in 2003. The growth in the GDP for Mainland Norway was broadly based, with strong growth in production of both commodities and services.²

The Norwegian Krone (NOK) is the currency in Norway. 100 NOK = 12,52 EURO (April 2008)

² <http://www.ssb.no/english/yearbook/2007/fig/fig-291.html>

1.4 Labour force participation

Compared with other countries, a high percentage of the adult population in Norway is in employment. This is mainly due to the majority of Norwegian women being in employment. Almost 7 out of 10 women and 8 out of 10 men are currently in employment. Thirty years ago, less than half of all Norwegian women were employed or actively seeking work. There is roughly the same number of employed men today as there was in the mid 1970s.

By the end of 2007 unemployment was 2,1 per cent. The labour force (the sum of employment and unemployment) increased by 88 000 people from the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007. In the same period, the working-age population (aged 15-74) rose by 54 000.

The labour force participation rate (the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population) was 73.2 per cent and all age groups except those above 66 years of age had a higher labour force participation rate than last year. The increase in the labour force participation rate for people aged 55-66 indicates that more people stay in employment for longer. The labour force participation rate for women rose by 1.9 percentage points, which is in line with a longer trend. For men, the rise in the labour force participation rate of 1.0 percentage point is a shift from the decline that has been observed over the last years.

The strong growth comes from a general increase in the labour force participation rate and immigration, especially from the new EU countries in Eastern Europe. The latter is due to increased immigration in general and to the fact that a larger share of the immigrants are allowed to stay for more than six months

Sickness absence:	6,9 per cent
Q4 2007:	
Unemployed:	2,1 per cent
Employed:	71,3 per cent
Labour force:	73,2 per cent

³ http://www.ssb.no/aku_en/

Recent years have witnessed a substantial increase in the number of people receiving social security benefits (including disability pensions, sickness benefits etc), prompting changes to national insurance legislation and a heightened emphasis on occupational/vocational rehabilitation measures. The new Administration for Work and Welfare (NAV), established in July 2006, represents a merger of the Norwegian Public Employment Service (Aetat) with public services for pensions and social affairs. One of its main aims is to improve the coordination of employment and welfare services in ways that can help unemployed job seekers and those most at risk of social exclusion to reintegrate into the labour market.

The sickness absence raised from 6.8 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2006 to 6.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2007, an increase of 1.6 per cent.⁴

1.5 Immigrant population and employment

At 1 January 2007 there are 415 300 persons in Norway with immigrant background, or 8.3 per cent of the total population. Immigrants are defined as first-generation immigrants, i.e. born abroad by foreign-born parents. They must be registered as settled in Norway for at least six months.

The increase in immigrant population is mostly a result of immigration from non-western countries. Three out of four persons in immigrant population have a non-western background, or 6.6 per cent of the total population. At the beginning of 1986, the non-western immigrant population made up 1.1 per cent of the total population.

In 2007 six out of ten immigrants were employed⁵. Registered unemployment among immigrants fell from 6.0 per cent to 4.4 per cent from November 2006 to November 2007. The figures are based on the Directorate of Labour's register of job seekers and are calculated as a fraction of the labour force.

9 193 immigrants were registered unemployed in the fourth quarter of 2007, a decline of 2 000 from the corresponding period last year. The unemployment rate for this group was at the lowest level ever recorded since the statistics were established in 1989.

⁴ http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/06/02/sykefratot_en/index.html

⁵ http://www.ssb.no/innvregsys_en/

1.6 Education⁶

Levels:

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION covers education for children aged 6 to 15. This includes pupils in 1st to 10th grade, together with pupils in minority language groups and special groups. In addition, there are special schools for children with special educational needs. Day care facilities for school children are a right for pupils from 1st grade to 4th grade.

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION provides three years of general education or vocational training after the 10th year of lower secondary education. The norm for apprenticeship training is two years of vocational training in upper secondary education followed by one or two years of practical training in industry.

TERTIARY/HIGHER EDUCATION: As part of the implementation of the Bologna Process, the degree system was entirely restructured in 2002-2003. As a result, the main structure follows the 3 + 2 + 3 model, viz. three-year Bachelor's degrees, two-year Master's degrees, and three-year PhD degrees.

Numbers:

Since 1955 the total number of pupils and students has increased from approximately 550 000 to more than 1 million. This means that more than one out of five Norwegians are studying.

With the change-over from seven years to nine- years compulsory primary school, the number of pupils increased from the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s.

The number of pupils fell until the mid-1990s but then increased sharply when school attendance became compulsory for six-year-olds in 1997 (Reform 97). In the autumn of 2004 there were 618 300 pupils at primary and lower secondary schools.

After a minor decline in the number of pupils (including apprentices) in upper secondary education in the 1990s, there has been an increase the last years.

More than 90 per cent of 16-18 year olds attend upper secondary school compared with 65 per cent in 1980.

The marked growth in higher education levelled off at the end of the 1990s. The total number of students is 224 200 (including students abroad) and more than one out of four 19-24 year olds are now enrolled in higher education. At the moment there are more students in higher education than in upper secondary

⁶ This is Norway- What the figures say SSB, Revised edition 2006

1.7 Population's level of education

Of the population aged 16 years and over, 6 per cent have a long tertiary education⁷. Of these, 36 per cent have an education in the field Natural sciences, Vocational and Technical subjects. More men than women have long, tertiary education, as at 1 October 2006, about 8 per cent of the male population has a long tertiary education corresponding to more than four years. The share for women is less than 4 per cent. Forty-six per cent of the men and 41 per cent of the women have upper secondary education as their highest educational level.

Gender and Total/County of residence ⁸	Total	Absolute figures				
		Below upper secondary level	Upper secondary education ²	Tertiary education, short ³	Tertiary education, long ⁴	Unknown or no completed education
2006	3 716 610	1 118 834	1 552 069	701 494	205 914	138 299

1.8 Different language and ethnic groups

As established by law and governmental policy, there are two official forms of written Norwegian — Bokmål (literally "book language") and Nynorsk (literally "new Norwegian"). The Norwegian Language Council recommends the terms "Norwegian Bokmål" and "Norwegian Nynorsk" in English.

The Sami are an indigenous people who live in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. The Sami in Norway have three different languages: Northern Sami, Lule Sami and Southern Sami.

⁷ http://www.ssb.no/utniv_en/

⁸ http://www.ssb.no/utniv_en/tab-2007-08-27-01-en.html

II. Adult learning and education in detail

1. Policy, Legislation and Financing

1.1. Legislative, policy and administrative frameworks of ALE;

1.1.1. The legislative and policy environment of ALE in Norway

i) Education for all

A basic principle of Norwegian educational policy is *Education for all*. Wherever they live in the country, all citizens should have an equal right to education, regardless of social and cultural background and possible special needs. All public education in Norway is in principle free of charge up to and including the upper secondary level/VET.

The Ministry of Education and Research has the overall responsibility for all public education and vocational training in Norway. Other ministries, like the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, The Ministry of Government Administration and Reform, The Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Trade and Industry are also involved in adult learning and training. Municipal authorities are responsible for formal primary and lower secondary education for adults and for training in Norwegian language and civic life for adult immigrants. County authorities are responsible for formal upper secondary education. The county councils cooperate as well with adult education associations and distance education institutions as providers.

More than 1 million participants attend adult education and training each year. Both the public educational system, adult education associations, folk high schools, distance education institutions, other private institutions and workplaces offer education and training for adults.

ii) Life Long Learning and participation in the knowledge society

In the Nordic societies three dimensions seems to be significant characteristics of adult education and training; the first refers to participation in wider society and relates to the concept of democracy, civil society and citizenship. The second is that adult education and training are called upon to help improve the match between educational qualifications and skills, on the one hand, and broad participation in the labour market, on the other. The third refers to the shared wish to create an inclusive learning society in which participation is truly for all.⁹

⁹ Nord (2001) Curious Minds- Nordic Adult Education Compared, Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen, Nord 2001:9

In keeping with the principle of lifelong learning the Norwegian approach to adult education and training works to promote adult knowledge and skills as the basis for personal development, and also to further development of working life and civic society through increased goal setting, business development, value creation and democratic participation.

Even though Norway has a high level of educational attainment, it may be not sufficient to satisfy the shifts in the demands for qualified labour in the future years. Updated and new skills and competence are necessary to improve competitiveness and increase flexibility in a changing working life. It is acknowledged that the Norwegian human resources constitute more than 80% of the national assets. In addition Norway faces an ageing population and all available resources have to be used in the most optimal way.

Both public authorities and the social partners have been preoccupied for a number of years with the risks of labour and skills shortages and mismatches. As a result the Norwegian Life Long Learning strategy was launched as the *Competence Reform* in 1998.

iii) The Competence Reform

White Paper No 42 (1997-1998) to the Storting

The Competence Reform was a result of the national wage negotiations between the state and the social partners and was based on recognition of the fact that a well-educated population is the most important resource a country can have for the creation of new jobs, ensuring quality of life and preventing new class distinctions. The main objective of the reform has been to help meet the needs of individuals, society and the workplace in terms of skills and knowledge and give adults opportunities to acquire education and training to improve their qualifications.

Main elements of the Competence Reform

The Competence Reform was designed on a tripartite collaboration with a strong commitment from the social partners and the authorities. The main elements of the reform were¹⁰:

- Flexible learning: develop and adapt educational programmes to the needs of adults, encourage continued development of educational programmes that utilise the potential of the workplace as an arena for learning, include people with diverse capabilities, development of flexible educational programmes, education for teachers and instructors.
- Framework conditions for the individual: right to leave of absence for educational purposes, subsistence funding, educational funding scheme, improve opportunities of combining work and education.
- A competence-building programme: help produce innovation and development in the field of continuing education and training.

¹⁰ Plan of Action for the Competence Reform 2000-2003

- Documentation and assessment of non-formal and informal learning in working life and in relation to the education system
- "Popular enlightenment" and democratic participation: raise the level of competence and awareness of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for democratic participation both in the workplace and in society in general.
- A new chance: primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education for adults
- Structural changes to the public education system: new organisation of schools and higher education, encourage co-operation between providers of education in developing educational models, network development, review legislation, rules and agreements. More interaction and co-operation between educational institutions at all levels and private and public enterprises at local and regional level is important to guarantee a high standard that can meet the trends and needs of society.
- Motivation and information: gather information about educational options in existing and new databases, establish a good guidance service, and reach out to those groups with the lowest level of education.

Results of the Competence Reform

One of the main results of the Competence Reform has been that all adults have been given a statutory right to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. The legal right to upper secondary education was put in force autumn 2000; while the legal right to primary and lower secondary education has been in force since August 2002. In addition considerable efforts have been made in recent years to improve educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups through adult education. This particularly applies to adults with especially weak schooling, various groups of physically disabled persons, adults with reading and writing difficulties and adult immigrants.

iv) Diversity through Inclusion and Participation. Responsibility and freedom¹¹

White Paper No. 49 (2003-2004) to the Storting

According to the report the new cultural and social diversity of the population and a permanent component of recently immigrated inhabitants mean that children in Norway will have more disparate starting points than was previously the case. This in turn will further increase the importance of school and education. Based on Report No. 30 to the Storting (2002-2003) *Culture for learning* and the *Strategy plan for equal opportunities in practice 2003*, the government believes that its effort to achieve equal educational opportunities constitutes the most important ingredient in preventing the future development of major social and economic

¹¹ [http://odin.dep.no/filarkiv/249171/English_summary_st.meld. nr. 49 \(2003-2004\).pdf](http://odin.dep.no/filarkiv/249171/English_summary_st.meld. nr. 49 (2003-2004).pdf)

differences along ethnic divisions. Report No. 49 to the Storting (2003-2004) proposed to reinforce the statistical base in order to facilitate effective targeted measures for groups in need of special support. A crucial point in the report is that work provides both social recognition and economic independence. By encouraging young people to get an education, the next vital step is said to be to make sure that they enter the labour market on the same footing as their peers. The report proposes to initiate long-term studies that are to follow groups of descendants with a non-western background in their encounters with the labour market.

v) Education and training in the correctional services¹²

White Paper No. 27 (2004-2005) to the Storting

In the beginning of 2005 the Government introduced a White Paper on Education and training in the correctional services. Research shows that 7.6 % of the inmates have not completed their primary and lower secondary education, while 49 % have not completed upper secondary education. In consequence, the Storting has recognised a need to focus more closely on the socio-economic perspectives of rehabilitation. The government underscored the need for more focus on validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes, with a view to promoting forms of education that can be adapted to the needs of the individual. In collaboration with the correctional services the educational sector has initiated a number of pilot projects for further development and strengthening of educational activities within the correctional services.

vi) Early intervention for lifelong learning.¹³

White Paper No. 16 (2006-2007) to the Storting

This white paper presented the Government's policy for how the education system can make a greater contribution to social equalisation. The main aim was to pursue an active education and training policy to reduce the differences in society. The goals were to diminish class distinctions, reduce economic inequity and combat poverty and other forms of marginalisation. Adult education and learning are included in the paper. It is believed that education, knowledge and skills contribute to inclusion in the workplace, to better economy and better health, to greater participation in society and to a lower crime level. Furthermore, participation in training and education has great significance for self-realisation. Including each individual in a learning environment that stimulates life-long learning is an important contribution to creating a good life.

¹² <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/regpubl/stmeld/20042005/Stmeld-nr-27-2004-2005-.html?id=407448>

¹³ http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/KD/Vedlegg/St.meld.nr.16/Sammendrag_engelsk%20o%20versettelse_2802.pdf

viii) Work, Welfare and Inclusion¹⁴

White Paper No. 9 (2006-2007) to the Storting

This White Paper contains the Government's strategies and proposals for strengthening employment and inclusion of persons who are at the fringe of the labour market. The strategies and proposals form part of a range of measures and policy proposals in order to fulfil the Government's political values and ambitions. The purpose is to outline strategies and measures aimed at improved inclusion in working life for persons of working age who have problems gaining a foothold in the labour market, or who are in risk of dropping out of the labour market. This primarily relates to the policy instruments managed by the new, merged employment and welfare administration, but also relevant instruments in the education and health sectors.

Laws and statutory rights

a) Education act

Governmental funded adult education is regulated by the Adult Education Act (1976) and the Education Act (1998). In addition, there is the Folk High Schools Act (1984).

Under the Adult Education Act, the provision of courses is the responsibility of the respective public education authorities at the various levels of education. The Education Act regulates primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education for all including adults.

Adults who need primary and lower secondary education have a statutory right to such education. Adults also have a statutory right to upper secondary education. This applies to adults who have not already completed an upper secondary education. The right to free education for adults up to and including upper secondary is guaranteed by law. The responsibility is divided between municipalities and counties.

Education and training organised especially for adults are specified in Education Act Chapter 4A¹⁵ and includes:

“Section 4A-1. The right to primary and lower secondary education for adults

Section 4A-2. The right to special education at primary and lower secondary level

Section 4A-3. The right to upper secondary education for adults

¹⁴ http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/AID/vedlegg/stmeld_9_2006_english.pdf

¹⁵ [http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KD/Vedlegg/Grunnskole/Oplæringsloven_engelsk_\(si_st_endret_2005-06-17\).pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/KD/Vedlegg/Grunnskole/Oplæringsloven_engelsk_(si_st_endret_2005-06-17).pdf)

Section 4A-4. The duty of municipalities and county authorities to provide primary and secondary education for adults.

Section 4A-5 Required qualifications for teachers

Section 4A-8. Counselling “

b) Act relating to Universities and University Colleges

All higher education in Norway, both public and private, is subject to the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges No. 15 of 1 April 2005. For ALE two sections are relevant and concern the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes for admission to HE and exemption from examination or test.

Section 3-6: Educational qualifications for entrance to higher education

Section 3-5: Exemption from an examination or test

c) The Introduction Act

A new Introduction Act was implemented in September 2003 (obligatory from 1 September 2004). It states that refugees and persons granted residence on political and humanitarian grounds are to be offered a 2-year introductory programme. This arrangement also applies to persons who immigrate in order to be reunited with family members.

In 2005 the Introduction Act was amended. A number of non-EU immigrants who will get their residence permit after 1 September 2005 have a right as well as an obligation to take courses in Norwegian language and social studies. The Act states that immigrants have to participate for 300 hours if they intend to get a permanent resident status and, later on, citizenship. Out of the 300 hours 50 are set aside for Norwegian cultural studies taught in a foreign language the participants can understand. They can apply for further training up to 3,000 hours if they need more time to reach a final level.

Immigrants who enter the country for purposes of family reunification with a Norwegian or Nordic citizen are given classes free of charge. EU citizens, students and au-pairs have to pay for their tuition. Immigrants who got a residence permit before 1 September 2005 are given free courses in Norwegian in a transitional period of 5 years. Exempt from this provision are EU citizens and asylum seekers.

d) The Adult Education Act¹⁶

An Act on Adult Education was adopted in 1976 and came into force from 1 August 1977. This was not an educational act that gave rights to the individual, but a manifestation of the intention that adults should have the opportunity to receive education subsidised by the government. In August 1999 a new Education Act came into force, and the parts of the Adult Education Act of 1976 concerning primary and lower secondary education and upper secondary education for adults are now included in the Education Act. Today the act regulates grants from the Government to study associations and distance education providers.

e) Working Environment Act

The right to employees for study leave has been introduced in 1 January 2001 and is laid down in the Working Environment Act. All employees who have worked for at least 3 years and at least 2 years with the same employer have the right to 3 years of full or part time study leave to participate in organised education and training leading to documented competence. The training has to be related to the professional situation. These rules only apply to the right of study leave and not to the right of salary during the study leave.

f) The folk high school Act¹⁷

The folk high schools in Norway are regulated by the folk high school act. This act describes the conditions for funding grants by the Ministry of Education and Research.

g) The regulations regarding educational support.

The objective of the educational support is:

- to remove inequality and to promote equal opportunities so that the pursuit of education is possible regardless of geographical conditions, age, sex and economical and social positions
- to ensure that students may freely choose their education
- to ensure a steady supply of educated labour

The State Educational Loan Fund provides financial assistance for most types of education and training. The rules have been changed to make them more applicable to adult needs.

¹⁶ <http://www.lovdato.no/all/hl-19760528-035.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.lovdato.no/all/hl-20021206-072.html>

h) The Act on Vocational Colleges of 2003

Tertiary vocational education is an alternative to higher education and is based on upper secondary education and training or equivalent informal and nonformal competence. Higher Education Entrance Qualification is not required.

The education consists of vocational courses lasting from half a year to two years. Apart from the traditional schools of technical management and maritime subjects which are publicly financed (by the county authorities), most of the schools offering this kind of education are private ones.

All courses must be accredited by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT). An up-to-date list of recognised courses can be found on NOKUT's website.

i) Tax Act

Education financed by an employer is generally exempt from tax, following amendments to the Tax Act of 1999.

1.1.2. The priority goals for ALE in Norway

i) Demographic changes

The demographic pattern of learners in Norway deviates on central indicators: The tendency to enter post-secondary education is relatively high for the older age cohorts. This is due to alternations between studies and full-time work; to the fact that a large number of learners start their career of study as adults; and due to a low level of completion in several areas of study.

Current trends pointing out the coming demand for post secondary education¹⁸:

- post-secondary education in Norway is perceived as a democratic expectation due to the role of education in the current and future prospects of macro-economical factors. These are related to continuous economic developments and social welfare, as well as to individual participation in the knowledge society.
- a well established educational system open to learners based on formal, non-formal and informal learning outcomes is in itself promoting increases in demands. High quality and easier access are regarded the more important factors for increasing recruitment to formal educational institutes.
- the profiles of learners within the Norwegian context is found when approaching one of the main challenges for the Norwegian economy; linking the adaptability between re-qualification and recognition of learning to the continuous growth of a highly competent

¹⁸ The White Paper on the Quality Reform

and flexible work force. Rapid changes in the educational length of the younger cohorts are resulting in a generation gap, the entering work force holding a significantly longer education than those already belonging to the occupational groups. A large number of the more experienced workers are expected to want to return to studies as adults for further learning or re-qualifications. Access based on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, as well as increasing opportunities in combinations of work and studies is expected to offer support structures for this demand.

ii) Further strategy for ALE

The current Norwegian strategy for life long learning and ALE is formulated in the document entitled "Strategy for lifelong learning in Norway"¹⁹. This strategy builds on and incorporates policy making processes which date back to the late nineties, when the Competence Reform put adult education and life long learning firmly on the political agenda.

From 2006 a reform of primary and secondary education called the Knowledge Promotion Reform has been implemented. It focuses very strongly on one main element of lifelong learning: the importance of having substantial basic skills. These skills are defined as the ability to express oneself orally; the ability to read; the ability to do mathematics; the ability to express oneself in writing, and the ability to use digital tools. The skills are included in each subject's core curriculum, thus making all teachers responsible for pupils and apprentices developing their basic skills through work in the various subjects. The new curricula also have clear objectives for what the pupils are to master at various stages. In addition, the study structure in upper secondary education is being simplified, with fewer and broader education programmes and greater flexibility as regards adapting the education for the individual pupil, school, apprentice and training establishment.

It is the position of the Norwegian government that adults with low basic skills should have the opportunity to get the basic education they need, and thus be able to take an active part in the workplace and society.

To counteract drop-out from working life because of poor basic skills the Government has initiated the Programme for Basic Competence in Working Life (BKA). The awarded funds are to be spent on giving employees instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and basic use of ICT. As far as possible instruction should be given in the workplace and be related to the job. Courses meant for job seekers have also been started through the Labour and Welfare Organisation. The programme is to help both job seekers and employees have the opportunity to acquire the competence they need to master the requirements of working life. The pilot projects have been very successful.

In White Paper no. 16 (2006-2007) on Early Intervention for lifelong learning, a number of measures are proposed with a view to improving the basic competence of adults. This is stated in chapter 6 Priority areas and measures. It is stated that adults lacking basic education or having insufficient basic skills deserve another chance. The Government wants an adult

¹⁹ Ministry of Education and Research (2007) National Report on the Implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, Norway

population that takes an active part in the workplace and in society. As part of the Competence Reform, a number of measures were initiated to build up the skills of the adult population. However, this has not led to an increase in participation among those who are in greatest need of such education and training.

The low participation in education and training among persons with a low education is due both to a lack of interest and to a shortage of good training programmes adapted to adult needs and life situations. Today, there is an increasingly large group of young adults who do not have the right to upper secondary education. This also applies to a growing number of immigrants who have arrived in Norway too late to exercise the right of adults to education.

Related measures:

- A proposal of the right to upper secondary education for adults above the age of 25 years will probably be adopted in the Storting May 23 2008. The law is proposed to come into force in August 2008.
- Strengthening work-based learning,
- Strengthen educational and career guidance for adults

1.1.3. Organisation of ALE within the government

The *Government* has the overall responsibility for basic education, for student financing, taxation system and for legislation.

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for administering the statutory educational provisions of the Education Act as well as developing curriculum guidelines. Further the Ministry is, according to the Education Act, responsible for the general development of adult education and for higher education. The Ministry of Education and Research co-operate with other ministries when deciding the guidelines for and capacity of educational programmes related to these ministries' fields of responsibility. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs are e.g. involved in fixing guidelines for education of nurses and social workers. The responsibility for immigrant education has been transferred from The Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion.

Centralisation/decentralisation²⁰:

The administrative levels are as follows: The state, the counties and the municipalities.

- Important agents on state level are the Parliament (the Storting), the Government and several directorates. The state has an overall responsibility for the whole education sector and administers university and colleges directly.

²⁰ http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/dec-educ-norway1-bukaresta-portal.pdf

- The country is divided into 19 regional counties. The responsibilities of the counties are primarily upper secondary education, including both academic and vocational training.
- Norway is organised in 431 local units – municipalities. They are responsible for public primary and lower secondary schools.

The Storting has during the last years implemented decentralisation of responsibility and political power to regional and local authorities, especially by delegating considerable authority and financial freedom to the counties and municipalities. Block grant is given from the state level, and county and municipal authorities determine their activities within the frames of existing legislation and regulations.

The Storting sets overall objectives for educational systems and passes the educational acts. The Ministry of Education and Research has the overall responsibility for administering and for implementing the national educational policy. The ministry determines standards and the general framework of teaching. This is done in form of curricula that states course objectives and national regulations for conducting examinations. Each county governor's office has a national education officer who guides and assists the municipalities in carrying out central government policy.

(Details about the responsibilities and the different providers of adult education and training will be described in 2.1)

1.1.4. ALE policy alignment with other initiatives

i) The national Validation Project (1999-2002)

According to the Plan of Action for the Competence Reform, one of its principal objectives was to establish a national system for documenting and validating informal and non-formal learning outcomes. This includes learning attained through paid and unpaid work, organisational involvement, and organised training.

In order to accomplish this, the national Validation Project was formed in 1999. The project was based on an agreement between the Ministry of Education and Research and the social partners. It was further based on the Storting (Parliament) resolution in connection with parliamentary discussions of White Paper no. 42 (1997–98) relating to the Competence Reform:

“The Storting asks the Government to establish a system that gives adults the right to document their non-formal and informal learning without having to undergo traditional forms of testing.”

Based on the experimentation the Norwegian framework for the documentation and validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes has reached a certain consensus²¹. It contains:

- Shared laws, rules and agreements to ensure the rights of the individual.

²¹ McHenry, Joyce Hartog and Torild Nilsen Mohn (2003): Transfine – National Study Norway, Oslo:Vox.

- Shared procedure for various forms of documentary proof and validation.
- Various assessment methods, tools and documentary proof, which are suitable in relation to the requirements of the educational sector, the workplace or the third sector.

ii) Lifelong guidance policies and systems

Today, guidance services in Norway are for the most part organised within each sector. The counselling services in lower and upper secondary schools provide counselling for pupils, to which they have statutory rights. Academic counselling services and career services in HEIs cater for applicants, students and graduates. The public employment offices are responsible for providing guidance to job seekers. In White Paper no. 16 (2006-2007), the government proposes a series of actions to strengthen each of these services, and to tie them closer together by way of national and regional coordination measures.

iii) Action Plan for Integration and Social Inclusion of the Immigrant Population and Goals for Social Inclusion²²

The goal for the Government's social inclusion policy is that each person who lives in Norway shall participate in society and have equal opportunities. The aim of the integration policy is that newly arrived immigrants are quickly able to contribute to and participate in society. An action plan for integration and social inclusion was launched in 2006 and a follow up action plan came in 2008²³.

iv) Action Plan against Poverty²⁴

Parallel to the launch of the action plan for integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population the Government is presenting an action plan against poverty. Several measures aimed at strengthening inclusion of immigrants in the labour market and promoting inclusion of vulnerable children and young people have been implemented as part of the Government's action plan against poverty.

²² http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/AID/publikasjoner/rapporter_og_planer/2006/H-plan2006_int_og_inkl_english.pdf

²³ http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/aid/dok/rapporter_planer/planer/2007/handlingsplan-integrering/del1.html?id=485017

²⁴ <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/aid/tema/andre/fattigdom/handlingsplan-mot-fattigdom.html?id=458365>

1.1.5. Main development challenges

a) Enhancement of basic skills

Basic skills are crucial for the individual in order to cope in a complex society and a rapidly changing working life. Programmes like The Competence Building Programme²⁵ and the Programme for Basic Competence in Working Life²⁶ have been established to stimulate adult learning. More and better tools, however, are needed to help enhance basic skills in adults who are particularly vulnerable.

Individual adults who need basic skills need easy access to targeted training. Enterprises wanting to start classes in reading and writing for their employees also need permanent, predictable funding.

A specific basic skills initiative for adults needs to be developed. Such an initiative must contain manuals, curricula, ranges of courses at different levels as well as learning tools. Increased research on the topic is needed along with opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills on basic learning for adults.

Another challenge is to find a way to reach and motivate the target group. There is a need for better cooperation between all stakeholders involved, especially public services and providers.

b) Norwegian language training for immigrants²⁷

The new Introduction Law came into force in September 2005, and therefore it is too early to assess the effects of it and make an accurate analysis of the present situation. There are, however, some aspects of the situation that need to be questioned..

One is that fewer immigrants than earlier attend classes in Norwegian language. According to the new Introduction law certain immigrants, but not all, have a legal right to attend free classes in Norwegian language. Surveys show that only about 20 per cent of immigrants to Norway are entitled to free classes.

It is a challenge to provide language instruction for immigrants who do not have rights under the introduction act but who nevertheless need to improve their mastery of Norwegian language.

Furthermore, we need a better national understanding of levels, quality and final tests. The Norwegian Language Test has not gained the expected legitimacy and status, and is therefore not used as documentation, neither by employers nor by government services for the unemployed. The education system also seems reluctant to accept its legitimacy. One reason could be that the test does not formally qualify for higher education.

²⁵ <http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=2639>

²⁶ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd/Selected-topics/Policy-for-lifelong-learning/Programme-for-Basic-Competence-in-Workin.html?id=498247>

²⁷ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/Topics/andre/introductory-programme-and-norwegian-lan.html?id=1141>

It seems that well educated immigrants to Norway are neglected. We know that many of them work in jobs far below their competence. The main reason for this fact is that they don't master Norwegian well enough. There are no free courses in Norwegian language designed for this group.

The social science part of the scheme is a bottleneck as classes in social science are held early in the programme and in a language understood by the participants. It is expensive to start classes with few participants, and often hard to find qualified teachers. The whole process is therefore often slowed down, also the Norwegian language training.

Well qualified teachers, ranges of updated texts and national plans for classes in social science for immigrants are needed to ensure that the academic standard is maintained.

c) Validation of learning outcomes

Documentation and validation of learning outcomes is closely connected with the rights to primary, secondary and higher education. The Norwegian system for documentation and validation, including a set of tools and methods for the process, has existed since 2002. It is clear, however, that the system is not yet uniform and national in the sense that it ensures all individuals, regardless of where they live in the country, equal and just credit for their prior learning. The potential of the system is not yet fulfilled.

A more targeted promotion of the system is necessary. Surveys show that Norwegian employees in particular and the public in general know little about their rights and possibilities of having their competences assessed.

It is important to reach a national consensus on how documentation and validation should be practised locally. The documentation and validation system must be based on national principles regulated by rules, not on local interpretations and often limited by tight budgets.

d) Flexible learning methods

As part of the Competence Reform, a number of measures were initiated to strengthen competence in the adult population. However, this has not increased participation among those who have most need for such training. Low participation in training among persons with a low level of education is due both to the lack of demand and the shortage of good training opportunities adapted to the needs and life situations of adults.

It is important that the training provided is flexible enough to meet the needs of individuals as well as providers of education and enterprises. Important element for motivation is to give learners increased choice, convenience, and individual adaptation of the training to suit the learner. Adults need flexible choices about where, when, and how learning and training will occur.

The majority of flexible learning programs to date have taken advantage of computer-based systems. Authorities and experts believe that adults need to maintain and update their digital skills to be able to meet future demands. For this reason national standards and a framework for

basic digital competence have been developed at Vox. Such standards are necessary to establish adequate digital learning opportunities. External and internal specialists and user groups are involved. On the basis of these standards it is recommended that adults' digital competence should be regularly monitored. Flexible learning must be one of a range of options for the learners. Training opportunities should also be offered for teachers and instructors.

e) Quality of and access to career guidance

Career guidance in a lifelong learning perspective is to provide services to assist individuals, of any age, to make educational, training and other choices and to manage their careers. The career and tuition system in Norway has been fragmented and has not in an efficient way involved adult learners. Project on different levels; ministerial, national and regional, has recently been accomplished. The goal and the challenge are to build up a career guidance service for all.

By law, the municipal authorities are responsible for providing primary and lower secondary education for adults. Studies show that only a small percentage of the adult population is familiar with their right to primary and lower secondary education. Some of them see no point in participating or they find the financial aspect difficult. Many adults with a poor primary and lower secondary education have bad experiences from school and are not motivated for school-based tuition. Local authorities throughout the country are encouraged to facilitate adult career planning. It is essential to reach target groups with up to date information about their educational rights and opportunities. When establishing career guidance systems it is necessary to improve the infrastructure for information, motivation and guidance to increase the number of adult learners and reduce the number of dropouts.

f) Increase rate of adult participation in lifelong learning

Adults in the education system are a complex group. Some need knowledge and skills at primary and lower secondary level, while others focus on a higher education. Moreover, adult learning largely takes place outside the formal education system, most often taking the form of skills development in the workplace.

A considerable percentage of adults in Norway have completed their lower secondary education without mastering the most common basic skills. The ALL survey (2003) says that app. 25 percent of the adult population do not have literacy and numeracy skills good enough to function appropriately in their workplace. Yet there are few who exercise their right to education at primary and lower secondary level.

Official statistics report 36 000 participants, but there is reason to believe that a number of them are inactive. 10 725 adults entered upper secondary education during the academic year 2006/2007.

Studies show that social background has a significance for participation learning in the workplace.

Adults with a low education have less learning-intensive work and take less part in courses, training and formal supplementary education than adults with a high education. While 67 per

cent of adults with a high education participate in work-related courses and training, only 31 per cent of adults with lower secondary education do so.

1.1.6. Other policies with impact on ALE

i) Learning for life²⁸

Green Paper (2007:11) Adult Education Associations

A Green Paper on the future of Adult Education Associations was launched by the Ministry of Education in September 2007. This education has a long tradition in Norway, and it is organised by these NGOs as study circles. The Green Paper comes up with proposals for the Ministry how to cope with the public involvement in adult education and learning taking place in NGOs, outside the formal education system, and the linking and cooperation between these two main bidders of adult education.

The main proposals in the Green Paper is:

- A new law for learning outside of the formal education system, replacing the Adult Education Act
- Responsibility for all right-based education for adults to one administrative level, in the counties
- Extending the responsibility for the counties to embrace all forms of adult education and learning. Putting up a "one door" – solution as an offer for all adults in each county

The Green Paper has been on a wide public hearing and it has been forwarded a broad variety of comments to the Ministry of Education and Research.

ii) An Information Society for All²⁹

White Paper No. 17 (2006 - 2007) to the Storting

As a result of these reports a Programme for Digital Competence was launched in 2004. The Programme for Digital Competence is concerned with primary and secondary education and training, higher education and adult learning. The vision of the Programme is digital competence for all. The Programme's priority areas are infrastructure, competence development, R&D and digital teaching resources, curricula and working methods. Digital competence builds bridges between skills like being able to read, write and do arithmetic and the competence required for

²⁸ <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/NOUer/2007/NOU-2007-11.html?id=480422>

²⁹ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/fad/Documents/Government-propositions-and-reports-/Reports-to-the-Storting-white-papers/20062007/Report-No-17-2006---2007-to-the-Storting.html?id=441497>

using new digital tools and media in a creative and critical way. The Programme is intended to be active for the period of 2004 – 2008.

iii) Voluntary work for all³⁰

White Paper No. 39 (2006-2007) to the Storting

The voluntary sector in Norway consists of 115 000 non-governmental and non-profit organizations. The majority of organizations are based locally, have no employees and very small financial means. There are 10 million memberships in NGOs and 84 % of the Norwegians are members of one or more organization(s). The total contribution of Norwegian volunteers is equivalent to 113 500 full time employees. The voluntary sector is a central arena for learning, creativity and competence and this sector is an important contributor to the knowledge society. The Government wishes to stimulate and support the distinctive and significant contribution made by the voluntary sector.

1.2. Financing of ALE;

A basic precept of Norwegian educational policy is that education is inclusive and comprehensive. All public education in Norway is free up to and including the upper secondary level. Since autumn 1994, everyone between the ages of 16 and 19 has had a statutory right to three years' upper secondary education leading either to higher education or to vocational qualifications or partial qualifications.

1.2.1. Public investment in ALE:

There are three statutory provisions that regulate adult education in Norway: the Act on Adult Education, the Education Act and the Introduction Act. The regulating principle between these three acts is defined by statutory provisions that give individual rights, and statutory provisions that do not give such rights but allocate public grants to independent education organisations that are providers of adult education.

In general the central government provides the bulk of funds required for primary and secondary education to municipalities and counties through a so-called "block grant". The "block grant" provides for a number of services delivered by municipalities, among them health and social services, as well as primary and lower secondary education. The municipalities are free to decide what proportion of this expenditure to use on education. The municipalities and counties are also free to choose providers of education, either public or private. A similar mechanism applies to upper secondary education, which is the responsibility of the counties. In either case, the grants are not earmarked; the budget for adult learning is a result of local political decision.

³⁰ St.mld. nr. 39 (2006-2007) Frivillighet for alle

Adult education programmes outside the formal primary and secondary education are financed by earmarked grants or subsidised by the Government. Grants are given to adult education associations and distance education institutions in accordance with the requirements of the Adult Education Act. These contributions are given on the basis of implemented hours of adult education activity, and according to special applications for pedagogical development work etc. The main source of financing for the adult education associations and for the distance education schools is, however, the participants' fees.

a) Grants from the Ministry of Education and Research to non-formal learning

Table 1: Grants from the education sector

Chap	Action	In 1000NOK
253	Folk high schools	592 986
254	Grants for study associations and distant education providers	192 722
68	Education and training in correctional services	175 611
257	Programme for basic competence in working life	36 944

Table 1 gives an overview of grants from the Ministry of Education and Research to non-formal learning and some development programmes for adult education and training, National Budget 2008.

b) Share of the budget allocated to adult education from other sectors,

Norwegian language training and social studies

On September 1st 2005 the right and obligation to Norwegian language training and social studies for adult immigrants was implemented in Norway. With the introduction of the right and obligation to training, a new state subsidy arrangement was also established. Adult education provided in accordance with the Introduction Act is given as an earmarked (per capita) grant to the municipalities. Local authorities, with central government support, administer a relatively extensive programme of education in Norwegian language and social studies for adult immigrants. The Ministry of Labour and Social inclusion (AID) has the financial and legal responsibility for this training, while the Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for the curriculum.

1 238,7 mill NOK is granted for this training in 2008. In addition 9,2 mill NOK is granted for developing training materials and training the teachers.

Labour market courses (AID)- Qualification program

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) organises centrally financed courses for job seekers, through its Directorate of Labour. The Ministry uses several providers, public, private and voluntary, for this purpose.

A new qualification programme was launched in 2007. The qualification program shall basically be a full-time, work-related activity adapted to the needs and abilities of the individual. Participation in the qualification program will entitle persons to financial benefits.

The national budget has a grant amounting to 230 mill NOK for this qualification program in 2008.

1.2.4. Civil society support to ALE

The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) is the largest workers' organisation in Norway. Different training and development funds for the members are established.

The legal right to educational leave, passed in 1999, does not include wages or other financial support. Some professions have paid educational leave as part of their union agreements.

The Basic Agreement³¹ is an agreement between the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) including all its national and local associations and individual enterprises, and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) including all its unions and associations divisions. The importance of cooperation and how to work further on development of qualifications is stated in chapter XVI in this agreement.

1.2.5 Learners'/individuals' contributions to ALE.

Adult education provided to those who have individual rights in accordance with the Education Act and the Introduction Act is free of charge for the participants. The municipalities and the counties are obliged to offer adult education but they are free to decide on what scale and how it is to organise it. Private schools and institutions offer courses that depend financially on the payment of participant fees.

The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund is a government agency that provides loans and grants to Norwegian and certain foreign students for their education. This system is aimed at making higher education available to everyone, regardless of their place of residence within

³¹ http://www.lo.no/lobasen/Content/123503/BasicAgreem06-09_1.pdf

Norway, their age, sex or economic and social status. All Norwegian public universities and colleges are free, but students attending private institutions may apply for an additional loan of up to NOK 50,000 in order to finance tuition.

1.2.6. Financial incentives in support of ALE

Programme for Basic Competence in Working Life

In 2006, the Government established the Programme for Basic Competence in Working life. Through the programme enterprises can apply for support for training measures in reading, writing, arithmetic and use of ICT. The purpose of the programme is to avoid exclusion of employees and job seekers from working life owing to a lack of basic skills. For 2008, the programme has received a grant amounting to NOK 37 millions.

2. Quality of Adult Learning and Education: Provision, Participation and Achievement

Providers of adult education and training- an overview

Adult education and training activities in Norway are undertaken by a number of organisations:

- Public providers like the municipalities are responsible for primary and lower secondary education, labour market courses and for Norwegian language training for adult immigrants.
- Public providers like the regional authorities (19 county councils) are responsible for upper secondary education and training for adults
- In addition a wide range of learning and training activities for adults take place under the auspices of independent study organisations and distant learning institutions. These institutions provide both formal education and training courses and non-formal courses
- Folk high schools are one-year boarding schools offering a variety of non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as academic subjects

2.1. Provision of ALE and institutional frameworks;

2.1.1. Institutions responsible ALE at national level

The *Government* has an overall responsibility for basic education, for student financing, taxation system and for legislation.

i) The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for administering the statutory educational provisions of the Education Act as well as developing curriculum guidelines. Further the Ministry is, according to the Education Act, responsible for the general development of adult education and for higher education. The Ministry of Education co-operate with others ministry when deciding the guidelines for and capacity of educational programmes related to these ministries' fields of responsibility. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs are e.g. involved in fixing guidelines for education of nurses and social workers. The responsibility for immigrant education has been transferred from The Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion.

ii) Vox - National institute for adult learning promotes the participation of adults in society and working life by increasing their competence level with particular attention to basic skills. The right of adults to education and training, and validation of learning outcomes are also major fields of work. Vox is an agency of the Ministry of Education and Research.

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

iv) The County Governor's Offices, one in each county, have a quality control function and shall ensure that children and adolescents are given an appropriate education in accordance with statutory regulations. They are responsible for reporting, evaluation and following up results; supervision and control; management training and refresher courses and centrally managed R&D.

v) The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (NAAL) is the national NGO umbrella for adult learning in Norway. Under this umbrella there are 19 governmentally approved adult education associations with a member network of 438 nationwide adult learning NGOs. The purpose of NAAL is to advocate the common interests of the associations and their participants vis-a-vis the Government, the Parliament and the Ministry of Education and Research, and to promote non-formal adult learning in society at large through information services, counselling concerning laws and regulations, adult learning theory and practice, educational planning and project coordination, advocacy and lobbying. NAAL represent liberal adult education in Norway, also as the national member of the European Association for Education of Adults and the International Council for Adult Education, in which NAAL is represented in the Executive Council.

viii) Norwegian Association for Distance and Flexible Education (NADE) is a national membership organisation for institutions involved in distance education. The members of the organisation are independent distance education institutions, public universities and colleges, private institutions and training centres for business and industry. NADE is a consultative and co-operating body for the Ministry of Education and Research in matters concerning distance education. It is first and foremost the flexibility that distinguishes distance education from traditional classroom-based teaching. NADE's objectives are to spread knowledge about

distance education, to heighten its professional and pedagogical standards and to strengthen the position of distance education within the Norwegian educational system. The organisation aims to develop distance teaching methods and to support research and development of methods and techniques in the field of distance education.

2.1.2. ALE programmes

Programme	Provider			Area of learning			Target group	Costs (mill NOK)	Funding source
	Public/ State	CSO/ NGO	Private	General competencies	Technical skills	Knowledge Generation			
Basic competence in working life	√	√	√	√		√	Employees lacking basic skills	06:24,5 07: 25,4 08:36,9	State
Competence Building programme	√	√	√	√	√	√	Employees	330 (00-05)	State Social partners

2.1.3. Linkages between formal and non-formal approaches

Universities and university colleges are obliged to give further education within their field of research and basic education. Higher education institutions offer mainly courses to former candidates who want to maintain and broaden their competence. It is a distinction between further education and continuing education. *Further education* comprises shorter courses without formal competence (non-credit giving courses). The main goal is refreshing and updating of basic education. *Continuing education*, on the other hand, is credit-giving courses that result in formal competence and can be part of a degree. These courses will often represent a specialisation or continuation of a basic education.

Adult Education Associations offers a broad range of courses all over the country, covering e.g. areas like languages, the use of computers, topics related to different aspects of the society, cultural activities, arts and crafts, courses for disabled people, how to run and develop NGO's and CSO's (Civil Society Organisations) etc.. Some of these associations offer courses qualifying for lower and upper secondary education and higher education in cooperation with the school authorities and universities. National guidelines and statutes regulate these courses. Adult Education Associations also provide courses in development work within schools and educational institutions and labour market courses. In addition to this, the associations are constantly putting important topics on the agenda and on the arenas for learning, such as democracy and active citizenship, sustainable development, inclusion and integration, family learning, critical consumerism and education for prisoners.

Distance Education Institutions. Most distance education studies courses are at upper secondary and higher education level. Distance education courses for school children living abroad exist, but 99 per cent of the participants are adults.

Folk high schools are one-year boarding schools offering a variety of non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as academic subjects. The folk high schools do not grant degrees or conduct exams, the students receive a diploma detailing participation. They are a supplement to the regular education system. Students can be of any age and can have any level of educational experience. The folk high schools are private schools, but receive government funding.

2.1.4. ALE and certification and national awards.

Formal learning: Three kinds of official documentation will be awarded when finishing courses following national curricula at upper secondary level:

- Trade certificate or journeyman's certificate in vocational education and training
- Diploma
- Competence certificate

These documents have the same status as the documents awarded for young pupils.

Non-formal learning: courses and study activities are documented by different internal certificates.

2.2. Participation in ALE;

2.2.1. Statistical data on participation:

As already mentioned ALE in Norway is a complex field. The complexity makes data collection difficult and the data currently available on adult learning are limited. Statistics Norway, the Directorate for Education and Training and Vox cooperate to improve the statistical basis.

Table 2 Adult education and training, by topic/organiser, extent and number of participants. ³²

Topic/organiser	Description	1997	1998	2005	2006
Adult education associations	Courses of different duration	711 351	681 359	594 459	505 813
Folk high schools	Main courses and shorter courses	29 474	28 236	20 785	19 079
Distance education institutions	Individual enrolment	52 207	44 731	20 160	20 658
Labour market courses ³³	Training towards job requirements	23 026	14 658	13 151	10 139
Adult immigration education	Courses of different duration	39 787	28 957	24 106	21 982
Primary and lower secondary education for adults under municipal responsibility	Offering examination	1 426	1 877	4 363	4268
Special needs education at primary and lower secondary level for adults	Offering examination	5 287	7 310	6575	6 225
Upper secondary education for adults under the responsibility of the county	In ordinary classes and part time pupils	34 826	26 942	35 084	36 832

Table 2 gives an overview of the numbers of participants at formal and informal learning courses provided in the years 1997-1998 and 2005-2006.

³² Source: Current educational statistics, Statistics Norway. The table includes courses that vary substantially in size. Some are very short, others are full time courses for one year. Further, persons who attend many courses, are counted many times. The table should therefore be interpreted with care.

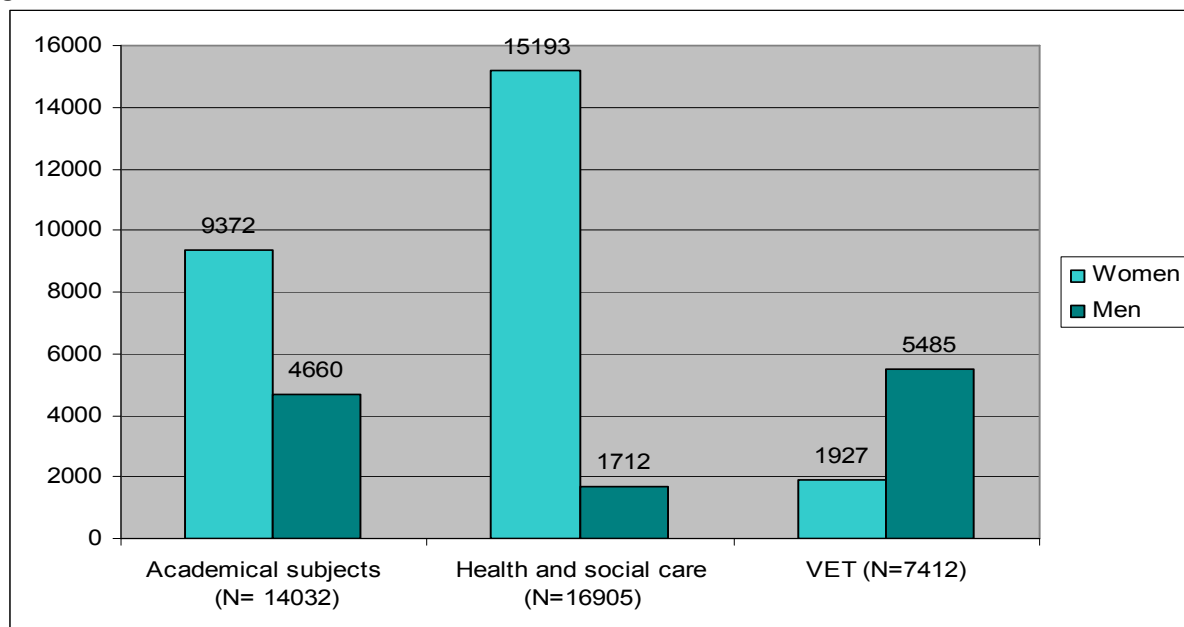
³³ <http://www.nav.no/binary/1073747603/file>

Table 3 Number of adults participating at primary and lower secondary level

Year	Total number	Share Women	Share immigrants
2002-2003	3 686	57	58
2003-2004	4 208	56	56
2004-2005	4 471	57	62
2005-2006	4 363	57	72
2006-2007	4 268	58	73

From 2000 adults have a statutory right to upper secondary education. This applies to adults who have not already completed upper secondary education. The provision of adult education at upper secondary level it is the responsibility of the counties. Table 3 gives an overview of the number of participants from 2002 to 2007 disaggregating according to gender and immigrants. As seen in table 2 the number of participants has not increased after introducing the individual legal right. From data of 2006 69% of the participants were women and most of them study subjects in health and social care or general subjects, see table 4.

Table 4 Number of participants at secondary level in 2006 disaggregating according to subject and gender³⁴



³⁴ The Vox Mirror 2007

Table 5 Adult education associations, number of participants and courses disaggregating according to the years 2002-2006

	2002	2003 ³⁵	2004	2005	2006
Number of participants	667 272	735 162	632 993	594 459	505 831
Number of Courses	52 181	50 083	46 925	42 800	39 088
Lessons	1 729 920	1 657 221	1 584 185	1 471 834	1 398 152

The adult education associations represent a multitude of interests and ideologies. The largest associations offer a broad range of themes on several levels, with or without formal exams and parallel programs in the public school system. Other associations emphasise more voluntary adult learning activities, organisational training of members, learning for the development of the local community and sustainable development. Others emphasise political training, culture and creative, aesthetical and practical topics. The adult education associations provide both formal and non-formal courses. The courses cover many areas and levels. As seen in table 2 the number of participants has decreased with 200 000 since 1997. The development for the last five years is seen in table 5.

Table 6 Distance education, number of participants and lessons disaggregating to the years 2002-2006³⁶

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of participants	29 749	20 393	21 708	20 160	20 658
Lessons	4 446 168	3 292 509	3 346 841	3 148 021	3 057 386

The aim of private distance education institutions is to meet the needs of various groups for open and flexible learning. Most distance education courses with public support are courses leading to work related qualifications. More than 2/3 of the courses cover subjects related to management and economics, technical work, communication, social care and health care. Distance education provided by professionals is today a recognised tool for acquisition of knowledge in most fields and at most levels – both for flexible continuing vocational education in the workplace and for open courses and programmes within the educational system. As seen in table 2 the number of participants has decreased since 1997. Table 6 gives data on the number of participants who finished courses and does not include the total activity in distance education learning.

³⁵ By a reporting mistake the per cent change from 2002 to 2003 is not correct

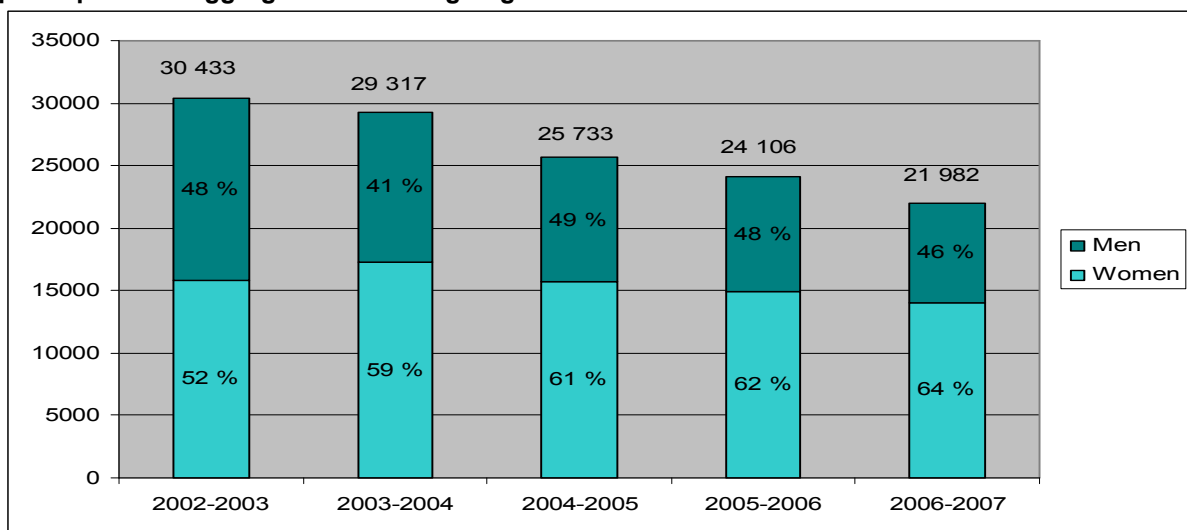
³⁶ Statistics Norway

Table 7 Folk high schools 2002, 2005-2006 ³⁷

Year	Total number	< 19 years		20-29 years		30-39 years		40-49 years		> 50 years	
		♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
2002	20 727	994	1 375	1 046	1 357	890	1 375	1 029	1 955	4 081	6 603
2005	20 785	991	1 276	766	1 132	757	1 450	1 000	2 177	4 094	7 142
2006	19 079	768	1 144	756	1 045	604	1 126	916	1 866	4 091	6 763

Folk high schools are one-year boarding schools offering a variety of non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as academic subjects. The idea of folk high schools is learning for life, an opportunity to grow both individually, socially, and academically in small learning communities where all students live on campus in close contact with staff and their fellow students. Most of the students are 19 to 20 year olds. There are 77 folk high schools spread throughout Norway. Each school offers a unique curriculum, a program of subjects in keeping with the profile of the school and the qualifications of the staff.

Table 8 Norwegian language training and social studies for adult immigrants: Number of participants disaggregated according to gender



Non-EU immigrants who will get their residence permit after 1 September 2005 have a right as well as an obligation to take courses in Norwegian language and social studies. The Act states that immigrants have to participate for 300 hours if they intend to get a permanent resident status and, later on, citizenship. Table 8 shows the number of participants in this training disaggregating according to gender.

³⁷ <http://www.ssb.no/emner/04/02/50/utfolk/tab-2007-05-09-01.html>

Table 9: Programme for Basic competence in working life: participation disaggregated according to type of learning, gender, age and level of education (in 2006)³⁸

	Share of total respondents	Reading and writing	Digital competence	Reading, writing and digital competence	Numeracy and digital competence	Comb of all
	(N=1818)	(N=177)	(N=1319)	(N=235)	(N=33)	(N=54)
Male	27	62	13	64	61	82
Female	73	38	87	36	39	19
<i>Sum</i>	100	100	100	100	100	101
18-29 years	6	18	3	9	18	15
30-39 years	16	24	12	25	30	33
40-49 years	27	35	25	32	33	11
50-59 years	34	15	38	28	12	22
60-66 years	9	3	12	4	3	2
Lower secondary	22	31	19	30	52	7
VET	46	32	46	53	24	70
Upper secondary	5	5	4	6	3	11
Higher education	20	9	26	1	21	2
Not available	8	23	5	10	0	9
<i>Sum</i>	101	100	100	100	100	99

The programme for basic competence in working life funds and monitors enterprise-based courses on basic skills. Table 9 gives an overview of the number of participants, gender, age and level according to the different training provided in 2006.

³⁸ The Vox Mirror 2007

Table 10: Education and training for prisoners³⁹

Year	1997	1998	2004	2005
Participants	807	798	944	964

Education and training in the correctional services is a central part of the rehabilitation of prison inmates in Norway. The prisons are formally linked to the ordinary public services available outside the prison. This implies that the educational authorities have the professional and financial responsibility for education and training in the correctional services. Table 10 gives data on the number of participants in prison for the years 1997-1998 compared to 2004-2005.

2.2.2. A survey undertaken on non-participation and groups difficult to reach

The barriers to adult education can be many and of various kinds, depending on the different needs for adult education. Opheim⁴⁰ has described four different types of barriers – institutional, economic, socio-cultural, and motivational. In Norway strong emphasis has been put on reducing institutional barriers against participation in adult and workplace learning. However, statistics indicate that the participants in projects are adults who already have attained high levels of education. These are the ones who also seem to benefit the most from adult education. Opheim describes this as the “Matthew-effect”. It has been argued that measures to remove the barriers against workplace learning might well benefit employees; while those who are excluded from the labour market have no possibility to participate in these kinds of workplace-related projects.

One aim of the Competence Reform has been to reduce economic barriers to participation in adult education. It has been recognised that adults may have a need for more financial support in order to leave their work and engage in educational activities. Adults with immigrant backgrounds who have not completed primary and lower secondary education or upper secondary education may face both cultural and linguistic barriers to participating in the educational activities that they need. Also insufficient knowledge of the educational system can represent a barrier to entering this system. Crucial policy measures taken to meet this challenge are to increase the flow of information and reduce institutional as well as financial barriers to participation. The fourth barrier mentioned by Opheim (2004) is considered particularly important. Adults who lack primary and secondary education may face a motivational barrier to re-entering the educational system. Research and experience show that the adults most in need of education are often the most reluctant to continue their education, due to negative school experiences earlier in life.

³⁹ <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/index.php?id=349096>

⁴⁰ Opheim (2004) Equity in education, Oslo: NIFU STEP

2.2.3 Surveys/studies on learner motivation

i) Adult Education Survey 2007⁴¹

The results of the Norwegian part of the Adult Education Survey shows that 37 per cent of the population would like to take part in more education and training than they had done in the last twelve months. This opinion was more common among those who had participated than among non-participants (47 versus 23 per cent). Although being employed is a positive factor for adult learning, 33 per cent of the men and 19 per cent of the women said that job responsibilities were the main obstacle. Responsibilities at home were another important obstacle for 18 per cent of the women and 11 per cent of the men.

Why I didn't participate	Per cent
Did not have the prerequisites	2
Could not afford it	8
Lack of employer's support/employer lacked resources	19
Didn't have time due to job responsibilities	26
Didn't have time due to family responsibilities	15
There was no training offered at the reachable distance	9
Not confident with the idea of going back to something like school	1
Health or age made participation difficult	9
Other reasons	11

ii) The Vox-barometer, national survey 2007⁴²:

The Vox Barometer is a nationwide, biannual, quantitative survey monitoring the basic skills situation in the adult population in Norway. In 2007 the report focuses on the adult population's attitudes to participation in adult learning and to their own competence. The population can be split into roughly four groups:

⁴¹ http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/04/02/50/vol_en/

⁴² Vox barometeret 2007: befolkningens holdninger til oppl ring og egen kompetanse, Vox: Oslo

Eager – both wish to participate and actually do. Half the population wants to take part in and actually does take part in non-formal learning. The corresponding number for formal learning is 16 per cent. The “eager” ones typically have a good education and work in the public sector.

Willing – wish to participate, but in reality don’t. 25 per cent wish to take part in non-formal learning, but don’t. Relatively large proportions of the “willing” do not take part in working life or work part-time. Half the population wishes to take part in formal education without actually doing so. A usual obstacle is the time factor and their experience of already having the competence they need.

Reluctant – participate without actually wanting to. 13 per cent take part in non-formal education although they don’t really want to. Achieving a certificate is an important motivating factor for this group. The learning outcome that they experience is not necessarily dependent on their having wanted the training.

Uninterested – neither participate nor wish to participate. 14 per cent neither wish to nor take part in non-formal learning. A large share of this group does not take part in working life. Many of those who supposedly need training are in this group.

iii) Motivation agents

In connection with the programme for Basic Competence in Working Life, a new initiative was launched in the autumn of 2007. In order to increase the number of applications for funding, a group called “motivation agents” was established. A total of 28 persons around the country were asked to make direct contact with local enterprises in order to motivate them to send in applications. The group was established in two steps: a project group of seven was first recruited; these seven again recruited three agents each.

A total of 280 applications to the programme were received, which was a considerable increase from last year’s 208. The increase is probably not just a result of the work done by the motivation agents, but their efforts have obviously contributed.

iv) Motivation, counselling and information

As a part of Competence Reform, the Ministry of Education and Research initiated a project called *Motivation, Counselling and Information*. The project period was 2000 – 2002 and the common aim of which was to contribute to the information about competence development possibilities and the motivation to use these. The nine development projects received funding direct from the Ministry. The projects were a mixed bag of local initiatives, and it was difficult to draw clear conclusions on the basis of the experience gained.

One frustration that was reported from guidance counselling services was connected with motivating potential participants to start an education or a separate course and then having to say that they don’t have anything to offer for the next three months or more. Motivation to attend will very easily have disappeared by the time the course/education starts.

2.3. Monitoring & evaluating programmes and assessing learning outcomes;

2.3.1. Assessment of the learning outcomes of ALE programmes

Tradition It is important to be aware of the Norwegian educational tradition with respect to assessment. Historically there has been little focus on formally structured and organised assessment systems in general. Formative assessment is a tool for giving emphasis to assessment *for* learning instead of assessment *of* learning. This is an issue of growing interest. In vocational education and training, pilot projects on formative assessment by the use of portfolios have been carried out. A major objective of these pilot projects is to enhance the quality of learning, by emphasising learning processes and outcomes. These trends also influence the assessment methods of adult education and training.

Teaching methods and assessment It could be argued that Norwegian teachers in general as well as in adult education have been using teaching methods and approaches to assessment that resemble the key elements of formative assessment, without discussing it or even being consciously aware of it. The intense activity in the area of compulsory education (new reform, new curriculum, and new national tests) and the stronger focus on assessment in general, with emphasis on the formative, leads to a search for concepts and definitions that are both practicable and acceptable to professionals as well as politicians.⁴³

New curricula- new guidelines Upper secondary education regulation states that the basis for assessing pupils is the objectives described in the Core Curriculum and the syllabuses for each course. Much is done to develop exams that are cross-disciplinary and are close to real life. A new regulation on exams, craft and journeyman's certificates and documentation, describes how assessment of broad competencies in accordance with the Core Curriculum is to be done. In addition a guidebook for schools and teachers, containing guidelines on individual and school-based assessment, as well as instructions for internal and external exams, has been produced.

2.3.2. What tools and mechanisms used to monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure good quality

NOKUT is an independent public agency, established by law in 2002, with the task of carrying out external quality assurance of higher education and tertiary vocational education in Norway.

Adult education associations offer courses to support the individual adult's personal development and increase equality of opportunities. The associations are responsible for the content of the courses. Most of the courses are independent of national curricula and examination tests. The adult education associations are obliged to provide study plans and documentation to the participants. The different associations had during many years developed

⁴³ Vox, Directorate for Education (2005) What works in innovation in education, Improving education for adults with basic skills needs through formative assessment

different standards and routines and there was a need for better coordination and to develop a uniform practise. The result of the project KVAASS (2004-2005) was a set of common standards of Quality in Adult Learning. The project was based on cooperation between several NGOs to standardise routines of educational planning and documentation. The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning has established a Quality Committee to give advice and counselling in quality standard matters.

NADEs Standing Committees. Through its Standing Quality Committee NADE plays a leading role in the work for the development of quality criteria and –standards for distance education. The Standing Committee has developed and published Quality Standards for Distance Education. The Standing Committee functions as an expert body in quality matters both for NADE's members and for the Ministry. The Advisory Committee of Governmental Grants is an expert body in matters concerning the public grants. The Committee works with questions concerning categorisation of study programmes and standards of working load for the different study programmes. They also work with documentation and statistics.

The adult education act (1976) regulating the grant system for NGOs. It is stated in the law that courses should follow a study plan and that the participants should receive a written award when finishing and that the participants should have influence on the course process, as a pedagogical and democratic right.

2.4. Adult educators/facilitators' status and training;

2.4.1. Educational qualifications/training required for adult instructors

In Norway there are no formal qualification requirements for teachers in adult education, but as indicated in table 12 (see below) more than 90% of the teachers are qualified. Compared to the other Nordic countries, adult education has a low profile as an academic field in Norway.

Teacher education is a complex field. The purpose of the various teacher education courses is to provide teachers for specific subjects, or specific types of education. However, teachers' competence overlaps in such a way that school owners are able to assemble teams of teachers according to the needs of the individual school. By structuring their studies or by taking further courses, teachers are able to extend the scope of their qualifications.

- Pre-school teacher education (3 years) qualifies for educational work in kindergartens and the first year of primary school. The addition of one year's relevant further education qualifies pre-school teachers for work from the first through the fourth year.
- General teacher education (4 years) qualifies for teaching in primary and lower secondary school, and in **adult education** at the corresponding levels⁴.
- Subject-specific teacher education (either 3 year or 4 years) qualifies for teaching of specific subjects in primary and lower secondary school, in upper secondary school and in **adult education. This education also certifies** candidates for other cultural work with children and adolescents.

- Vocational teacher education (3 years) qualifies for teaching in upper secondary school and **adult education. Candidates also qualify for teaching specific** subjects from the fifth year of primary school onwards.
- Teacher education programme (1 year) builds on a graduate course of academic studies or on a vocational training course with practical training and vocational theory, and qualifies for teaching from the fifth year of primary school, in upper secondary school and in **adult education.**
- Integrated master's degree (5 years) qualifies for the teaching of certain subjects from the fifth year of primary school, in upper secondary school and in adult education.⁵

Master of science in Adult Education⁴⁴: NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology – provides a research based programme on adults' ability to learn and achieve competence in a lifelong learning perspective. The Master of Science in Adult Education aims to provide students with an understanding of the subject area, considering its development and significance for adult learning. The programme of study also includes theoretical and practical knowledge on how to organize, prepare and evaluate learning outcomes in working life and society in general.

The University of Tromsø has for some years provided and offered a work related part time Bachelor and Master degree study in Adult Education. Target groups for these studies have been both teachers and others involved in education.

See also 4.3 i)

2.4.3. The proportion of adult educators/facilitators

The tables presented below⁴⁵ show that in 2005 there were about 3,000 full time teacher positions in adult education, within the field of primary and secondary education, special needs education for adults, and Norwegian language and social studies for adult immigrants. Seen in relation to the total number of people involved in teaching and administration at management levels (approximately 8,000) there seems to be a high number of people in part time positions. This might reflect the situation of a wide range of providers of adult education in Norway. Adult education provided by local and regional authorities is to a great extent given by teachers in full time positions. On the other hand, adult education provided by e.g. independent study organisations mostly hire teachers in part time positions. This might indicate that there are many teachers in adult education who do this as a supplementary position and source of income. Another explanation might be that teachers within the field of adult education combine different part time positions provided by different educational institutions to one 100 per cent position.

⁴⁴ <http://www.ntnu.no/studies/adulteducation/master/about>

⁴⁵ http://www.vox.no/upload/Nedlastingscenter/Background%20report%20Norway%20CERI%207_web.pdf

Table 12. Registered full time positions in per cent in primary and lower secondary education and special education for adults in Norway, per 1 October 2005-06

Full time positions in per cent			
	Men	Women	Total
Headmaster/principal	3,453	3,528	6,981
Vice principal	2,259	3,195	5,454
School counsellor	703	1,589	2,292
Teachers with approved qualifications	2,742	63,952	91,494
Teachers without approved qualifications	1,442	3,233	4,675
Total	35,399	75,497	110,896

Table 13 Registered full time positions in per cent in Norwegian and social studies education for adult immigrants, per 1 October 2005-06

Full time positions in per cent			
	Men	Women	Total
Headmaster/principal	4,137	4,417	8,554
Vice principal	2,612	4,793	7,05
School counsellor	939	2,666	3,605
Teachers with approved education	46,043	122,670	168,713
Teachers without approved education	3,067	5,726	8,793
Total	56,798	140,272	197,070

Table 14. The total number of registered persons working in primary and lower secondary education for adults, special education for adults and Norwegian and social education for adult immigrants, per 1 October 2005-06

	Men	Women	Total
Total number of registered persons working in primary and lower secondary education for adults, special education for adults and Norwegian and social studies	3,146	4,873	8,019

3. Research, Innovation and Good Practices

3.1. Research studies in the field of adult learning;

Research and studies in the field of adult learning has mainly been undertaken by different national and international organisations. We have listed some of the most relevant studies and reports with references to the web site where more information is given:

BASICS! Adult Learning; status, challenges and recommendations

<http://www.vox.no/templates/ArticleOverview.aspx?id=2986>

The Vox barometer

<http://www.vox.no/templates/ArticleOverview.aspx?id=3053>

The Vox mirror

<http://www.vox.no/templates/ArticleOverview.aspx?id=2989>

IALS, ALL

<http://www.oecd.org/els/pdfs/EDSALDOCA004.pdf>

Fafo: The Competence Reform and Lifelong learning

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20049/20049.pdf>

Adult Education Survey 2007

http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/04/02/50/vol_en/

Bureaucratic response to policy change: implementation of adult education policy in Norway

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a790542281~db=all~jumptype=rss>

Evaluation of how the municipalities implement the right and obligation to Norwegian language training and social studies

http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/AID/publikasjoner/rapporter_og_planer/2008/Sluttrapport%20evaluering%20av%20oppl%C3%A6ring%20i%20norsk.pdf

Learning condition monitor

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/501/index.htm>

Active labour market programmes in Norway: are they helpful for social assistance recipients?

<http://esp.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/15/1/27>

Lifelong learning in Norway- A deflating Policy Balloon or an Act of Piecemeal Implementation?

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20030/20030.pdf>

4. Adult Literacy

4.1. Definition of Literacy

In the early 70s and up till quite recently “primary literacy” - breaking the code- was the most common approach to literacy in Norway. Today “secondary literacy” - literacy is closely connected functionality- is well established among stakeholders involved in literacy policy and practise. In Norway we are using the same definition as used in IALS and ALL surveys: *“Literacy is using printed and written information to function in society to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential. (Kirsch and Jungeblut, 1986)”*

4.2. New policies

i) Basic Competence in Working Life⁴⁶

Vox has the administrative responsibility for a national programme directed towards developing basic competence for working life. The programme funds and monitors enterprise-based courses on basic skills. Projects organised outside workplaces can also receive funding, provided the objective is to prepare people for working life. The aim of this programme is to give adults the opportunity to get the basic skills they need to keep up with the demands and changes in modern working life and civil society.

The programme concentrates on reading, writing, numeracy, and digital skills. Any enterprise in Norway, private and public, can apply for funding from the programme.

The following criteria have been emphasised from the start of the programme:

- the learning activity should be combined with work and basic skills training should preferably be linked to other job-relevant learning
- the skill levels aimed for correspond to the lower secondary school
- the courses should strengthen the participants’ motivation to learn

ii) Qualifications Framework for Basic skills for Adults⁴⁷

From 2006 a reform of primary and secondary education called the Knowledge Promotion Reform has been implemented. It focuses very strongly on one main element of lifelong learning: the importance of having substantial basic skills. These skills are defined as the ability to express oneself orally; the ability to read; the ability to do mathematics; the ability to express

⁴⁶ <http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=2647>

⁴⁷ <http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=2613>

oneself in writing, and the ability to use digital tools. The skills are included in each subject's core curriculum, thus making all teachers responsible for pupils and apprentices developing their basic skills through work in the various subjects. The new curricula also have clear objectives for what the pupils are to master at various stages.

The education and training that has been on offer for adults with low basic skills so far is a full (condensed) primary school course. For some this will meet their needs, but for many this will be neither useful nor necessary. What many adults need, is a possibility to attend flexible education geared specifically towards the basic skills.

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research has assigned to Vox the responsibility to develop a Framework for Basic Skills for Adults, i.e. descriptions of levels of competence for each of the basic skills that the programme comprises (literacy, numeracy, ICT skills and oral communication). The frameworks for literacy, numeracy and ICT were approved in the autumn of 2007. The framework for oral communication is approved.

The Framework for Basic Skills for Adults establishes national standards for reading and writing, mathematics, ICT skills and oral communication.

The descriptions of levels of competence for each of the basic skills are divided into three levels. The template is identical for all skills and all levels. Each level is described in detail in the form of intended learning outcomes.

iii) Individual legal rights

Adults have got the right to a basic education. Adults who need primary and lower secondary education have a statutory right to such education. This education must be adapted to the individual's needs and life situation.

Adults have a statutory right to upper secondary education. The right applies to adults who have not completed an upper secondary education.

iv) The introduction scheme⁴⁸

Everyone who has been granted a residence permit in Norway has a right and a duty to participate an introduction programme. The introduction scheme is intended to contribute to easier and speedier integration of newly-arrived refugees into Norwegian society. All municipalities that settle refugees are obliged to offer the introduction programme. The programme involves tuition in the Norwegian language and social studies. Participation in such programmes is compulsory for refugees. IMDi (the Directorate of Integration and Diversity) is responsible for providing guidance and for follow-up in relation to the municipalities and their work in connection with the scheme.

⁴⁸ http://www.imdi.no/templates/CommonPage_7748.aspx

v) Right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition

The Norwegian language is important in terms of understanding others and making oneself understood, in terms of getting a job or an education, and in order to participate in society. Immigrants' right and obligation to participate in Norwegian and social studies tuition was enshrined in law on 1 September 2004⁴⁹. The teaching is aimed at improving immigrants' chances of participating actively in employment and society at large.

4.3. Examples of effective practice and innovative literacy programmes.

i) Basic skills: Guidelines, tools and teacher training

In 2008, Vox is working to further develop the content of the Framework for Basic Skills for Adults, with the level descriptions as a starting point. The development is funded through the programme Basic Competence in Working Life. Currently Vox is developing guidelines for providers, mapping tools, tests and didactic models.

In addition Vox has been assigned the responsibility to design a model for teacher training customized to the needs of teachers who teach basic skills to adults. We work in close cooperation with pedagogical experts from training seminars. Taking part in a wide range of international networks in this field, Vox will be able to draw on experiences, resources and examples from other countries in this work.

ii) Norwegian language: National tools and guidelines

In January 2006 the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education presented a preliminary language portfolio for adult immigrants in Norway, based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Guidelines for the portfolio is now being developed.

The curriculum for Norwegian language and social studies is based on the levels and framework in CEFR. There is no guidance related to the teaching methodology and assessment of the learning outcomes in the curriculum. Therefore a methodological pilot guide has been made⁵⁰. This contains articles relating to the theoretical superstructure in the curriculum. The methodological guide also comprises a website and a DVD with examples of good teaching practice.

⁴⁹ Circular H-20/05

⁵⁰ <http://www.vox.no/templates/CommonPage.aspx?id=1099>

The training model for Norwegian language and social studies is divided into three tracks (spor 1, spor 2, spor 3) based on the individual level of education and skills. The target group for track 1 is low skilled adults and especially illiterate. The framework of levels and expected learning outcomes for the training provided at track 1 is the same as CEFR but the progression is adapted to the target group. A language portfolio special adapted to the low skilled adults is now developed , “Spor 1”⁵¹ .

iii) ABC pc www.abcpc.no/english

ABC pc is an interactive training programme for basic pc skills. It comprises the use of mouse and keyboard, writing texts, using the Internet and e-mail. The programme is aimed at adults who want to improve their basic ICT skills.

iv) Read and write www.vox.no/lesogskriv.

Read and write (Les og skriv) is a website for adults, aimed at improving literacy skills. It has been an objective for Vox to develop a low-threshold tool for literacy skills training; it should be simple to get started and fun to go on with the training. The website comprises some 1000 interactive tasks of various types and levels.

v) Family Learning <http://www.efln.eu/>

The aim of Family Learning is to improve future prospects, quality of life and motivation for learning for the whole family, especially for the children.

Family Learning emphasises making use of family resources by building and strengthening the families' own basic starting point and competence. The method includes the use of authentic learning arenas such as the local community and home.

The concept of focusing on the whole family has been emphasised in connection with Norwegian language courses for immigrants in recent years. Norwegian language courses for adult immigrants will make it possible for the participants to take part in community life and experience gaining control of their own lives. Knowledge about community institutions such as kindergartens and schools are important areas of training.

4.4. Policies and programmes focus on diversity.

i) Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi)

IMDi's goal is to contribute to equality in living conditions and diversity through employment, integration and participation. Among IMDi's areas of responsibility is the achievement of employment-based integration through settlement, the introduction programme, interpreting

⁵¹ <http://www.vox.no/spor1>

services, functioning as a competence centre, efforts aimed at diversity and dialogue and equality with respect to public services.

ii) The introduction programme

The introduction programme financial and practical framework has a positive effect on immigrant women with huge family responsibilities. It is now possible to get paid when learning and a lot of municipalities offer child care when the mothers are taking lessons. Some learning centres also include family learning (see previous page) and this kind of learning are very motivating for women.

iii) Women and d@ta

To an ever increasing degree, information and communication technology (ICT) is becoming a condition for the welfare society. Individual competence concerning ICT is now acknowledged as one of society's basic skills. But does this include all individuals or groups? What about ethnic minority groups, and what may be the outcome if inclusion of minority groups is not the case?

These questions are relevant in creating the rationale behind the Ministry of government administration and reform launching the initiative concerning project "Women and d@ta". The main goal of the project is to boost digital competence for women within different ethnical minority groups in Norway.

The initiative will focus on digital competence and the participants in relation to:

- their roles as parents
- participation in working life/ employment
- inclusion in the society

4.5. Policies and programmes aim at building literate environments

i) ICT and the Library as an open learning centre

Both the report *Library Reform 2014 and the white paper report No 17(2006- 2007)to the Storting* point to the Library as a digital learning arena. The library is an easy access point for digital competence and is often used in relation with different forms of educational and training activities. The library is well suited as a learning centre for digital literacy because the necessary equipment and the broadband connection can be found here. It is also believed that librarians are experienced and can give guidance in digital literacy.

5. Expectations of CONFINTEA VI and Future Perspectives of ALE.

For **CONFINTEA VI** should try to put forward the following points:

- emphasise adult education and training as important tools for development and for democracy and active citizenship around the world
- work for putting more emphasis on adult learning in the Education for All Goals (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
- improve adult basic education in such a way that literacy education can have sustainability
- work out international standards and bench marks for adult education and training
- recognise the work that is being done by the civil and voluntary sectors and organisations around the world to improve basic education for young and adults
- focus on connections between learning and migration and highlight education as a vehicle of integration of immigrants in working life and in society.