Vocational Education and Training in Norway

Main Model

4 Years

2 Years in School

Vg1

Vg2

2 Years Apprenticeship in Enterprise

Training

Productive work

Final Examination
The authorities at national level (The Ministry of Education and the Directorate for Education and Training) are responsible for the curriculum/subject syllabus, the VET-structure and the acts. The authorities at county level are responsible for school- and VET dimensioning, for dispensing the VET financing provided by the state budget (including apprenticeships), for providing apprenticeships and for supervision.
Norway has a VET system built upon the tripartite cooperation principle. A system of cooperation, mandated by the Education Act, is established both at national and regional level, involving both employers’ and workers’ unions.

At national level, the National Council for VET (Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring), a body for cooperation on vocational education and training, appointed by the Ministry, gives advice and takes initiatives within VET. One Vocational Training Council (Faglig råd) exists for each VET programme.

At regional level, there are county vocational training boards (Yrkesopplæringsnemnder), one in each county. These boards have specific advisory tasks as stated in the Education Act. The organisation of pupils/apprentices is represented in both in the National Council for VET and in the County Vocational Training Boards.

Education and training is conducted both in schools and in enterprises. Both public and private enterprises accept apprentices and are approved as training enterprises by the county. Training Offices and Training Circles, enterprise driven cooperation ensuring apprenticeship place provision, have become increasingly common.
The first stage at which VET is provided in Norway is at lower secondary level through Elective programme subjects (utdanningsvalg). These enable 8–10th year students to try out subjects from the different upper secondary level programmes, including VET.

Having completed lower secondary education, a student can choose to enter one of the following nine Vocational Education Programmes: Programme for Technical and Industrial Production; Programme for Electricity and Electronics; Programme for Building and Construction; Programme for Restaurant and Food Processing; Programme for Health and Social Care; Programme for Media and Communication; Programme for Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry; Programme for Service and Transport; Programme for Design, Arts and Crafts.

The standard model for VET at upper secondary level is often called the 2+2-model. This refers to the division of the standard four year programme into two years school-based training followed by two years enterprise-based training which corresponds to one year in school. The model carries a certain degree of flexibility depending on the different programmes.

After the first year at upper secondary level in one of the nine programmes, the student has to choose between several specialisations in year 12 leading to a further specialisation in year 13 when the profession is chosen. The subjects within VET are divided into Common Core Subjects, Common Programme Subjects and In-depth Study Project (prosjekt til fordypning). As the curricula are regulations, the schools and training establishments are bound by their content.

Should a student wish to transfer to a General Studies Programme, he/she may do so by completing a year of Supplementary Studies Qualifying for Higher Education.
Experience-based Trade Certification

The experience-based trade certification scheme has existed since the 1950s and gives adults the right to pass the Trade- or Journeyman’s Examination upon proof of long and relevant practice. The scheme has played an important part in the establishment of new trades and is an important recruitment tool for trainers and members of the Examination Boards.
Facts about Norway

4 700 000 Inhabitants

324 000 km²

16 Inhabitants per km²

19 Counties

477 237 Enterprises
• 0–9 employees: 432 174 (90.6%)
• 10–49 employees: 38 036 (8%)
• 50–249 employees: 6 432 (1.3%)
• 250 employees or more: 595 (0.1%)

2.8% unemployment

Average monthly pay (2006) in NOK:
• 33 100 (men)
• 28 700 (women)

187 314 pupils enrolled in upper secondary in 2006–2007:
• 52% applied to a VET programme in 2006
For more information on the Norwegian Vocational Education and Training system and governance, please consult the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research: www.kd.dep.no

For more information on Vocational Education and Training content and implementation, please consult the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training: www.udir.no

For further statistics, please consult Statistics Norway: www.ssb.no