



## **Youth Wiki national description**

# Youth policies in Norway

2021

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki>



<b>Norway .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1. Youth Policy Governance.....	7
1.1 Target population of youth policy .....	8
1.2 National youth law .....	8
1.3 National youth strategy .....	9
1.4 Youth policy decision-making.....	9
1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries .....	12
1.6 Evidence-based youth policy .....	12
1.7 Funding youth policy .....	15
1.8 Cross-border cooperation .....	16
1.9 Current debates and reforms .....	16
2. Voluntary Activities .....	18
2.1 General context .....	19
2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering .....	19
2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering .....	21
2.4 Youth volunteering at national level .....	21
2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes .....	22
2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities .....	22
2.7 Skills recognition.....	23
2.8 Current debates and reforms .....	23
3. Employment & Entrepreneurship .....	24
3.1 General context .....	24
3.2 Administration and governance .....	25
3.3 Skills forecasting .....	28
3.4 Career guidance and counselling.....	30
3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships .....	31
3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market.....	33
3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities .....	36
3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence .....	37
3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs.....	38
3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture.....	39
3.11 Current debates and reforms .....	39
4. Social Inclusion .....	39
4.1 General context .....	40
4.2 Administration and governance .....	40
4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people .....	42

4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people.....	43
4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness .....	46
4.6 Access to quality services .....	48
4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion .....	50
4.8 Current debates and reforms .....	50
5. Participation .....	52
5.1 General context .....	52
5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy.....	53
5.3 Youth representation bodies.....	54
5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making .....	58
5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation .....	60
5.6 Supporting youth organisations .....	60
5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning.....	61
5.8 Raising political awareness among young people.....	63
5.9 E-participation .....	64
5.10 Current debates and reforms .....	64
6. Education and Training.....	65
6.1 General context .....	65
6.2 Administration and governance .....	68
6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET) .....	69
6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning .....	70
6.5 Cross-border learning mobility.....	71
6.6 Social inclusion through education and training.....	72
6.7 Skills for innovation .....	73
6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media.....	74
6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work.....	77
6.10 Current debates and reforms .....	77
7. Health and Well-Being.....	77
7.1 General context .....	77
7.2 Administration and governance .....	79
7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity.....	80
7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition .....	82
7.5 Mental health .....	84
7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks.....	85
7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly .....	86
7.8 Current debates and reforms .....	87

8. Creativity and Culture.....	87
8.1 General context.....	87
8.2 Administration and governance .....	88
8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people .....	89
8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation.....	90
8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences .....	91
8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture .....	92
8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies.....	92
8.8 Synergies and partnerships .....	93
8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture.....	93
8.10 Current debates and reforms .....	94
9. Youth and the World .....	94
9.1 General context.....	94
9.2 Administration and governance .....	94
9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues .....	95
9.4 Raising awareness about global issues.....	95
9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption.....	97
9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation .....	97
9.7 Current debates and reforms .....	98
10. Youth Work.....	98
10.1 General context.....	98
10.2 Administration and governance of youth work .....	99
10.3 Support to youth work .....	100
10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work.....	100
10.5 Youth workers .....	102
10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work.....	102
10.7 Raising awareness about youth work.....	102
10.8 Current debates and reforms .....	103
Glossary .....	103
References.....	106
Archive.....	123



# Norway

## Youth Policy in Norway

No single strategy covers all aspects of Norwegian youth policy. Instead, several policy documents target different aspects of young people's lives within different sectors, as described in the underlying YouthWiki chapters.

The Government's youth policy is described in relevant draft resolutions and bills [Proposisjoner til Stortinget] that form the basis for the Parliament's consideration of proposed resolutions, new legislation or amendments to legislation, the budget, or other matters that require a decision by the Parliament. The budget spells out the Government's priorities in all sectors, including youth policy.

The two lower levels of government, counties and municipalities, are the main implementers of state policy. This is true to the implementation of youth policy as well. The exception is where the central government has its own implementing bodies at regional level for core services and institutions (e.g. hospitals, universities, police, prisons, and courts).

Both counties and municipalities have over time increased their autonomy towards the way government funding is being used to reach desired goals, by utilizing so-called free funding ['frie midler'] – sometimes called non-earmarked funding.

The Norwegian welfare model is characterized by redistribution of wealth through its taxation system, and through a broad universalistic social welfare system. Norway also offers more or less free education, from kindergartens and preschool, up to higher education. The voluntary sector plays an integral role in almost all policy areas.

## 1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

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### Introduction

Norway has a predominantly centralized political/administrative system of governance, which means that most, if not all, overarching political strategies are made at state level, and then implemented top-down.

The two lower levels of government, counties and municipalities, are the main implementers of general state policy. This is true to the implementation of youth policy as well. The exception is where the central government has its own implementing bodies at regional level for core services and institutions (e.g. hospitals, universities, police, prisons, and courts).

Both counties and municipalities have increased their autonomy towards *the way* government funding is being used to obtain the desired means and goals, by utilizing so-called free funding ['frie midler'] – sometimes called non-earmarked funding.

Lastly, Norway does not have a youth law, and by that, no judicial definition of youth. This means that particular legislation to young people is mostly found in laws countering the needs of the child (under the age of majority).

Still, Norway has a comprehensive and encompassing youth policy – see segment [1.3 National youth strategy](#).

## 1.1 Target population of youth policy

The [Ministry of Children and Families](#), which is the main responsible authority for children and young people, generally defines youth as those aged between 13 and 26. This aligns with the [regulations relating to national grants for voluntary child and youth organisations](#) which triggers grants for organisations with counting members up to the age of 26.

A 2011 Official Norwegian Report (NOU) on youth influence and participation in Norway, [NOU 2011: 20 Ungdom, makt og medvirkning](#), defined youth by age in three sub-groups:

- 12 – 15 years: youths in lower secondary school
- 16 – 19 years: youths primarily in upper secondary school
- 20 – 26 years: youths/young adults in the process of establishing themselves through education and the labour market

However, the definition of youth is broad and changeable across sectors and policy initiatives. The category 'children and young people' is in many contexts defined up until the age of 24.

The "[0-24 cooperation](#)" is a cross-sectoral initiative of the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education to support and strengthen coordination and cooperation at the national level for the benefit of children and young people between 0 and 24. This is aligned with the so called [young person's right](#) laid down in the [Education Act](#) which establishes the statutory right to upper secondary education and training for young people until the school year starting when they turn 24.

In addition, the [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) provides an overview of initiatives for children and adolescents aged 0-24.

## 1.2 National youth law

### Existence of a National Youth Law

Norway does not have a youth law. The following laws relate specifically to the rights of children and adolescents under the age of 18, and in some cases up to the age of 24:

- The Children's Act [[Barneloven](#)] covers legislation on parenthood, parental responsibility, attendance and maintenance obligations. The Act also contains rules on parental mediation and the handling of parenting disputes in the courts.
- [The Guardianship Act](#) [Vergemålsloven] applies to persons under guardianship and their right to take legal action or to dispose of their own funds. The Act also applies to guardians of persons under guardianship and the competence of the guardian to take legal action or to dispose of funds on behalf of the person he or she is guardian of. However, for guardians of minors, the law applies only to the extent that the competence is not covered by the parental responsibility under the Children's Act.
- The [Child Welfare Act](#) [Barnevernloven] relates to the Child Welfare Services.
- [The Education Act](#) relates to rights pertaining to primary and secondary education.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been embedded in Norwegian legislation in the [Human Rights Act, cf. Item 2](#).

There are no specific references to youth in the constitution, but the rights of children below the age of majority are specifically mentioned in the [Norwegian Constitution](#) (§ 104).



## Scope and contents

Not applicable, as Norway currently does not have a youth law.

## Revisions/updates

Not applicable.

## 1.3 National youth strategy

### Existence of a National Youth Strategy

No single strategy covers all aspects of Norwegian youth policy. Instead, several policy documents target different aspects of young people's lives within different sectors as described in the underlying YouthWiki chapters.

The Government's youth policy is described in relevant draft resolutions and bills [Proposisjoner til Stortinget] that form the basis for the Parliament's consideration of proposed resolutions, new legislation or amendments to legislation, the budget, or other matters that require a decision by the Parliament. The budget spells out the Government's priorities in all sectors, including youth policy.

Most ministries are responsible for measures affecting children and youth, either directly or indirectly. The ministries cooperate in many areas, and often put forward joint initiatives, through action plans, strategies and parliamentary announcements. The previous Government's 2015 Plan on child and youth policy initiatives [[Trygghet, deltakelse og engasjement – regjeringens arbeid for barn og unge](#)], was drawn up in collaboration between by the Ministry of Children and Families, Ministry of Health and Care Services, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Justice and Public Security and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It presents the overall goals and focus areas of the Government's children and youth policy but does not include all measures. For more information about the plan see section [1.4 Youth policy decision making](#).

In 2020 the Government launched a [cooperation strategy for children and youth in low-income families \(2020-2023\)](#). The cooperation strategy is part of the national follow-up of the UN Sustainability Goal 1 to eradicate all forms of poverty, and the overall goal of *Leaving no one behind*.

## Scope and contents

Not applicable.

## Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

Not applicable.

## Revisions/updates

Not applicable.

## 1.4 Youth policy decision-making

### Structure of decision making

At the central level

The responsible authority for overall youth policy is the [Ministry of Children and Families](#). The Ministry is responsible for [children and young people's participation](#) and provides basic support for national and international work in voluntary youth organisations. However,

strategies and measures affecting different aspects of young people's lives may lie with other ministries or are often devised and implemented cross-sectorally. The following ministries are the most important ones in terms of responsibility for policies and services affecting youth:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Research
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Health and Care Services
- Ministry of Justice and Public Security

The division of tasks and responsibilities demands cooperation and coordination between ministries and among different levels of administration. The Ministry of Children and Families and its underlying agency the [Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs](#) often coordinate state efforts for children and youth.

### At the local level

Norway is divided into 11 counties and 356 municipalities. Practical implementation of national child and youth policy priorities lies primarily at the municipal level through the provision of services. The main responsibilities of the municipality relating to youth are primary education (until 10th grade), youth health stations and school health services, outpatient health services, unemployment and other social services and economic development.

Many national youth policy goals are not enshrined in legal regulations and do not trigger earmarked funds. Therefore, the municipalities have much freedom in how they implement and finance national policy goals, such as in youth work. Child and youth organisations are important collaborating actors at the municipal level.

### Main themes

The [Government's 2015 Plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) presents the overall goals and focus areas of the Government's child and youth policy but does not include all measures. The plan is based on the following goals and principles:

- A safe upbringing in family and in the local community
- Equal rights and opportunities
- Participation and influence
- High quality services for everyone

Key focus areas of the plan are:

- Family and community
- Kindergarten, school and working life
- Health and welfare
- Culture and leisure

The strategies and measures relevant to the youth population described in the document are covered in detail in the YouthWiki chapters where applicable and if still relevant. For recent developments in these areas see section [1.9 Current debates and reforms](#).

### The national agency for youth

There is no National Agency for Youth. However the [Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs](#) is the governmental office for the welfare and protection of children and families. Its main objective is to provide quality services to children, young people, and families. The directorate hosts the website [Ung.no](#), targeting young people

aged 13 – 20 with public information and guidance about rights, opportunities and obligations.

**The following agencies also play an important role in the implementation of youth policy goals**

[The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#) is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research and is responsible for the development of primary and secondary education. In The Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations.

[The Norwegian Integration and Diversity Directorate](#) implements the government's integration policies. The directorate is tasked with strengthening the municipalities, sector authorities, and other collaborative partners' competence in the field of integration and diversity.

Some of the directorate's key responsibilities include:

- Resettlement of refugees
- Facilitating to assist immigrant participation in the labour force and in local communities
- Efforts against negative social control, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation
- Provide professional and knowledge-based recommendations for further development of integration policy and ensure coordination in the field of integration
- Manage grant schemes aimed at municipalities and voluntary organizations
- Produce and disseminate research, analysis, statistics, and best practice

[The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) administers one third of the national budget through schemes such as unemployment benefits, work assessment allowances, pensions, sickness benefits, child benefits and cash-for-care benefits. The local authorities and central government cooperate through 456 NAV offices in municipalities and city boroughs. Each local authority and NAV agree on what local authority services their office should provide. The services provided by a NAV office will thus vary from local authority to local authority.

**Policy monitoring and evaluation**

The policies and measures relating to youth are devised and implemented cross-sectorally. Evaluation may be conducted by a ministry or agency or they may choose to make the evaluation subject to competition. In most instances, analyses, consultancy services, and evaluations are subject to [procurement rules](#). [Doffin](#) is the Norwegian national notification database for public procurement. The website assists the authorities to create and publish notices in accordance with the regulations and makes it easy for suppliers to find relevant competitions in the public sector.

In cases relating to draft laws regulating people's rights and duties, draft changes in how the public administration is organised (for instance relocation) and jurisdiction changes, public consultations are initiated by the Government to allow the public, civil society, and the business community to state their opinion, and to control how the public administration works and performs their tasks. Public consultations are also used after the publication of Official Norwegian Reports (NOUs) that report on different aspects of Norwegian society, laws or administrative practice, and which often suggest new policy or legislative measures.

## 1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

### Mechanisms and actors

Norwegian youth policy is cross-sectoral with emphasis on collaboration and coordination between ministries, local and central authorities, and with the voluntary sector. In addition, children and young people's participation is emphasised. The [Government's 2015 Plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) was drawn up in collaboration between by the Ministry of Children and Families, Ministry of Health and Care Services, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Justice and Public Security and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The cross-sectoral approach is reflected in the "[0-24 cooperation](#)", a cross-sectoral initiative of the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education to support and strengthen necessary coordination and cooperation in counties and municipalities, for the benefit of children and young people and their families.

## 1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

### Political Commitment to Evidence- Based Youth Policy

The commitment to evidence-based policymaking is high. Draft resolutions, bills and white papers presented to Parliament are often based on reports, plans, or Official Norwegian Reports (NOUs). All reports and plans are generally produced by appointed individuals or committees. For example, NOU reports are produced by committees and working groups constituted by the Government or a ministry to report on different aspects of society. The purpose of the NOU reports is to present and discuss the evidence base and possible choices of action or strategies for the development and implementation of public measures.

[Instructions for Official Studies and Reports](#) [Utredingsinstruksen] aimed at ministries and the underlying activities of the state administration was first established by Royal Decree on February 18, 2000 and revised in 2005 and 2016. The purpose of the instructions is to provide a sound basis for decisions on state measures by identifying economic, administrative, and other significant consequences of reforms and measures. The underlying agencies of the state administration also conduct knowledge production as the basis of professional advice to the ministries and may commission research and development projects. Research and development activities vary from sector to sector and according to annual funding allocations.

The [Research Council](#) is an administrative body with special authorizations under the Ministry of Education and Research. It distributes funding for research and serves as the chief advisory body for research policy issues. It has responsibility for strategic planning for the research institute sector in which the provision of basic funding is the most important instrument. Basic funding is divided into two parts consisting of a basic allocation and strategic institute initiatives. To qualify for basic funding, research institutes must conduct research of interest to Norwegian trade and industry, government administration or society at large. All ministries may allocate funding for strategic institute initiatives in selected areas. At present, only the environmental institutes, the primary industry institutes, and the foreign policy institutes are receiving funding under this part of the scheme.

The Ministry of Children and Families' [Research Strategy for 2022-2026](#) is aimed at improving the knowledge development in a more offensive way than before. At the end of the strategy period, the knowledge development within the Ministry's areas will be characterized by stronger research environments, better data base and more international research collaboration than in 2022.

## Cooperation between policymaking and research

Many research institutes carry out research sought by the authorities. For some institutes, a core activity is providing the knowledge and evidence base for policy development. Research may be ordered, either as mandated administrative tasks, through assignments directly to the institutes, or indirectly through programmes administered by the [Research Council of Norway](#). Regional research institutes often provide commissioned research on youth related topics. They have a two-part role in the Norwegian research and development system. They are a part of national social science institutes and participate in the same competition arenas as these. In addition, the regional institutes also have a role as regional research and development actors. The most important characteristic of the regional institutes is that they have a social science structure, that they maintain a "regional function" and that they are spread throughout the country.

[The Center for Welfare and Labor Research](#) (SVA) at Oslo Metropolitan College (OsloMet) consists of four research institutes that conduct commissioned research on working life, consumption, city and regions, adolescence and aging, as well as the services and organization of the welfare society. The four institutes are: the Work Research Institute (AFI), Norwegian Social Research (NOVA), the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), and the Consumption Research Norway (SIFO). The [NOVA](#) youth research section conducts multi-disciplinary empirical research based on local and regional qualitative and quantitative studies, as well as national representative surveys. Main research topics are youth culture and leisure activities, school adjustment, transitions from school to employment, alcohol and drug use, social problems, intergenerational relations and issues concerning ethnicity and multi-cultural society.

Top level authorities commission research on relevant policy themes regularly and sometimes fund projects commissioned by committees constituted by the government to report on different aspects of society. Some recent examples are:

- Two research projects were commissioned by a committee ([#UngIDag-utvalget](#)) constituted by the Government reporting on equality challenges for children and young people in everyday life. The committee [presented an Official Norwegian Report](#) to the Minister of Culture in 2019. The research projects that informed the report investigated gendered patterns in youths' leisure activities and [leisure activities for children and youth in a gender equality perspective](#). The research was funded by the Ministry of Children and Families and conducted by Norwegian Social Research (NOVA).
- The Ministry of Children and Families is funding a research project conducted at Norwegian Social Research (NOVA) on [parenting in ethnic and religious minority contexts in Norway](#). The background for the project is a concern about public family and childhood services and institutions being premised on majority families' norms and values. There is also concern on the part of public authorities relating to gender equality and lack of autonomy for children and young people in some minority families. The aim of the project is to develop research-based knowledge about different forms of parenthood that co-exist in Norway, based on parents' own perspectives. This knowledge can contribute to developing public services that are adapted to different families' needs.
- The Ministry of Children and Families has funded a research project on [the consequences of growing up in low-income families](#). The project reviewed existing research on the consequences of growing up in low-income families in Norway. The project focused on the timing and duration of exposure to low-income as well as family-relations, health, neighbourhood, housing, social participation, education, and transition to work.
- The Norwegian Directorate of Health funded a project about [adolescents attending municipal youth clubs](#). By using material from the national [Ungdata-survey](#) the project combined information on social background, gender, age and immigrant background with adolescents' self-reported health, well-being, behaviour problems, drug abuse,

engagement in recreational activities and social support. The purpose of the study was to investigate municipalities' potential to actively use youth clubs to promote adolescents' health and well-being.

## National statistics and available data sources

[Statistics Norway](#) is the national statistical institute of Norway and the main producer of official statistics. The institute is responsible for collecting, producing, and communicating statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. The Institute reports to the Ministry of Finance and is subject to the provisions of [the Statistics Act](#). However, the institute is a professionally autonomous organisation. It provides statistics relevant to the [child and youth sector](#) in the areas of demographics, families, health, crime, leisure, education, labour market, income and child welfare services.

[Ungdata](#) is a cross-national data collection scheme, designed to conduct youth surveys at the municipal level in Norway. Ungdata is financed through the national budget, Norwegian Social Research (NOVA) is responsible for the national coordination of the project, while the regional Drug and Alcohol Competence Centers [KoRus] are responsible for conducting the municipal surveys. A [national report](#) is published every year on selected topics.

Ungdata covers various aspects of young people's lives such as relationship with parents and friends, leisure activities, health issues, local environment, well-being, and school issues. The surveys also include questions about tobacco and drug use, and participation in various forms of antisocial behaviour such as violence and bullying. The data is often used in municipal planning and developmental work related to public health and preventive measures aimed at young people.

Underlying agencies to the ministries also present statistics and analysis on relevant topics related to youth:

- [The Directorate of Education and Training](#) is responsible for all national statistics concerning kindergarten, primary and secondary education. The directorate provides data about basic education through an online [portal](#). The purpose of the portal is for schools and municipalities to have easy access to relevant and reliable information to conduct local quality assessment work. The portal contains data in the areas of learning outcomes, learning environment, implementation in upper secondary education, resources, and school facts. Users of the portal can create their own reports and export data to spreadsheets.
- The [Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs \(Bufdir\)](#) provides [statistics and analysis](#) on welfare and living conditions for children and youth, the child welfare services, disability, ethnicity and religion, gender equality and LHBTIQ.
- Norway has many good quality health registries. Data from these are collected, along with information from Statistics Norway and Norwegian health studies, into the online [the municipal statistics bank](#) and the [Norhealth statistics bank](#). Every year, the [Norwegian Institute of Public Health](#) releases public health profiles for municipalities and counties. Profiles are published between January and March. The public health profiles for municipalities and counties are used actively by the municipalities. The reports are also popular with the media who use them to compare the health of the local population with the rest of Norway. The data includes indicators relevant for the youth sector in the areas of population, childhood and living conditions, environment, injuries and accidents, health-related behaviours, and health conditions.

## Budgetary Allocations Supporting Research in the Youth Field

There is no specific budget allocation for research in the youth field.

Research and development as well as monitoring and evaluation of policy reforms are part of the ministerial budgets. The Ministry of Children and Families' budget was strengthened in 2020 to increase research on the effects of preventative measures and services for



children, young people, and families. In 2021 the Ministry of Children and Families transferred approx. NOK 32 million to the [Research Council](#) to support research in the following areas:

- the effects of measures and services for children, young people, and families through the family protection offices
- effects of preventive work and various services and measures aimed at children, young people, and families
- research programme on welfare, working life and migration
- research programme on health, care, and welfare services

## 1.7 Funding youth policy

### How Youth Policy is funded

There is not a specific budget for youth policy. Initiatives and measures directed at youth are integrated within the overall national policy measures across different sectors. This is reflected in the annual budget proposals by each ministry. In Norway, the youth population is often described as those aged 13-26, but this may vary according to the issues being addressed, or by sector. As many services, initiatives and measures target children and young people as one group and because young people over the age of majority enjoy rights and access to welfare services as adults it is not possible to report on a separate budget/public expenditure for youth specifically.

### What is funded

Ministries allocate grants to municipalities to carry out projects targeting the child and youth population. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs spent approximately NOK 684 million in grants to municipalities in 2019, out of which the largest grant was NOK 365 million for the strengthening of municipal foster homes. The grant scheme run by the Directorate of Health which aims to strengthen mental health and substance abuse prevention among children and young people had a budget of NOK 77 million in 2019. In the 2020 national budget NOK 422.1 million was allocated to a grant scheme aimed at strengthening and developing municipal health stations and school health services.

Support to youth organizations provides another indication of the overall commitment to youth. In 2021 the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs spent approximately NOK 155 million for youth organizations and NOK 231 million for organizations representing persons with disabilities. 13 of 15 ministries provide grants to voluntary organizations annually, many of them youth organizations or organizations with projects aimed at or run by youth.

### Financial Accountability

[The Office of the Auditor General](#) (OAG) provides the parliament with a comprehensive and independent audit of the government. The tasks of the OAG are to:

- audit the central government accounts
- carry out systematic performance audits of the finances, productivity, achievement of goals and effects based on parliamentary decisions
- monitor the management of the state's proprietary interests in companies
- contribute to the prevention and detection of irregularities and errors
- advise the government administration to prevent future errors and omissions

The Parliament can instruct the OAG to initiate special audits.

## Use of EU funds

There is no information on EU funds that have been used for youth policy at top-level. Norway does take part in several EU programmes relevant to the youth sector such as:

- [Horizon 2020](#)
- [Erasmus+](#)
- [EU program for Employment and Social Innovation – EaSI](#)
- [Connecting Europe Facility – CEF 2014-2020](#)

## 1.8 Cross-border cooperation

### Cooperation with European countries

For the Norwegian participation in EU programmes, see section [1.7 Funding youth policy](#) - Use of EU Funds for an overview of the European Union programmes.

Norway participates in a wide range of cooperation at both the Nordic and European level:

[The Nordic Committee for Children and Young People \(NORDBUK\)](#) is the Nordic Council of Ministers' Advisory and Co-ordinating body for matters relating to children and young people.

The [Council of the Baltic Sea States \(CBSS\)](#) supports regional cooperation on education and culture between Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Russia, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland

The [Barents Youth Coordination Office \(BYCO\)](#) provides counselling, information, education in project management, guidance and all kinds of support for youth groups, organizations and networks working with international youth projects in the Barents region.

### International cooperation

Norway, as a signatory of the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18) and participates in the [European Steering Committee for Youth \(CDEJ\)](#). The CDEJ supervises a programme of activities involving policy makers, youth researchers and youth work practitioners and focuses particularly on the development of youth policies in its member states.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may apply to the [European Youth Foundation \(EYF\)](#). The EYF fund was established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities.

Within the framework agreement between the European Union and Council of Europe, Norway takes part in the [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy \(EKCYP\)](#) which is an on-line database intended to provide the youth sector with a single access point to reliable knowledge and information about young people's situation across Europe. EKCYP aims at enhancing knowledge transfers between the fields of research, policy and practice through the collection and dissemination of information about youth policy, research and practice in Europe and beyond.

Linked to EKCYP is a [network of national correspondents](#), who are youth policy specialists responsible for collecting national data.

## 1.9 Current debates and reforms

### Forthcoming policy developments

Across the Government's key focus areas for children and youth described in section [1.4 Youth policy decision-making](#) recent policy developments across ministries include:



## Family and community

In 2020 a new collaborative strategy for children and young people growing up in low-income families was released "Equal opportunities growing up" [[Like muligheter i oppveksten](#)]. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs led the work in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization. An advisory youth panel was set up to provide insights and proposed measures for the strategy.

## School and working life

A committee was set up in 2017 to assess the strengths and weaknesses of higher education as well as propose changes in its structure, organization, and professional composition. This resulted in two Official Norwegian Reports; [NOU 2018: 15](#) assessing whether upper secondary education has the structure and content to ensure that as many as possible complete upper secondary education. The second report [NOU 2019: 25](#) considered various models for upper secondary education and proposes concrete changes in structure and subject composition. Another committee was appointed in 2017 to look at the regulations for primary and secondary education. [NOU 2019: 23](#) proposes a new Education Act, which is intended to replace today's Education Act. The committee also proposes principles for regulatory governance. The reports form the basis for ongoing public consultations and consideration by the Government and Parliament. A third [committee](#) that was set up in 2017 to provide an evidence-based assessment of Norway's future skill needs. This assessment will form the basis for planning and strategic decision making of both authorities and in the labour market, regionally and nationally. The committee work until 2020 has been to assess national and international research. A total of three reports have been submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research; [NOU 2018: 2](#), [NOU 2019: 2](#) and [NOU 2020: 2](#). The Committee will continue from 2020 to 2026 but will no longer produce Official Norwegian Reports. It has the following task for the next six years:

- Analyse and assess the available knowledge base and give the best possible evidence-based analysis and assessment of society's future skill needs, including the education system's ability to cover these needs.
- Provide an analysis and assessment of the future skill needs both for the short, medium, and long term.
- Facilitate and stimulate open dialogue and discussion about society's skill needs with different stakeholders and society more generally. The Committee is to highlight the input from the social partners.
- Produce at least one report every second year with analysis and assessment of Norway's future skill needs, nationally and regionally. The Committee may on its own initiative raise issues that concern skill needs in separate reports, articles, or other documents.
- The Committee's work and products should be made relevant to the development of skill policies by national and regional authorities, including planning in the education sector.

For more on youth policy related to education and training see YouthWiki chapter 6. Education and Training.

## Health and welfare

The [Government's strategy on young people's health 2016 – 2021](#) covers the age group 13–25 years and sets out several goals related to mental health, healthy lifestyles and sexual health among youth. The governments [Sexual Health Strategy \(2017-2020\)](#) includes activities for increasing young people's knowledge and skills to safeguard their own sexual health. The Government has also initiated a drug reform process with the goal

of transferring responsibility for society's response to the use and possession of illegal drugs for personal use from the justice sector to the health sector. For more on youth policy related to health and well-being see YouthWiki chapter [7. Health and Well-Being](#).

The Government has initiated a collaborative effort between municipalities, the voluntary sector, and top-level authorities to ensure that all children and youth, regardless of their parents' social and financial situation, can participate regularly in recreational activities. In addition, the Government has initiated a 'Recreation Card' trial, with the aim of giving children and young people 6 to 18 years the opportunity to participate in organised leisure time/recreational activities regardless of economic resources. The aim is to develop a national universal scheme.

### Culture and leisure

The Government is developing a White Paper on children and youth culture. For more on youth policy related to creativity and culture see YouthWiki chapter [8. Creativity and Culture](#).

**Equality and social inclusion** is central to Norwegian youth policy. This involves equitable access to services so that no one experiences discrimination and exclusion. Recent policy developments include:

- The Government's [strategy for the equality of persons with disabilities for the period 2020–2030](#) and the Government's [Action Plan for Universal Design](#).
- The [Government's action plan against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression 2017-2020](#).
- Two Official Norwegian Reports on gender and young people that were released during 2019; one describes gender differences in school performance and educational attainment, another overall gender equality challenges among children and young people. The reports propose various measures to address identified issues. The reports form the basis for ongoing public consultations and consideration by the Government and Parliament.
- The [Action Plan to Combat Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation 2017-2020](#) includes operational measures to liberate children and young people in Norway from negative social control and various forms of coercion.
- In 2020, the Norwegian government launched the [Action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims \(2020-2023\)](#). The aim of the action plan is to prevent and deter racism and discrimination against Muslims and persons believed to be Muslims.

For more on social inclusion see YouthWiki chapter [4. Social Inclusion](#).

## 2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

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### Introduction

Volunteer organizations and different forms of volunteer work have long been a part of Norwegian culture and society. The volunteer sector is seen as one of three crucial contributors to the rise of the modern welfare state in Norway post WW2 (the other two being the social-democratic state and the commercial/industry).

Volunteering lies at the heart of sports, outdoor recreational activities [friluftsliv], and activities in culture and the arts for children and youth. Policy on youth volunteering will be found in several sectors in Norway.

## 2.1 General context

### Historical developments

In Norway the first, and perhaps the largest, voluntary policy initiatives came in the 1830s and 1840s when formal barriers to organizational formation were removed. From the mid-1800s, there was a significant growth in social movements in both rural and urban areas.

The expansion of the welfare state following WW2 into fields that had previously been run by voluntary organizations included areas such as health and social work, culture, sports, and recreation. However, this did not result in the diminishment of the voluntary sector, and the number of voluntary organisations continued to increase. During the 1960s there was a growth in children's and youth organizations, particularly within culture, recreation and sports.

Public policy has and continues to emphasise the role of the state, counties and municipalities in facilitating the independent and self-contained work of voluntary organizations.

### Main concepts

White Paper No. 10 (2018 – 2019) [[Frivilligheita - sterk, sjølvstendig, mangfaldig - Den statlege frivilligheitspolitikken](#)] which defines Government policy for the voluntary sector describes the sector as fulfilling an important role distinct from the public or for-profit sectors by:

- Consisting of organizations and activities that are created and developed by the participants themselves.
- Representing an innovating force in the provision of vital social services, often based on values and public profiles distinct from the public or for-profit sectors.
- Providing the infrastructure for the development of a vibrant civil society.

There is no formal definition of the voluntary sector or voluntary activities. Nevertheless, the state has been instrumental in defining the sector through:

- The Act governing the Public Registry for Voluntary Activity [[Lov 29. juni 2007 nr. 88 om register for frivillig virksomhet \(frivillighetsregisterloven\)](#)], which defines non-profit activity as voluntary activity.
- The [satellite account for non-profit institutions](#), produced by Statistics Norway, which provides an overview of the sector and shows the organizations' contribution to the gross domestic product, how their activities are funded and the value of volunteer work.
- National grant schemes that delineate target groups and objectives.

## 2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

### Governance

Voluntary engagement has a central place in the Government's policy platform and is an integral component of almost all policy areas. Furthermore, it has issued a letter of intent on interaction with the voluntary sector [[Frivillighetserklæringen](#)].

Voluntary organizations are supported through [state grant schemes](#) which are administered through the relevant ministry according to sector, or on behalf of the relevant ministry by underlying government agencies or civil society organizations. The [Ministry of Culture](#) has published a cross-ministerial guide [[Veileder: Forenkling av statlige tilskuddsordninger for frivillige organisasjoner](#)] to make it easy for voluntary organizations to apply for and report on state grants. The [Ministry of Children and Families](#) provides

basic support to voluntary youth organizations. Grants to youth organizations are administered by the Grant Allocation Committee, whose secretariat is at the [Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs](#). The grants are regulated by the Regulations concerning grants to voluntary youth organizations of 29 November 2007, amended on 15 September 2009.

Most municipalities and counties have funds to which local volunteer organizations, foundations, ad-hoc groups and individuals can apply for funding.

The value added tax compensation scheme [[momskompensasjon for frivillige organisasjoner](#)] aims to promote voluntary activities. The scheme is intended to compensate for costs that voluntary organizations incur for VAT when purchasing goods and services.

There is a Public Registry for Voluntary Activity [[Frivillighetsregisteret](#)] established by law [[Lov 29. juni 2007 nr. 88 om register for frivillig virksomhet \(frivillighetsregisterloven\)](#)]

The purpose of the registry is to

- Strengthen the knowledge base regarding the voluntary sector in Norway.
- Simplify the dialogue between voluntary organizations and the government.
- Lay the foundation for policy development.

Organizations, foundations, or actors who receive funding from the National Lottery [Norsk Tipping] are obliged to register with the Public Registry for Voluntary Activity. Organizations, foundations, or actors who register may also apply for VAT deduction through the value added tax compensation scheme.

### Main actors

The [Ministry of Culture](#) is responsible for policy related to the voluntary sector. The [Ministry of Children and Families](#) is responsible for youth policy areas and youth organizations.

The main non-public actors taking part in the development of policies that have a bearing on youth volunteering are:

- The association of NGOs in Norway [[Frivillighet Norge](#)] which is an umbrella organization for more than 300 member organizations that together have more than 50,000 local branches throughout Norway. Many of the member organizations are youth organizations. The mission of the Association is to coordinate the voluntary sector's dialogue with the authorities on issues that are common to the voluntary sector, and to voice the voluntary sector's opinions to the public and the authorities. Another important task is to produce information and give advice to the member organizations.
- The Norwegian Children and Youth Council [[Landsrådet for Noregs barne- og ungdomsorganisasjoner \(LNU\)](#)] is an umbrella organization representing just under one hundred Norwegian children and youth organizations. As mentioned earlier in this chapter the organization administers the project support scheme [Mangfold og inkludering](#) [Diversity and Inclusion] on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Families.
- The Norwegian association of youth with disabilities [[Unge Funksjonshemmede](#)] is an umbrella organization representing 37 organizations for children and youth with disabilities or chronic disease.

The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities [KS – [Kommunenes sentralforbund](#)] and the Association of NGOs in Norway [[Frivillighet Norge](#)] have signed a joint platform defining principles and actions to strengthen the relationship between the public and voluntary sectors in Norway. Local organizations, municipalities and county municipalities are encouraged to establish similar collaborative platforms at the local level.

Volunteer centres [[Frivillighetssentraler](#)] are local meeting places that link individuals and organizations together to create a good voluntary environment and activities. This is done

in collaboration with local public authorities. There are currently 463 volunteer centres in operation in Norway, distributed among 307 municipalities. The volunteer centres have received operating grants through the national budget but as of 2017, the responsibility for allocating funds to the volunteer centres has been transferred from state to municipality.

### **Cross-sectoral cooperation**

The letter of intent on interaction between the government and the voluntary sector [[Frivillighetserklæringen](#)] described earlier in this chapter sets the framework for dialogue and interaction with the voluntary sector, regardless of ministry, directorate or agency, and shall contribute to a comprehensive and cross-sectoral volunteer policy.

## **2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering**

### **Existence of a National Strategy**

In Norway, there is no national strategy for youth volunteering.

### **Scope and contents**

Not applicable.

### **Responsible authority**

Not applicable

### **Revisions/ Updates**

Not applicable

## **2.4 Youth volunteering at national level**

### **National Programme for Youth Volunteering**

Norway has no national programme for youth volunteering.

### **Funding**

Not applicable as Norway has no national programme for youth volunteering.

### **Characteristics of youth volunteering**

Youth organisations were the fastest growing subgroup of volunteer organizations up until 1980. This period of growth was followed by two major declines in youth organization memberships, the first from 1982 to 1986, and the second from 1990 to 1998. The decline of membership subsequently stabilized in the 2000s, with a slight increase from 2000 to 2009, and then stabilized again.

[Ungdata](#), a cross national collection scheme designed to conduct youth surveys at the municipal level, and which is financed through the national budget, shows that most children and young people participate in various types of organized activities, including voluntary activities. Nine out of ten have participated in an organization, club or team after they turned ten.

### **Support to young volunteers**

Norway does not have a national programme to support young volunteers and there are no youth volunteering initiatives at national level. However, as described in section [2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering](#) the Government supports civil society organizations and youth organizations through several state grant schemes which are administered through the relevant ministry according to sector, or on behalf of the

relevant ministry by underlying government agencies or civil society organizations. In this way young volunteers are indirectly supported.

### **Quality Assurance (QA)**

There is no national quality assurance system available for evaluation of voluntary activities for young people.

Organisations that receive funding through the grant schemes described above have to report to the relevant ministry or underlying agency/civil society organisation administering the scheme. This may include annual progress reports and a final report with accounting figures, information on activities, and the outcomes of activities.

### **Target groups**

Not applicable, as there are no youth volunteering initiatives at national level. However, as described in section [2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering](#) the Government supports civil society organizations and youth organizations through grant schemes. The Government seeks to facilitate breadth and diversity through these schemes. For example, some grants specifically emphasize that project funds must promote diversity, inclusion and participation.

## **2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes**

### **EU programmes**

[The European Solidarity Corps](#) replaced the European Voluntary Service (EVS) in 2018. Norway is not a Participating Country but takes part in certain actions under the programme as a Partner Country. Norwegian organisations can participate as partners in [Volunteering Projects](#), but cannot apply for funding. Norwegian organisations are required to find host organisations in the EU, Turkey, Iceland or Macedonia that are responsible for funding and reporting.

### **Other Programmes**

[NOREC – the Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation](#), an agency administratively subject to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and funded through the national budget, funds volunteer exchange projects. Some projects have a specific youth focus and are meant to contribute to contact and cooperation between a variety of youth-oriented organizations and institutions in Norway and in developing countries, based on reciprocity, equality and solidarity. Cooperating countries must be approved by OECD / DAC as recipients of Official Development Assistance. Specific target groups are identified in each project.

### **Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers**

VISAs and residency permits are regulated by chapter 2 and 3 of The Immigration Act [[Lov om utlendingers adgang til riket og deres opphold her \(utlendingsloven\)](#)].

Visitors from most countries outside of the Schengen area will have to apply for a VISA to work as a volunteer in Norway. The Norwegian Directorate for Immigration provides information about entry requirements and visas: <https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/>.

## **2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities**

### **Information providers**

Since there is no single public authority responsible for the voluntary sector, there is no single contact point or national website providing information on volunteering for young people.



The Association of NGOs in Norway [[Frivillighet Norge](#)] described in section [2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering](#) provides information about volunteering in general, including links to youth organizations. It also provides a toolkit for establishing and running voluntary organizations. The association publishes an annual survey [[Frivillighetsbarometeret](#)] which presents important key figures on participation and attitudes towards volunteering, with questions about local community volunteering and barriers to participation. The association has also created a website [frivillig.no](https://om.frivillig.no) to make it easier for people to become volunteers and easier for organizations to find volunteers. The site has a dedicated page for young volunteers: <https://om.frivillig.no/ung-frivillig>

The Volunteer centres [Frivillighetssentraler], also described in [section 2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering](#), raise awareness about local youth volunteering opportunities.

## Key initiatives

On 5. December 2019 Association of NGOs in Norway [[Frivillighet Norge](#)] marked International Volunteer Day by organizing a large scale conference, [Frivillighetens Dag](#), with support from the National Lottery [Norsk Tipping], the Ministry of Culture, Microsoft, Stiftelsen Dam and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities [[KS – Kommunenes sentralforbund](#)]. While the event does not focus specifically on youth volunteering, youth volunteering and youth volunteers were highlighted through the programme.

## 2.7 Skills recognition

### Policy Framework

Norway has no policy framework that defines and regulates the transferability and recognition of skills and competencies acquired through volunteering.

### Existing arrangements

Recognition of voluntary activities is closely linked to the recognition of the work of non-governmental organizations.

Norway participates in both Youthpass and Europass. Beyond this, Norway has no other arrangements or mechanisms contributing to the formal recognition of voluntary activities. Neither Europass or the Youthpass have been evaluated in Norway.

## 2.8 Current debates and reforms

White Paper No. 10 (2018 – 2019) [[Frivilligheita – sterk, sjølvstendig, mangfaldig – Den statlege frivillighetspolitikken](#)] defines national policy for the voluntary sector, including youth volunteering, and spells out four policy objectives:

- Expand participation: Anyone should be able to access and benefit from the voluntary sector, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, income, level of function or field of interest.
- A strong and independent sector: The Government will facilitate a strong and independent sector. This means, among other things, to strengthen grant schemes, make the criteria for allocation transparent and facilitate possibilities for volunteers to access funds from other sources, such as private individuals and businesses.
- Simplification: It should be easy to run a voluntary organization. It should be easy for volunteers to apply for, receive and report on public support. Effective management and digitization are among the tools to achieve simplification.
- A coordinated voluntary policy: The voluntary sector is diverse. Voluntary policy is a responsibility across sectors and ministries. Good coordination between sectors will contribute to achieving the other policy objectives. This also applies locally.

## 3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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### Introduction

Norway has a high level of employment, significantly due to the high employment rate among women. According to [Statistics Norway](#) the number of employed people in Norway has increased each year since the 1990s. Notable exceptions are the period after the financial crises in 2008 and the drop in the oil prices in 2014. During the period 2007-2017 the level of the employment rate (employed persons divided by the entire population in the same age group) has either decreased or been stable. However, since the beginning of the global Covid-19 pandemic employees in several sectors in Norway have been affected. This was especially the case for employees in the tourism, transportation, and services sectors. Due to the high number of lay-offs, registered unemployment has climbed to levels not seen in 75 years.

The Norwegian labour market model is characterized by tripartite cooperation at the national level between a strong trade union movement, centralised employers' associations, and the state. Trade unions and employers' organizations have played a decisive role in the evolution of the labour market. There is broad political consensus in Norway for this model.

The [Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) is the responsible authority and implementer the government's "youth effort" targeting job seekers under the age of 30 who, after eight weeks of unemployment, are not in work, education, or other activity.

### 3.1 General context

#### Labour market situation in Norway

The Norwegian labour market model is characterized by tripartite cooperation at the national level between a strong trade union movement, centralised employers' associations, and the state. The [Norwegian Working Environment Act](#) [Arbeidsmiljøloven] protects workers' rights while emphasising workers' obligations to participate in creating a sound working environment. A cooperative system of industrial relations became institutionalised in 1935 with the signing of the first 'Basic Agreement' by the employers' organisation Norsk Arbeidsgiverforening (N.A.F.) (today The [Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise](#), NHO) and Arbeidernes Faglige Landsorganisasjon (today The [Confederation of Norwegian Trade Unions](#), LO). This agreement has subsequently been part of all collective agreements between the parties. Wage setting is the domain of the bargaining parties, and no national statutory minimum wage exists. Trade unions and employers' organizations play a decisive role in the evolution of the labour market. There is broad political consensus in Norway for this model.

Norway has a high level of employment, significantly due to the high employment rate among women. According to [Statistics Norway](#) the number of employed people in Norway has increased each year since the 1990s. Notable exceptions are the period after the financial crises in 2008 and the drop in the oil prices in 2014. During the period 2007-2017 the level of the employment rate (employed persons divided by the entire population in the same age group) has either decreased or been stable. The employment rate began to increase again after 2017. According to the 2018 OECD report [Investing in Youth: Norway](#) recent trends and challenges for the youth population (15-29) are:

- the youth employment rate has declined by 7 ppts since its peak in 2008, reflecting rapid youth population growth because of high immigration
- the absolute number of young people in work has increased, but so has the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)



- the NEET rate in Norway is one of the lowest across OECD countries (9% vs. OECD average of 14%)
- 2/3 of NEETs are inactive and this share is growing; these young people are generally further from the labour market, and often not in touch with public services
- young people without an upper-secondary degree account for 56% of all NEETs in Norway, a much greater share than in the OECD on average (36%)
- those without an upper-secondary degree face a risk of being NEET that is seven times higher than for university graduates (numbers for 25-29 year olds)
- 6% of all young people receive incapacity benefits – this is three times the OECD average and more than in any other OECD country

Since the beginning of the corona crisis in Norway, employees in several sectors have been affected. This was especially the case for employees in the tourism, transportation, and services sectors. The Revised National Budget for 2020 indicates that due to the high number of lay-offs, registered unemployment has climbed to levels not seen in 75 years. Unemployment is forecast to rise from 2.2 percent in 2019 to 5.9 percent this year. The unemployment rate is estimated to increase from 2.2 percent in 2019 to 5.9 percent in 2020. By the end of 2021 the unemployment rate was 3.4 percent and it is expected to go back to normal during 2022.

## Main concepts

Social dialogue and tripartism are specific concepts describing the Norwegian labour market model. The 2019 report [Getting and staying together: 100 years of social dialogue and tripartism in Norway](#), financed by the ILO and the Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, examines the role of tripartism and social dialogue in Norway.

Information about unemployment in Norway is provided through two sources.

- The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) compiles statistics on unemployed persons at the Employment Offices. Government measures to promote employment are compiled by NAV based on registers of unemployed persons and applicants for work.
- Statistics Norway runs an annual survey – the [Labour Force Survey](#) (LFS) to provide data on employment and unemployment, and data on the labour force participation in different sections of the population. The figures on unemployment based on the LFS differ from the figures on unemployed persons registered at the Employment Offices because the LFS-figures also include unemployed persons not registered at the Employment Offices, some of the participants in government measures to promote employment and some of the disabled persons. On the other hand, some of the registered unemployed are not classified as unemployed in the LFS, based on the information given on seeking and availability for work. Concepts and definitions used in the LFS are in accordance with recommendations given by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and EU/Eurostat. Concepts describing employment status and aspects of work are described [LSF home page](#).

## 3.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

[The Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) is responsible for:

- Labour market policy
- Working environment and safety policy
- Pensions policy
- Welfare and social policy

The ministry is the main top-level governmental authority responsible for youth employment and entrepreneurship.

[The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) administers one third of the national budget through schemes such as unemployment benefits, work assessment allowances, pensions, sickness benefits, child benefits and cash-for-care benefits. The local authorities and central government cooperate to find good solutions for users through 456 NAV offices in municipalities and city boroughs. Each local authority and NAV agree on what local authority services their office should provide. The services provided by a NAV office will thus vary from local authority to local authority. The Directorate for Labour and Welfare [Arbeids- og velferdsdirektoratet] is the central government agency/directorate for NAV under the Ministry of Labour and Welfare. The directorate works on all the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service Administration's (NAV) policy areas, and runs nationwide support functions for NAV.

[The Labour Court of Norway](#) deals with disputes concerning the interpretation, validity and existence of collective agreements between employer's federations and a trade union federations concerning pay and working conditions, cases of breach of collective agreements and the peace obligation and cases of claims for damages arising from such breaches and unlawful industrial action. The Labour Court has territorial jurisdiction over the whole country and is the highest court in its domain.

[The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman](#) has its mandate and role stipulated under the Norwegian Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act. In addition, the Ombud can provide guidance on how to bring a case to the [Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal](#), which was established in 2018. The Tribunal is a complaints body and makes final, legally binding decisions on harassment and discrimination cases. It can also award compensation. Discrimination and harassment are prohibited pursuant to anti-discrimination regulations if they are on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or combinations of these factors. In an employment relationship, the prohibition also includes differential treatment based on political views and membership of a trade union (section 13-1 first paragraph of the Working Environment Act).

[Skills Norway](#) is an underlying agency of the Ministry of Education and research. The agency works in the following areas:

- adult learning opportunities
- competence development in Norwegian companies
- Norwegian training for immigrants
- free, quality-assured career guidance and education and employment information for young people and adults

The main non-public actors taking part in the development of policies in the field of youth employment and entrepreneurship include trade unions and employers' associations.

## Trade unions

[The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions \(LO\)](#) [Landsorganisasjonen i Norge] is the largest and most influential workers' organisation in Norway. LO has over 900 000 members through the 24 affiliate national unions. Approximately 130 000 of members are below the age of 30. [LO Ung](#) is a sub-division particularly catering to the members that are under the age of 30. LO Ung arranges campaigns, conferences, and information and support of interest to youth. LO has regional offices all over Norway, and at the Trade Union House (ITUH) in Brussels, Belgium.

[The Confederation of Unions for Professionals](#) [Unio] is Norway's second largest confederation with national affiliates and approximately 375 000 members. Its members

are almost exclusively employed in the public sector. Unio has a forum for [students](#) [Unio-studentene] for students belonging to one of the affiliates.

[The Confederation of Vocational Unions \(YS\)](#) [YS - Yrkesorganisasjonenes Sentralforbund] consists of 13 affiliated unions, with a total membership of over 226 000 persons. [YS Ung](#) is a sub-division particularly catering to the members that are under the age of 30. LO Ung arranges campaigns, conferences, and information and support of interest to youth.

[The Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations](#) [Akademikerne] is a confederation of professional organisations whose members have an extensive academic education. Professions include lawyers, engineers, psychologists, doctors, veterinary surgeons, social scientists, architects, business school graduates, economists, dentists and agronomists. The Federation of Norwegian Professional Associations has a separate membership category for students in training/in school.

In addition to the national unions affiliated with the four confederations, there are approximately 20 independent national unions. Most of these are fairly small and specialised, the largest and most important being the [Norwegian Society of Engineers and Technologists](#) [NITO] with more than 90 000 members.

### Employers' organisations

The [Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise \(Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon - NHO\)](#) is the only confederation in the private sector in Norway. NHO combines the role of an employers' association with that of a business and industrial interest organisation. Although the federations negotiate separately with their counterparts, NHO exerts a strong central authority over the federations in bargaining and the conclusion of collective agreements with LO and YS unions, and is party to all their collective agreements. The primary objective of NHO is to simplify the contents of collective agreements and labour law and to decentralise wage formation. This objective is shared with other employers' associations.

[Virke, the Enterprise Federation of Norway](#) is the primary employer partner within trade and private services and consists primarily of smaller firms, with more than 23 000 businesses with more than 250 000 employees. The federation represents, among other businesses, industries such as trade, knowledge, technology, travel, service, health, care, education, culture and voluntary work.

[Spekter](#) was originally called the Association of Public Owned Enterprises (NAVO) and was founded in 1993 to meet the needs of semi-autonomous state enterprises. The members of the association are primarily primarily companies within the health sector, culture and transport/infrastructure.

[The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities](#) (Kommunenenes Sentralforbund – KS) is the organisation for all local governments in Norway. KS is Norway's largest public employer organisation. All municipalities and county councils (with the exception of Oslo) have authorised KS to negotiate and enter agreements with employee organisations on salaries and other conditions. KS is a key negotiating partner in workplace matters and ensures that the members individually do not have to negotiate with more than 40 employee organisations. In total, KS covers about 440,000 employees in over 100 different professional groups.

The [Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation](#) is responsible for government employer policy. The Department of Employer Policy manages and develops laws and regulations, agreements, administrative provisions, general conditions etc for the government's personnel and employer policy. This responsibility includes drawing up the framework for the execution and development of the function as employer in state entities.

### Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is no specific mechanism for cooperation on matters of youth employment and entrepreneurship policy. Youth policy themes are expressed through various policy

documents that target different aspects of young people's lives across sectors as well as through relevant draft resolutions and bills that form the basis for the Parliament's consideration. General mechanisms which may be used to raise cross-sectoral aspects related to youth employment and entrepreneurship include parliamentary standing committees related to labour and social affairs, education, business and industry, or government appointed working groups or committees.

The [Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy 2017 – 2020](#), developed by the Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, the Sami Parliament and the main social partners, is a binding agreement between the government, both sides of industry, the voluntary sector and the Sami Parliament. The strategy sets the goals and approaches for work on the skills policy from 2017 to 2021. It has three main focus areas:

- Good choices for individuals and for society
- On-the-job learning and putting skills to good use
- Strengthening the skills of adults with weak affiliation to the world of employment.

Cooperation between the strategy partners will continue through the establishment of a Skills Policy Council that will meet regularly during the strategy period. The council will follow up on the strategy, and discuss deliveries from the Future Skills Needs Committee, as well as other relevant issues. The strategy partners will report on their follow-up activities to the Skills Policy Council.

### 3.3 Skills forecasting

#### Forecasting system(s)

Statistics Norway has an ongoing project for [modelling and projection of supply and demand for labour after education](#). The aim is to project supply and demand for different types of educational directions and levels. This is done by combining the macro-econometric model [MODAG](#) with the job offer model [MOSART](#).

[The Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education \(NIFU\)](#) [Nordisk institutt for studier av innovasjon, forskning og utdanning] conducts surveys among graduates from universities and colleges for their adaptation in the labour market [[Kandidatundersøkelsen](#)]. It involves, among other things scope of employment, unemployment, where the candidates are working and what kind of career they have and what they earn. In recent years Kandidatundersøkelsen has included questions relating to quality of education and relevance.

[NHO's Skills Barometer/Competency Barometer](#) [Kompetansebarometer] is a survey undertaken by The Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) for The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon - NHO). The survey is distributed to all the members of NHO.

[Norwegian Committee on Skill Needs](#) [Kompetansebehovsutvalget] was set up by the Government in 2017 to provide an evidence-based assessment of Norway's future skill needs. This assessment will form the basis for planning and strategic decision making of both authorities and in the labour market, regionally and nationally. The committees work until 2020 has been to assess national and international research. A total of three reports have been submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research; [NOU 2018: 2](#), [NOU 2019: 2](#) and [NOU 2020: 2](#). The Committee will continue from 2020 to 2026 but will no longer produce Official Norwegian Reports but will:

- Analyse and assess the available knowledge base and give the best possible evidence-based analysis and assessment of society's future skill needs, including the education system's ability to cover these needs.

- Provide an analysis and assessment of the future skill needs both for the short, medium, and long term.
- Facilitate and stimulate open dialogue and discussion about society's skill needs with different stakeholders and society more generally. The Committee is to highlight the input from the social partners.
- Produce at least one report every second year with analysis and assessment of Norway's future skill needs, nationally and regionally. The Committee may on its own initiative raise issues that concern skill needs in separate reports, articles, or other documents.
- The Committee's work and products should be made relevant to the development of skill policies by national and regional authorities, including planning in the education sector.

Another committee was also set up in 2017 to assess the strengths and weaknesses of higher education as well as propose changes in its structure, organization, and professional composition in order to help students qualify for further education, working life and active community participation. This resulted in two Official Norwegian Reports; [NOU 2018: 15](#) assessing whether upper secondary education has the structure and content to ensure that as many as possible complete upper secondary education. The second report [NOU 2019: 25](#) considered various models for upper secondary education and proposes concrete changes in structure and subject composition.

## Skills development

[The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education](#) [NOKUT] is an independent expert body under the Ministry of Education and Research. The purpose of NOKUT is to ensure and promote quality in Norwegian higher education and higher vocational education, to approve and inform about foreign education and to inform about the possibilities for approval of foreign education and skills/competence in Norway. NOKUT administers regulations and exercises authority by accrediting and supervising Norwegian education and approving foreign education. The agency also generates, compiles, analyses, and disseminates knowledge about the state of quality in Norwegian education. NOKUT also works to ensure that foreign education and competence can be effectively used in Norway.

[Skills Norway](#), an underlying directorate of the Ministry of Education and Research, works to ensure that adults, whether in work or not, have access to the skills training they need. The directorate reviews the evidence base and submits recommendations to government authorities and other parties to bring about skills policy development. Skills Norway is also involved in international cooperation and is the current national coordinator for the European Agenda for adult learning. Skills Norway also acts as the secretariat for the national council for tertiary vocational education [Nasjonalt fagskoleråd] and has a coordinating role for the Nordic Network for Adult Learning [Nordisk Nätverk för Vuxnas Lärande, NVL].

[Utdanning.no](#) is the official Norwegian national education and career portal. It includes an overview of educations in Norway and about 600 career descriptions. Both education and career information have been developed in close collaboration with relevant institutions, such as study providers and professional bodies. Utdanning.no also contains interviews with professionals and students, study descriptions and articles which have been designed to help prospective students select education and career.

[Veilederforum.no](#) is a part of the utdanning.no site, but particularly catered to career counsellors. The forum offers information, training opportunities, research and statistics, possibilities to network, tools and new approaches to coaching and guidance.

Both websites are run by [the Norwegian Directorate for Education](#) under [the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research](#).

[Arbeidslivet.no](https://arbeidslivet.no) is a web-based knowledge portal about working life, headed by the Institute For Labour and Social Research [FAFO], to provide simple, basic background information about current issues in Norwegian working life and society for trade union representatives and members.

## 3.4 Career guidance and counselling

### Career guidance and counselling services

In 2020 the [Parliament passed an amendment to the Education Act](#) that gives the counties a statutory duty to provide career guidance. This is a follow-up to the [Norwegian Official Report 2016: 7 Career guidance for individuals and communities](#) which recommended that career centres with sufficient capacity should be established in all counties. The [public career centres](#) offer free career guidance and job search assistance to anyone over the age of 19.

[Skills Norway](#) coordinates the career guidance field in Norway through the [National Unit for Lifelong Guidance](#). The main objective of the Unit is to improve the quality in career guidance and to promote equal access to career guidance services for young people and adults in all life stages. Skills Norway is developing an online career guidance. The service is being developed on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research and will be launched in the autumn of 2020.

#### Career guidance and counselling services specifically for young people

According to the [Education Act](#) § 9-5 and § 22- 3 pupils in upper secondary school have the right to educational and vocational counselling through advice and information on:

- choice of profession and education
- education tracks
- occupational areas and the labour market
- guidance tools, application deadlines, entry conditions and funding schemes
- job search and application procedures

The law also stipulates (§ 3-6 and § 13- 3) that youth up to the age of 21 who are not in education or work should receive individual follow-up and supervision. The county is responsible for establishing the follow-up services and establishing contact with individual youth in the target group.

#### Youth guarantee

Norway has no public Youth Guarantee scheme equivalent to [the one described in the European employment strategy](#). Yet, the [Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) is the responsible authority and implementer (at the county level) of a more narrowly defined youth guarantee in Norway. From 2017 a new “youth effort” was introduced, replacing three existing guarantee schemes for young people without a job and education. The “youth effort” provides a job-oriented offer to job seekers under the age of 30 who, after eight weeks of unemployment, are not in work, education, or other activity. The effort is aimed at motivating young people to seek employment, increase their job search skills and to quickly get unemployed young people into work, education, or other activities.

#### Online information and guidance

NAV has a dedicated [online platform for youth](#) with information about rights and available services for young jobseekers.



[Ung.no](https://ung.no), a public information website administered by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs for young people aged 13 – 20 provides information and guidance about opportunities, rights and obligations related to the labour market.

## Funding

The county careers centres are funded from various sources and this may differ among the counties. The [National Unit for Lifelong Guidance](#) has on behalf of the Ministry of Education and research managed a state grant for career guidance partnerships. A good portion of these funds have been used to finance career centres. In addition, the counties themselves, NAV and municipalities contribute with financing or other resources. Some centres receive project funding as well.

More than NOK 60 million was allocated in 2017 for nationwide strengthening NAV's capacity to conduct enhanced follow-up of young people through the "youth effort". The funds came in addition to what the Ministry of Labour and Welfare already spends on this priority group. NOK 70 million was allocated for the same purpose in 2018 and the "youth effort" as a core priority has been continued in consecutive years.

## Quality assurance

[Skills Norway](#) through the [National Unit for Lifelong Guidance](#) is responsible for quality development and quality assurance in the career guidance field in Norway.

The [Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) is responsible for the implementation of the national "youth effort" and reports to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The Ministry of Education and Research oversees the Education Act. The Directorate of Education has developed [recommendations](#) for counties, municipalities and private schools regarding the formal education, knowledge, attitudes and skills a career counsellor should have.

## 3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

### Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are organised through the formal upper secondary education system in Norway. Vocational education and training (VET) programmes usually entail two years of education in an upper secondary school followed by two years of apprenticeship training and productive work in a training enterprise or public institution. The upper secondary schools are responsible for the first two years of education and training, while the enterprises are responsible for the final two years. The apprenticeship period gives the apprentice an opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge in a vocational field and prepare for the trade or journeyman's test. The two-year apprenticeship is formalised through a signed contract between the apprentice and the training enterprise. The county authorities have an overarching responsibility for all aspects of public upper secondary education and training, including apprenticeship training. Thus, the apprenticeship contract must be approved by the county authorities.

The Education Act provides the regulatory framework for apprenticeship. Chapter [4. Upper secondary education and training in enterprises](#) defines the terms apprentice, candidate for certificate of practice, training candidate and candidate for trade certificate at work. The act spells out the rights and obligations of apprentices and the other categories of candidates as well as the rights and obligations of training establishments. It also describes the county authority's duties concerning vocational education and training.

Many companies and public enterprises offer traineeships or traineeship programmes targeting young professionals with a college or university degree and with limited working experience. Traineeship programmes usually last for 12 months, include rotation within the company and guarantees full time employment in a junior management position at

the end of the program. There is no regulatory framework relating specifically to trainees, but [the Work Environment Act](#) applies equally to people in trainee positions. As salaries are not regulated by the Work Environment Act pay may therefore vary significantly for trainees.

### Social security coverage

All persons who are either residents or working as employees in Norway are entitled to essential medical and care services, and are compulsorily insured under the National Insurance Scheme. Persons insured under the National Insurance Scheme are entitled to old-age pension, survivors' pension, disability benefit, basic benefit and attendance benefit in case of disablement, technical aids etc., work assessment allowance, occupational injury benefits, benefits to single parents, cash benefits in case of sickness, maternity, adoption and unemployment, medical benefits in case of sickness and maternity and funeral grant.

### Cooperation with social partners

Social partner representatives from business, industry and the public sector hold most of the seats in all advisory bodies in the decision-making system for upper secondary vocational education and training. The social partners have been actively involved in the development of the a new structure of available courses and apprenticeships which is in force from the school year 2020/21 and also in the development of renewed [vocational education and training](#) curricula for all trades and crafts in accordance with labour market needs.

## Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

The Government has launched the VET Promotion initiative with three main goals: closer cooperation between schools and businesses, greater flexibility in vocational education and training, and better and more relevant courses. The apprenticeship promotion initiative is designed to help enterprises seeking to become training establishments and make new companies aware of the advantages of having apprenticeship programmes. The initiative's website provides information about, among other things, how to become an approved training establishment. The apprenticeship promotion initiative has been developed in cooperation between the education authorities and employers' and employees' organisations.

As part of the initiative to provide more opportunities for young people to earn their trade or journeyman's certificate, the Government has drawn up a [strategy](#) to increase the number of apprentices in the government administration. The strategy also includes measures to increase awareness in the public sector about the valuable resource apprentices represent, as well as measures to make it easier to provide apprentices with high-quality training. The Government also requires companies to have an apprenticeship programme to be eligible to win contracts for major public procurements.

## Recognition of learning outcomes

The county authority issues trade and journeyman's certificates and certificates of practice on the grounds of passed examinations, and vocational training certificates based on completed training. The county authority approves the practical experience of candidates registering for the trade or journeyman's examination without an apprenticeship period.

National validation arrangements make use of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) exclusively for cross-border mobility, both when sending students and apprentices, and when receiving students and apprentices in vocational and vocational training.

Recognition of foreign vocational education and training includes an assessment of vocational content. [NOKUT](#) (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) assesses vocational education and training and compares it in scope, level and vocational content with a Norwegian craft or journeyman's certificate. Recognition of vocational



education and training means that the qualification is comparable with a Norwegian craft or journeyman's certificate. Recognition is voluntary and intended to assist persons with foreign vocational education and training in the Norwegian job market.

There is no formal recognition of traineeships or participation in traineeship programmes.

## Funding

The counties are responsible for funding according to guidelines and rates set by the Ministry, in pursuance of regulations set by the Education Act (section 11-4). The counties provide regular basic grants to companies that take apprentices, candidates for certificate of practice, training candidates and candidates for trade certificate at work. The rates are adjusted annually and announced by the [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#).

## Quality assurance

The [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#) provides a common knowledge base, tools, procedures and goals for key actors on different levels in the education system. [The School Portal](#) is a web-based portal which provides relevant and reliable information for use in local quality assessment activities, in accordance with section 13-10 of the Norwegian Education Act and the regulations relating to activity-based assessment. The portal is a key part of the national quality assessment system. It provides [data](#) relating to the fields of learning dividends, learning environment and completion rates for vocational education and training.

There is no system of quality assurance relating to traineeships or traineeship programmes.

# 3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market

## Youth employment measures

The [Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) administers a third of the national budget through schemes such as unemployment benefit, work assessment allowance, sickness benefit, pensions, child benefit and cash-for-care benefit. The local authorities and central government cooperate through 456 NAV offices in municipalities and city boroughs. Each local authority and NAV agree on what local authority services their office should provide. The services provided by a NAV office will vary from local authority to local authority.

In addition to administering important economic welfare schemes, NAV contributes to the efficient operation of the labour market. NAV is required by law to provide jobseekers with advice and help, whether they are already unemployed or are merely seeking to change employment. The following statutes form the basis for NAV's activities:

- The Labour and Welfare Administration Act [Lov om arbeids- og velferdsforvaltningen] – spells out the purpose of NAV, its organisational provisions, and its interaction with the individual local authority. The Act lays down important principles of confidentiality, consumer involvement, and its duty to provide information and guidance to the individual user.
- The National Insurance Act [Folketrygdloven] – provides for the central national insurance and welfare schemes in Norway.
- The Labour Market Act [Arbeidsmarkedsloven] - imposes duties on employers in connection with job vacancies that the employer seeks to fill, and rules governing mass redundancies and lay-offs. The Act stipulates the basic services and rights for users of local NAV services. In addition, the Act regulates employment agencies and hiring of labour.

- The Social Welfare Act [Sosialtjenesteloven] - governs the responsibilities of each local authority in respect of several social welfare services provided to the municipality's inhabitants.

The municipalities and local NAV offices have a central role in implementing preventive measures, coordination and providing comprehensive local services for youth. This responsibility was reinforced in an addition to the Social Welfare Act in 2010 emphasising the NAV offices' mandate for children and young people; the law is intended to ensure that vulnerable children and young people and their families receive comprehensive and coordinated services.

In 2017 the government initiated a joint effort for young people (the "youth effort") to replace three existing guarantee schemes for young people without work and education (one for those under 20 years, one for the group 20-24 years, and one for those between 20-29 years with reduced working capacity). NAV is the responsible authority and implementer. The "youth effort" provides a job-oriented offer to job seekers under the age of 30 who, after eight weeks of unemployment, are not in work, education, or other activity. Local NAV offices have the freedom to choose appropriate measures to quickly get unemployed young people under 30 into work, education, or other activities.

Work training is one of several work-oriented measures in NAV and is the most common measure used with young people under 30. This involves training to persons with little or no work experience, or with impaired or reduced work capability who need help finding a job. Work training involves training for up to one year in tasks that are typical for the general labour market. An agreement will be drawn up and signed by the participant, by the employer and by NAV. The agreement will state the goals of the work training, explain the training and what it entails and lay out a training plan to be used for the duration of placement. A participant of the work training scheme is defined as an ordinary employee at the business or organization at which he or she is placed.

Another measure is the time-limited wage subsidy scheme for employers to employ individuals on ordinary pay and on ordinary terms and conditions of work. The wage subsidy compensates for lower productivity. NAV and the employer enter into an agreement determining the duration, the conditions of employment, and the need for special follow-up.

There are special programmes for immigrants such as the "introduction programme for foreign speakers" and "courses in Norwegian with a view to work". In cooperation with the local authorities, there is for example an introduction scheme for newly arrived immigrants.

In accordance with the Education Act young people who are entitled to upper secondary education and training up to and including the year they turn 21 should receive follow-up services. The follow-up service helps by mediating offers of educational or training options, jobs or other forms of employment. The education or training should, as far as possible, lead to [university admissions certification](#), [vocational competence](#) or [basic competence](#).

The counties are responsible for establishing the follow-up services and to contact individuals who:

- have not applied for upper secondary education
- have not accepted a placement at a school or in-service training establishment
- have interrupted their education/training before it was finished
- do not have a regular job
- have lost their entitlement to education and training as the result of being expelled for the remainder of the school year or abrogation of an apprenticeship/ training contract

## Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

Apart from the employment measures described in the previous section, such as the wage subsidy scheme, which are part of the overall [employment schemes provided by NAV](#) there are no specific flexible employment schemes for young people only. Young job seekers may have the right receive unemployment benefits while actively applying for jobs.

[Financial assistance](#) from NAV is intended to secure a person's income on a temporary basis to cover his or her basic subsistence costs. All other options must be considered first. NAV makes a specific and individual assessment of assistance needs. To receive financial assistance individuals must

- have legal residence in Norway
- be unable to support themselves through gainful employment, with savings or with the aid of other financial right

The [Qualification Programme](#) offers training and vocational training to those who have been receiving financial assistance for a long time or are at risk of ending up in this situation. The programme is full-time and includes

- work-oriented activities
- education and training activities
- close individual follow-up and guidance

The programme may also include other activities that support and prepare individuals for the transition to working life. Time may also be set aside for necessary medical treatment.

## Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

NAV provides a number of [family related benefits](#) that support people to balance work and family responsibilities, and which promote gender equality in the labour market. These include:

- Pregnancy, birth, and adoption benefits
- Child and cash benefits
- Benefits for single mothers or fathers
- Child support/advance payments of child support

These measures are not specific for young people.

## Funding of schemes/initiatives

A third of the national budget covers the various schemes administered by NAV. The state and the municipalities have joint responsibility for the operation of NAV offices and shall ensure coordinated services. NAV employs around 19,000 people. Of these around 14,000 are employed by the central government, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service, and around 5,000 are employed by the local authorities.

## Quality assurance

The Directorate of Labour and Welfare, under the authority of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, is responsible for translating political guidelines into practical action and to ensure that NAV achieves annual and long-term goals.

NAV's [annual reports](#) include descriptions of goal attainment and the agency's accounts.

## 3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

### Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

[EURES](#) is a cooperation between the European Commission, the EU/EEA countries and Switzerland. The cooperation is designed to promote the free movement of workers within the EU/EEA and Switzerland. In Norway, EURES is an integrated service within the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV).

[The Service Centre for Foreign Workers \(SUA\)](#) helps foreigners who come to Norway to work. The following can receive assistance from SUA:

- EU/EEA nationals who come to work in Norway, and their family members.
- Non-EU/EEA nationals who are applying for a residence permit to work in Norway, and their family members.
- Employers of the above

SUA is a cooperative effort between [the Labour Inspection Authority](#), [the police](#), the [Norwegian Tax Administration](#) and [the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration](#).

[Workinnorway.no](#) is a resource and information site for those who need advice and information on applying for jobs, working life, and relocation to Norway. The guide includes links to official websites that provide useful information before arrival, in addition to the time during the initial period at work. The website also applies to Norwegian employers wanting to recruit foreign workers to Norway and to foreign companies who want to sell their services in Norway.

[Eurodesk Norway](#) offers a range of services to facilitate access to European information (education, work, scholarships, financing, volunteering etc)– such as free enquiry answering, help and guidance by telephone, e-mail or in person, summaries of European programmes, publications on print and web sites, disseminating mobility information on events, seminars and youth meetings. Eurodesk is run by [the Norwegian Erasmus+ Youth in Action office](#) at [the Norwegian Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs](#).

[Nordjobb.org](#) is a Nordic initiative to increase cross-border work mobility in the Nordic Region, particularly to youth between the ages of 18 and 30. The Nordic exchange programme offers summer jobs in the Nordic countries. Nordjobb also provides its applicants with accommodation and organizes culture- and leisure activities.

### Legal framework

The [Immigration Act](#) provides the legal framework for foreign nationals who wish to work in Norway. Unless otherwise provided by legislation currently in force, foreign nationals have the same rights and obligations as Norwegian nationals during their lawful stay in Norway. Everyone who works in Norway must have a tax deduction card and a [Norwegian identification number](#).

The EU/EEA regulations give all EU/EEA nationals and their family members the right to live, work and study in Norway. The EU/EEA regulations are a part of the collaboration between Norway and the EU through the EEA agreement. The regulations that apply to EU/EEA nationals are regulated through EU Directive 2004/38/EC of 29 April 2004 which is incorporated into the Immigration Act chapter 13. Citizens of an EU/EEA country do not need a residence permit to work in Norway and can stay in Norway for up to six months while searching for a job. The EU/EEA national must register with the police as a job seeker within three months after arrival in Norway.

Foreign nationals from countries outside the EU/EEA who wish to work in Norway need to apply for a residence permit as a skilled worker, ethnic cook, seasonal worker, self-employed person or employee in a humanitarian, non-profit or religious organisation. It is also possible to apply for a residence permit to attend a working holiday for young adults,

as a working guest in agriculture, or as an artist, musician, or performer. To apply for a residence permit, foreign nationals must receive a job offer from an employer in Norway. In some exceptional cases skilled workers may be granted a residence permit to stay in Norway while looking for work.

There are different types of residence permits for foreign nationals from countries outside the EU/EEA who wish to [carry out research or participate in vocational training](#). Young people between the ages 18 and 30 can apply for a visa to be an intern while studying for a Bachelor's or Master's degree. It is possible to get a residence permit as an intern for up to six months. In some circumstances it is possible to get a residence permit for up to 12 months. It is not possible to renew a residence permit as an intern.

## 3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

### Policy framework

The most recent policy framework describing the development of entrepreneurship competence and of an entrepreneurial mind-set among young people is presented in [Entrepreneurship in Education and Training – from compulsory school to higher education 2009–2014](#). The main objective of the action plan was to “strengthen the quality of and the scope of entrepreneurship education and training at all levels and areas of the education system. Internationally Norway shall be a leading force when it comes to entrepreneurship in education and training”. The plan emphasised that entrepreneurship in education and training must comply with the overarching fundamental principle in Norwegian educational policy; that it must be given broad priority and made available for everyone, adapted to the individual's abilities and needs. It also emphasised the involvement and collaboration of several actors, including:

- Private actors: business and industry, and commercial and industrial organisations
- Organisations: pupil and student organisations, the social partners, Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise Norway (JA-YE Norway), STARTNorway and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
- Public actors: Innovation Norway, the Research Council of Norway, SIVA, municipalities, county authorities and other regional development actors, the Directorate of Education and Training, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

In 2021 the Government presented [a White Paper](#) on the quality and relevance of education. An important aspect of the policy document is the strengthening of innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.

### Formal learning

Primary and lower secondary education, upper secondary education and training, vocational college education, universities and university colleges are all governed and organised differently.

Entrepreneurship in primary and secondary education and training is mentioned in the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training. Entrepreneurship for both compulsory education and for upper secondary education and training is embedded in the Core Curriculum, the Quality Framework and in the various subject curricula. There is increasing interest in entrepreneurship in education and training and entrepreneurship is taught in many ways.

Entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity are concepts that have become embedded in Norwegian higher education. In higher education the emphasis is on developing the students' knowledge about and skills in innovation processes, establishing enterprises and business development. Most state university colleges and universities offer programmes of study in entrepreneurship, varying from individual courses to complete master's degree

programmes. Among these there are courses and degree programmes for teachers, economists, technologists, and the tourism trade as well as cross-disciplinary courses. A number of universities and university colleges have established separate units for entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, such as the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Oslo, the University of Stavanger, the University of Agder and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

The vocational technical colleges are required to offer vocational education and training, so entrepreneurship competence is relevant both as a discipline and as a topic integrated in other subjects.

## Non-formal and informal learning

[Junior Achievement - Young Enterprise Norway](#) (JA-YE Norway) is a non-public actor that provides entrepreneurship training for students, in collaboration with county municipalities, local businesses and industries. Through their programmes, students are given the opportunity to run their own student businesses and to develop their business skills in cooperation with other students. The organisation also organises innovation camps that take place during school hours. JA-YE Norway receives funding in the national budget through the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries in order to expand its programmes (approx NOK 30 mill in 2018, 2019 and 2020).

In addition, entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and leadership competences are crucial for the associational and voluntary sector. As described in YouthWiki Chapter [2. Voluntary Activities](#), voluntary engagement has a central place in the Government's policy platform and is an integral component of almost all policy areas.

## Educators support in entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship education is not a compulsory topic in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Norway.

Only teachers in general upper secondary education are offered CPD activities (Continuing professional development) related to entrepreneurship education. No central guidelines are provided for any curriculum area.

[pedent.no](#) is a public resource bank for teachers focusing on educational entrepreneurship. The aim is to inspire teachers to use entrepreneurial work methods in teaching.

## 3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

### Access to information

Public information about funding opportunities, programmes and service providers and professional guidance is predominantly offered through

- [Innovation Norway](#) [Innovasjon Norge], a state-owned Norwegian special law company that works specifically to help entrepreneurs, growth companies and business environments to succeed in future-oriented business activities.
- [Altinn](#), an online portal for businesses, private individuals and public agencies. The portal has a lot of useful information for those who wish to establish and run businesses in Norway, sThese pages also contains a list of various business support schemes.

### Access to capital

[Innovation Norway](#) offers grants for the development of innovative, market-oriented business ideas. These include grants for market clarification and grants for commercialization. The company also offers innovation loans and start-up loans. These schemes do not target young people exclusively. However, to stimulate increased recruitment in agriculture, Innovation Norway has a separate scheme for young farmers who want to make smaller investments to maintain and develop operations.



The Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) has a support scheme that allows for people who are already receiving unemployment benefits to continue receiving benefits while establishing their own business. To be considered for the scheme applicants must meet certain requirements, including providing a professional assessment of the business plan by a body that NAV has approved.

### 3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

#### Special events and activities

Innovation Camps are held regionally by JA-YE Norway [[Ungt Entreprenørskap](#)], and at three levels of education

- Lower secondary school [[Innovasjonscamp ungdomsskole](#)]
- Upper secondary school [[Innovasjonscamp videregående skole](#)]
- Higher education [[Innovasjonscamp høyere utdanning](#)]

EMAX (Innovation Norway Youth business fair) is an annual entrepreneurship business fair for youth between 18 and 25. A competition is instigated, and the winners get a special chance to promote their product and business ideas, and to travel to tech related destinations and venues. [The winners of the 9th Emax Challenge 2020](#) focused on health and law.

Information on entrepreneurship is usually disseminated through the schools and teaching staff, or through JA-YE Norway [[Ungt Entreprenørskap](#)] (sometimes via affiliated youth organizations).

#### Networks and partnerships

Networks and structures at regional and national levels involved in promoting entrepreneurship culture is offered by JA-YE Norway [[Ungt Entreprenørskap](#)], and its regional and local affiliate groups.

Norway has no general Entrepreneurship Action Plan that supports specific activities from partners such as national youth organisations and employers with regard to the implementation of a specific entrepreneurship action plan. Norwegian policy initiatives have mostly been on entrepreneurship in education ([Entrepreneurship in Education and Training – from compulsory school to higher education 2009-2014](#)).

### 3.11 Current debates and reforms

A [committee](#) was set up in 2017 to provide an evidence-based assessment of Norway's future skill needs. This assessment will form the basis for planning and strategic decision making of both authorities and in the labour market, regionally and nationally. The committee work until 2020 has been to assess national and international research. A total of three reports have been submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research; [NOU 2018: 2](#), [NOU 2019: 2](#) and [NOU 2020: 2](#). The Committee will continue from 2021 to 2027 to provide an analysis and assessment of the future skill needs both for the short, medium, and long term.

## 4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

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#### Introduction

The Norwegian welfare model is characterised by relatively strong redistribution of wealth through the taxation system, and through universal social welfare schemes. Norway also

offers more or less free education, from kindergartens and preschool, up to higher education.

Norway has become increasingly diverse in terms of ethnic composition (through immigration), gender expression/sexuality (higher visibility/acceptance) and through increased adaptation and sensitivity to special needs. At the same time income inequality has increased in Norway, with higher levels of relative poverty.

The NEET rate in Norway is one of the lowest across OECD countries but has increased in the last decade.

## 4.1 General context

### Main challenges to social inclusion

Norway is a wealthy country that scores well on international rankings of income and living conditions. The Norwegian welfare state protects the population in most situations of risk through universal health care and education, as well as other welfare services. Nevertheless, over the last couple of decades there has been a considerable increase in families living with persistent low incomes. Families with an immigrant background and single parents are overrepresented among households with persistent low incomes.

10.7 per cent of young people under the age of 30 were out of work, education, and work-oriented measures in 2019. According to the OECD report [Investing in Youth: Norway](#) NEETs in Norway tend to be more disadvantaged than in other OECD countries. More than half have not completed upper-secondary education and young people born abroad are more than twice as likely to be NEETs as their Norwegian-born peers. NEETs are also nine times more likely to be of poor health and six times more likely to feel depressed than other young people.

[Statistics show](#) that immigrants and Norwegian-born with immigrant parents experience discrimination in many areas of society in Norway, such as in the labour and housing market. There are only a few studies on discrimination against Sami and national minorities in Norwegian society today. This is partly because there are no statistics for these groups as no information on ethnicity is registered in official statistics in Norway.

### Main concepts

In Norway social exclusion [utenforskap] among young people is often defined as lack of participation in education and work, lack of or very limited social network and lack of belonging to a community or to society at large.

## 4.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

Main public actors

The [Ministry of Culture](#) is responsible for policy related to equality and social inclusion. This involves promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and disability. The Ministry of Culture is also responsible for voluntary engagement which is an integral component of almost all policy areas. The following legislation is of importance:

- [Act relating to equality and a prohibition against discrimination](#), entered into force 1 January 2018.
- Act relating to the prohibition against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression which entered into force on 1 January 2014. This Act prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender



expression and the prohibition applies to all areas of society apart from family life and the private sphere.

[The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud](#) is mandated to promote equality and combat discrimination based on, among other things, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, and age. The Ombud gives advice and is a driving force for equality and diversity. The [Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal](#) enforces the statutory prohibitions against discrimination. In June 2019, the Parliament decided to authorise the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal to enforce the prohibition against sexual harassment in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, and to award compensation in cases concerning work-related sexual harassment and certain other instances.

The [Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs](#) (Bufdir) is the specialist directorate for equality and non-discrimination under the Ministry of Culture. The directorate develops statistics and indicators, monitors and coordinates national action plans and administers [grant schemes](#) for public authorities, municipalities, private actors and voluntary organizations to promote equality and non-discrimination. There are several grants for organisations representing disabled persons and leisure-time initiatives for persons with disabilities. The directorate provides [statistics](#) about disabilities in Norway.

The [Ministry of Children and Families](#) is responsible for child, youth and family policy, including measures to ensure that families can feel secure, both financially and socially. The [Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs](#) (Bufdir) is responsible for services relating to children, youth and families on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Families. The directorate develops statistics and indicators on child poverty, [a municipal monitoring scheme focused on child poverty](#), monitors and coordinates national action plans related to children, youth and families, and administers several [grant schemes](#) for public authorities, municipalities, private actors and voluntary organizations related to:

- improving the living conditions of marginalized children and adolescents
- providing coordinated follow-up services for youth at risk of dropping out of school
- efforts to counteract and/or mitigate the consequences of poverty among children and adolescents.

The [Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs](#) is responsible for welfare policy, including the [Norwegian National Insurance Scheme](#), to advance equal opportunities, rights and obligations irrespective of economic or social background. [The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration](#) (NAV) administers one third of the national budget through schemes such as unemployment benefits, work assessment allowances, pensions, sickness benefits, child benefits and cash-for-care benefits. The local authorities and central government cooperate through 456 NAV offices in municipalities and city boroughs. Each local authority and NAV agree on what local authority services their office should provide. The services provided by a NAV office will thus vary from local authority to local authority.

The [Ministry of Health and Care Services](#) is responsible for providing good and equal health and care services. The ministry directs these services by means of a comprehensive legislation, annual budgetary allocations and through various governmental institutions. One of the goals of the [Norwegian Public Health Act](#) is to reduce health inequities. The act mandates the implementation of policies and measures with municipalities and county municipalities to accomplish this goal. The [Directorate of Health](#) is a specialist body both in the areas of public health and living conditions, and health services. The directorate administers [grant schemes](#) for public authorities to promote public health among children and young people and to strengthen school health services.

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) is responsible for the Government's integration policies and the [Directorate of Integration and Diversity](#) (IMDi) is a specialist directorate, an administrative body and the national competence centre responsible for the integration field. It is tasked with strengthening the municipalities, sector authorities, and other collaborative partners' competence in the field of integration and diversity.

## Main non-public actors

Youth organisations contribute to the development of policies in the field of youth social inclusion through their active participation in civil society. They also receive or manage government grants that promote social inclusion among young people. Major organisations include:

- [The Norwegian Children and Youth Council](#) (LNU) is an umbrella organisation for [one hundred Norwegian children and youth organisations](#).
- [UNGORG](#) [in Norwegian]- Umbrella organization representing 60 child and youth organizations in Oslo. The organisation also runs several services for young people in Oslo.
- [The National Union of Students in Norway](#) - the largest organisation for students in Norway. Comprising 30 member unions from higher education institutions across the country. The member unions represent more than 240 000 students. NSO's goal is to ensure students' academic, social, and economic rights.
- [Ungdom og Fritid](#) - a national, non-profit organisation which organizes over 600 youth clubs.
- [The Norwegian Association of Youth with Disabilities](#) - Umbrella organization for 35 Norwegian youth organizations representing youths with disabilities.
- [Skeiv ungdom](#) - LGBTQI organization for youth under the age of 30.

## Cross-sectoral cooperation

Polymaking for social inclusion is cross-sectoral with emphasis on collaboration and coordination between ministries, local and central authorities, and with the voluntary sector.

The Minister of Culture makes an annual statement to the Parliament on the status of efforts to promote equality and diversity in all sectors. A key equality policy strategy is to integrate the equality perspective into all policy development at central, regional, and local level. Efforts at the central level are additionally influenced by the strategy of sectoral responsibility for equality, which makes each ministry responsible for equality in its field.

## 4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

### Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

The main national strategy for the social inclusion of young people is [the Government's cooperation strategy for children and young people in low-income families \(2020–2023\)](#).

Some social inclusion measures are integrated in the Government's 2015 Plan on child and youth policy initiatives [[Trygghet, deltakelse og engasjement – regjeringens arbeid for barn og unge](#)]. The Plan emphasises equal rights and opportunities, participation and influence, and access to quality services.

The following policy documents are also of importance to the social inclusion of young people:

- [The Government's action plan against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression \(2017-2020\)](#)
- [White paper no. 7 \(2015-2016\) 'Equality in practice - equal opportunities for women and men'](#)
- [The government's strategy for the equality of persons with disabilities \(2020–2030\)](#)
- [The Government's action plan for universal design \(2015-2019\)](#) (a new plan will be presented in 2021)

- [The Government's Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination on the Grounds of Ethnicity and Religion \(2020-2023\)](#)
- [The Government's Strategy against Hate Speech \(2016-2020\)](#)

## Scope and contents

[The Government's cooperation strategy for children and young people in low-income families \(2020-2023\)](#) strengthens efforts aimed at children and young people in families with persistent low income. The strategy emphasizes increased participation for children, young people and parents in low-income families arenas such as kindergarten, school, after-school programs, leisure activities and in working life. It also emphasizes enhanced social mobility for children and adolescents.

The strategy covers nine focus areas:

1. Good care growing up
2. Stable living situations and safe neighborhoods
3. Early intervention in kindergarten and in primary education
4. Increased participation and inclusion in leisure activities
5. Reduced social inequality among children and youth health
6. Inclusion during adolescence
7. Connection to working life for young people and parents
8. Research and statistics
9. Coordinated efforts by public authorities

## Responsible authority

The following ministries are responsible for the strategy:

- The Ministry of Families and Children
- The Ministry of Education and Research
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Health and Care Services

## Revisions/ Updates

Not applicable.

## 4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

### Programmes for vulnerable young people

The main top level instruments for addressing different sorts of vulnerability and reducing marginalisation among young people are grant schemes managed either directly by responsible ministries or underlying agencies, or in some cases delegated to civil society organisations. Such national schemes include:

**Diversity and Inclusion** [Mangfold og inkludering] Children, youth and youth organizations (including youth clubs and youth houses) may apply for funding to implement measures aimed at combating marginalization, discrimination and radicalization, and efforts towards strengthening inclusion, acceptance and diversity.

Responsible authority: [The Norwegian Children and Youth Council \(LNU\)](#) (by appointment of [the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality](#))

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021 (budget in 2018: NOK 1,7 million)

**National subsidy scheme for the inclusion of children and young people** [Nasjonal tilskuddsordning for inkludering av barn og unge]. The scheme supports public bodies, including municipalities, private actors and voluntary organizations to counteract and / or mitigate the consequences of poverty among children and youth.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: NOK 360 million in 2021 - NOK 550 million in 2022

**Child and youth initiatives in larger urban communities - open meeting places** [Barne- og ungdomstiltak i større bysamfunn – åpne møteplasser]. The scheme supports development of open meeting places and social arenas where children and young people from all social groups can meet and participate on equal terms. Activities shall facilitate social inclusion and participation of children and young people.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: NOK 44,2 million in 2021

**Follow-up services for youth** [Støtte til oppfølgings- og løsfunksjoner for ungdom]. The scheme supports municipalities work to improve and increase the completion rate of lower and upper secondary school. Municipalities most often hire social workers or counsellors that coordinate and offer outreach services to youth who are at risk of school drop-out.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: NOK 9,3 million in 2021

**Improved living conditions and life quality for LGBTQI people** [LHBTI - Bedre levekår og livskvalitet blant lesbiske, homofile, bifile, trans- og queerpersoner og personer med variasjon i kroppslig kjønnsutvikling (LHBTQ)]. The scheme supports organisations to implement measures aimed at improving quality of life among lesbians, gays, bisexuals, trans persons and intersex persons. The measures should also facilitate increased diversity within the organisations.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: NOK 15,7 million in 2021

**Measures to improve the living conditions and quality of life of people with disabilities** [Tiltak for å bedre levekårene og livskvaliteten til personer med funksjonsnedsettelse]. The scheme supports organisations, non-profit foundations, municipalities, boroughs, and county municipalities to implement measures that contribute to public debate and change in attitudes toward people with disabilities, the participation of people with disabilities, and the production and dissemination of knowledge about toward people with disabilities. Measures that for improving the living conditions and quality of life of people with disabilities can also get support.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021

**Leisure activities for people with disabilities** [Fritidstiltak for personer med funksjonsnedsettelse]. The scheme supports voluntary organizations and foundations in organising holiday and leisure activities for people with disabilities.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021

**Universal design - knowledge development, skills development and information** [Universell utforming - kunnskapsutvikling, kompetanseheving og informasjon]. The scheme supports state, county, municipal and private institutions and enterprises, foundations, research institutions and organizations to implement knowledge development, skills development and information in universal design in important areas of society such as planning, construction, facilities, outdoor areas, transport and ICT

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021

**National housing and support services for young people over the age of 18 exposed to forced marriage and honor-related violence** [Nasjonalt bo- og støttetilbud til unge over 18 år utsatt for tvangsekteskap og æresrelatert vold]. The aim of the grants scheme is for municipalities to provide short-term measures supplementary to the municipalities' statutory assistance and services for young people exposed to forced marriage. Measures include safe housing for a transitional period, support services that provide young people with help to re-establish and to be able to live as normal a life as possible.

Responsible authority: The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

**Grant scheme to activity measures for children and youth in asylum reception centres** [Tilskuddsordning til aktivitetstilbud for barn i asylmottak]. Volunteer organizations, not-for profit actors, and municipalities may apply to implement activities for children and young people under the age of 18 in refugee reception centres or in their adjacent local communities that promote learning, integration and preventive health and mental health.

Responsible authority: [The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration \(UDI\)](#)

**Grants for integration work under the auspices of voluntary organizations** [Tilskudd til integreringsarbeid i regi av frivillige organisasjoner]. Voluntary organizations can receive support from three sub-schemes for projects, individual measures or activities that contribute to increasing work and community participation among immigrants and their children. The grant is managed by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity and 20 selected municipalities.

Responsible authority: [The directorate of integration and diversity \(IMDi\)](#)

Budget: NOK 41.48 million in 2021

**Grants to user-driven organizations working against poverty** [Tilskudd til brukerstyrte organisasjoner som arbeider mot fattigdom]. The aim of the scheme is to promote self-organization and user-driven organizations' work against poverty and social exclusion. The grant will strengthen the organizations' opportunities to conduct interest policy work, and contribute to increased user participation. The overall goals of the scheme are increased inclusion in work and society, financial security and improved living conditions.

Responsible authority: [The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration \(NAV\)](#)

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021

**Grants for activation and work training** [Tilskudd til aktivisering og arbeidstrening]. The purpose of the subsidy scheme is to stimulate the development of new measures and methods for activation and work training of people with little or no connection to the labour market. The overall goal is to give everyone the opportunity to get a job and to improve the living conditions of the most disadvantaged, which may include These can be, for example, individuals who are long-term recipients of social assistance, immigrants and refugees, young people at risk, single parents, the homeless, drug addicts and former drug addicts, people with mental health problems or people who have been in prison.

Responsible authority: [The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration \(NAV\)](#)

Budget: Pending the Parliament's budget decision for 2021

## Funding

The budget framework for grant schemes is determined through the national budget and the Parliament's final budget decision. Available funding may therefore vary year by year.

## Quality assurance

Regulations and application criteria for the national grant schemes specify reporting and quality assurance requirements. Requirements may vary from scheme to scheme, and the responsible authority. However, recipients are at a minimum required to provide a report with accounting figures showing whether the funds are used in accordance with the application and grant scheme regulations. It is normal that regulations specify that accounts shall be audited and that the accounts should specify whether support from other state subsidy schemes have been used to carry out the measures/project.

In addition [the Office of the Auditor General](#) (OAG) provides the parliament with a comprehensive and independent audit of the government. The Parliament can instruct the OAG to initiate special audits.

## 4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

### Intercultural awareness

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for state support to seven independent foundations that promote democratic values and attitudes, especially aimed at children and young people:

- [The Falstad centre](#)
- [ARKIVET Peace and Human Rights Centre](#)
- [Nansen Centre for Peace and dialogue](#)
- [The Narvik War and Peace Centre](#)
- [The Rafto Foundation](#)
- [The European Wergeland Centre](#)
- [The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies](#)

Common to these foundations is that they contribute documentation, research, teaching and dissemination in the areas of democracy, peace and human rights, minorities, and genocide. Research or teaching is a central part of the core business at all the centres and one of the conditions for receiving state support.

The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies leads a government funded project for the prevention of anti-Semitism, racism and undemocratic attitudes in schools [DEMBRA](#). The project springs from the assumption that participation and knowledge based reflection are key factors in preventing group hatred and attitudes of exclusion. Schools are guided in developing local action plans for prevention, based on local surveys and the teachers' own experiences. Knowledge based teacher courses are offered at all the participating schools.

### Young people's rights

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was incorporated into Norwegian law through the Human Rights Act, which entered into force on 1 October 2003. The Convention on the Rights of the Child thus applies as Norwegian law and has precedence if any conflict should arise between the Convention and other statutory laws.

[Ung.no](#) the state's information channel for young people aged 13–20. Ung.no is based on Articles 13 and 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which state that children and young people have the right to information, and that the state shall ensure this. The website aims to provide young people with easy access to quality-assured information about rights, duties and opportunities.



[The Ombudsperson for Children](#) is an advocate for children and young people's rights. The Norwegian Ombudsperson for Children was the world's first Ombudsperson for Children. The duties of the Ombudsperson is to ensure that the opinions of children and young people are heard and that their rights are upheld.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has not been incorporated into Norwegian law, but Norway has adopted a number of legislative, policy and administrative measures such as:

- The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act in January 2018;
- The action plan for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons on safety, diversity and openness (2017–2020), which features a programme aimed at incorporating issues relating to disability, sexuality and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons into the online information service run by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs;
- The strategy to prevent hate speech (2016–2020), aimed at combating hate speech based on disability, among other issues;
- The Patients' and Users' Rights Act, in 2015, establishing in law the right to user-controlled personal assistance.

[StoppHatprat/](#) No Hate Speech Movement launched in Norway on Safer Internet Day in February 2014 and is supported by the Ministry of Children and Families. The movement consists of youth ambassadors who run practitioner networks in human rights education against hate speech for youth workers, teachers and youth leaders about. StoppHatprat has an open youth network for organizations and individuals who support the movement's purpose. The Norwegian Handicap Association hosts the campaign, receives or reports on funds and is the employer of the two campaign advisers who coordinate the movement. The movement is part of the European No Hate Speech Movement, a movement started by the Council of Europe's Youth Department in 2013 and which has had committees in over 40 countries.

[The United Nations Association of Norway](#) (UNA) aims to increase the knowledge on the UN, human rights and international issues in Norway. Target groups are teachers, students, the press and the general population. UNA Norway is mostly financed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[The Human Rights Academy](#) is a non-governmental organization that works to strengthen respect for the international human rights in Norway and abroad. They offer lectures, workshops and courses on a variety of topics on human rights, multicultural understanding and peaceful conflict resolution. The main target groups are pupils and students, refugee youth, asylum seekers and teachers. The Human Rights Academy is supported by project funding from different sources such as the Directorate of Immigration, Arts Council Norway/The Cultural Fund, EEA Grants, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and grants from private persons or foundations.

## **Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism**

The national action plan for the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism (2014). [Handlingsplanen for å forebygge radikaliserings og voldelig ekstremisme (2014)] was revised in 2020.

The plan embraces many sectors and services, and it has a particular focus on prevention. Measures are aimed at all forms of extremism through:

- Better knowledge through research, dialog, and information/teaching resources
- Better cooperation and coordination, giving [the Norwegian Police Security Services](#) a central role



- Prevent the recruitment to extremist groups, with particular focus on integration/re-integration work
- Prevent radicalization and recruitment through the internet
- Increased international cooperation

[A national subsidy scheme](#) has been set up by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to support targeted measures and work in counties and municipalities to prevent radicalization and violent extremism, including extreme Islamism, right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism and anti-state activism. Grants awarded in 2022 amounted to NOK 10,5 million.

## 4.6 Access to quality services

The Norwegian welfare state model ensures a broad range of welfare provisions for anyone who resides legally in the country. These provisions apply across policy areas, such as health, employment and social services. Some of the services and benefits are universal, while others target people with special needs. Most services are provided at the municipal level, supervised by the County Governor.

### Housing

The Norwegian State Housing Bank (NSHB) is the government's main implementing agency for social housing policy and uses financial measures to facilitate the achievement of housing policy goals. The most important financial measures are basic loans, start-up loans, housing grants and housing allowances. The aim of these measures is that more people will be able to obtain their own place to live either as a homeowner, or a tenant.

The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) may provide public housing for young people at risk of social exclusion. There is no specific youth programme, but there is a special emphasis on young people, and vulnerable youth/youth at risk. Potential public housing candidates have to apply for housing. Housing is given by need-basis only. NAV also offers [temporary accommodation \(emergency\)](#).

Student University Welfare Associations usually offer subsidised housing/ student housing. There may be an upper age limit for applicants, and priority is usually given to first year students, non-local or foreign applicants and applicants with special needs. Student housing is usually not provided for PhD students as these are paid positions in Norway.

The Government's [National strategy for social housing policy 2021-2024](#) [Nasjonal strategi for den sosiale boligpolitikken 2021-2024] states that more people should be able to own their own home - and rent should be a safe alternative. Some notable measures described in the strategy are:

- Increased use of start-up loans to enter the housing market, especially for families with children.
- Assist more people with developmental disabilities to own their own home.
- Targeted tax deduction on savings for young people below 34 who do not own their own home.
- Strengthening of existing schemes and housing benefits.
- Strengthening of existing schemes and services for people with substance abuse problems and mental disorders.

### Social services

The Norwegian social welfare system requires membership in the [Norwegian National Insurance Scheme](#) pursuant to the provisions of the National Insurance Act. National insurance contributions help to finance the National Insurance scheme. National insurance contributions are also calculated on personal income.

Anyone who resides legally in Norway (for at least 12 months) is a member of the National Insurance Scheme. Membership in the National Insurance Scheme is prerequisite for eligibility to [services and benefits](#) from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) such as unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, family related benefits, financial assistance and temporary accommodation.

The Child Welfare Services in each municipality provides help and support to children, adolescents and parents who are experiencing challenges or difficulties within the family. The CWS may also get involved if a child needs help for other reasons, such as behavioural issues connected to drugs or alcohol. Most children receiving assistance from the CWS remain with their family while the family receives home-based assistance. In more serious cases the CWS will consider more intrusive measures. This applies to neglect, violence and abuse. The Child Welfare Act regulates the work done by the Child Welfare Services in Norway, as well as the measures available to assist children in need of protection.

## Health care

Municipalities are responsible for providing necessary health services – including for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Municipalities must provide:

- public health centres for children and young people, a school health service and care during pregnancy and post-natal care,
- a general practitioner (GP) service,
- an accident and emergency service,
- rehabilitation,
- health and care services, such as home nursing care, personal assistance, nursing homes and respite services.

Municipal health services are financed by the government through the National Insurance Scheme, municipal funds, and patient charges. Health care in specialist services is financed by the government through grants to the health authorities, the National Insurance scheme, and patient charges (user fees).

Everyone, except children under sixteen and pregnant women, must pay user fees. However, the annual limit for user fees is currently just over NOK 2000. After this one is entitled to free treatment for the remainder of the year.

Children and young people up to the age of 18, persons with mental handicaps and elderly people who are receiving care services from the municipality are entitled to free dental treatment from the public dental service (county authority). Young people aged between 19 and 20 are entitled to public dental treatment, but they must pay a reduced copayment. Other adults must visit a private dentist and pay the treatment costs themselves. The National Insurance Scheme covers the cost of treatment by dentists or dental hygienists if patients are suffering from certain illnesses.

## Financial services

Key financial services and benefits offered by Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV):

- [Unemployment benefits](#)
- [Sickness benefit](#)
- [Family related benefits](#)
- [Financial assistance](#)
- [Financial advice and debt counselling](#)
- [Occupational injury and illness](#)

Young people under the age of 30 who receive social assistance in Norway are now required to participate in work-related activities.

### Quality assurance

[The County Governor](#) supervises municipal activity and serves as the administrative appeals body for many municipal decisions. The County Governor is the sectoral government authority for a range of important policy fields. As the sectoral government authority, the County Governor represents several ministries, as well as the directorates and central supervisory authorities which these encompass. The County Governor works to safeguard the rule of law, both as the administrative appeals body for municipal decisions and as the supervisory authority for central welfare issues which fall within the municipalities' remit.

[The Office of the Auditor General](#) (OAG) provides the parliament with a comprehensive and independent audit of the government. The Parliament can instruct the OAG to initiate special audits.

## 4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

### Policy/legal framework

There is no policy or legal framework relating specifically to youth work to foster social inclusion. However, youth work is generally understood as a means of fostering social inclusion through open meeting places and social arenas where children and young people from all social groups can meet and participate on equal terms.

### Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

There are no programmes funded or organised by top level authorities.

### Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people

For information about youth work providers please go to [10.2 Administration and governance of youth work](#).

### Training and support for youth workers engaged in social inclusion programmes

["Youth leadership"](#) is a course offered by Youth Work Norway [Ungdom og Fritid] and funded by the Directorate of Health. The training emphasises the role of clubs and youth centres as inclusive meeting places that actively use participation to increase young people's well-being and experience of mastery and belonging.

### Financial support

Not applicable.

### Quality assurance

Not applicable.

## 4.8 Current debates and reforms

### Poverty

An ongoing debate about Romani visitors are periodically present in the Norwegian media and social media. A suggestion introduce a national ban against begging was not followed up, but municipalities were given the right to introduce local bans ([nrk.no - timeline with articles \[in Norwegian\]](#)).

## LGBTIQ

Norway has had two major LGBTIQ policy events:

- The introduction of a new law giving the right to change legal gender (clients over the age of 16) without having to have a diagnosis ([Regjeringen.no 21.06.2016 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/nyheter/21062016-regjeringen-vedtar-lovgivning-om-legal-gender-id21062016)).
- The introduction and evaluation of free Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) treatment to high risk groups, young men who have sex with men being one of them.

Ongoing debates:

- The concern on an increase of LGBTIQ-hate crimes in general, and especially LGBTIQ of dual minority, and possible measures to prevent and combat ([nrk.no 23.06.2016 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.nrk.no/nyheter/23062016-nrk-om-hate-crimes-id23062016)).
- Focus on LGBTIQ and ethnic minorities ([KUN, 2018](https://www.kun.no/2018/01/11/lgbtiq-og-etniske-minoriteter)).
- The completion of full and equal legal protection of trans and intersex people (<http://www.ftpn.no/>).

## Disability and Universal Design

There are ongoing efforts in bringing all public spaces into physical availability to disabled people by the year 2025.

Efforts are described in:

Title in English: Universal design 2025. The Government's action plan for universal design and increased access 2009-2013.

Title in Norwegian: [Norge universelt utformet 2025](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/nyheter/20090923-norge-universelt-utformet-id20090923). Regjeringens handlingsplan for universell utforming og økt tilgjengelighet 2009-2013.

Type of document: Action plan ['handlingsplan'].

Time of introduction and timeframe: 2009 – in effect.

## Religious clothing and symbols

Certain professions have regulation regarding correct attire and uniform, but everyone in Norway has the right to wear religious clothing and symbols.

The political discourse regarding religious clothing has become more polarized since the terrorist attacks happened in Brussels, Paris, and Nice in 2015 and 2016, and the increase of Syrian, Afghani and Iraqi refugees in 2015 and 2016.

A primary school in the northern town Finnsnes allowed the use of the Burkini in the children's swimming education ([nrk.no 21.07.2016 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.nrk.no/nyheter/21072016-nrk-om-burkini-id21072016)), that caused nationwide debate around the inclusion of religious clothing in schools in Norway. The Ministry of Education and Research has said that it is up to each municipality whether or not they want to ban the use of the Burkini ([dagbladet.no 14.07.2016 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/14072016-dagbladet-om-burkini-id14072016)).

Supporters of denying the Burkini claimed religious clothing has no place in a secular setting, whereas opponents claimed that Christian values and rituals already exist as a part of the national curriculum, so to deny Muslims the same right would be ethically wrong and violate basic human rights. Some also saw the introduction of the Burkini as unproblematic as it would contribute to more inclusion of some young Muslim girls, as they again would feel comfortable attending swimming education.

While several MPs have stated that they would prefer to see the Niqab and Burqa banned in public spaces, the Norwegian Government has so far been hesitant to institute a nationwide ban. Opponents believe that such a ban would be unconstitutional ([Dagbladet 21.06.2016 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/21062016-dagbladet-om-burqa-id21062016)). The debate reignited after the European Court of Human Rights' (EMD) condoned France's ban on the use of Islamic veils in public spaces ([Library of Congress 11.07.2014](https://www.libraryofcongress.gov/2014/07/11/emd-condones-frances-ban-on-islamic-veils) and [vg.no 05.07.2014 \[in Norwegian\]](https://www.vg.no/nyheter/05072014-vg-om-islamske-veiler-id05072014)).

In 2018 a [ban on the use of religious clothing covering the face of staff working as educators and teachers](#) was introduced by the Ministry of Education and Research. Three parties voted against the ban and it is still being debated.

## 5. PARTICIPATION

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### Introduction

Youth participation is an important component of Norway's overall youth policy initiatives as expressed in the [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#). The document states that all children and young people should be provided with opportunities for participation and influence. The importance of youth participation is also expressed in the national budget and through earmarked funding for youth organisations.

### 5.1 General context

#### Main concepts

One of the primary goals of the [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) is that all children and young people should be provided with opportunities for participation and influence. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is described as a key tool in promoting children and young people's participation and influence at all levels. The right to participation should be safeguarded through legislation, planning and policymaking for children and youth.

#### Institutions of representative democracy

##### Constitutional structure

Norway is a unitary constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. Power is separated among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, as defined by the Constitution, which serves as the country's supreme legal document.

##### Main representative institutions

At the national level, the people are represented by the Storting (Norwegian parliament) which has legislative power. The Government implements the Storting's decisions and draws up proposals for new laws or law amendments.

Norway has a two-tier subnational government system, composed of 356 municipalities and 11 counties with no hierarchical link and which carry equal rights and responsibilities. The city of Oslo is both a county and a municipality. [The Local Government Act](#) sets the basic legal framework for local and regional government. Central government is directly represented at the local level by the office of the county governor.

Currently, municipal functions include education (pre-school, primary and lower-secondary schools), health and social care (care for the elderly, disabled and children, social services, primary health care, housing support, etc.), local roads, utilities (water supply and sewerage, waste), local town planning, environmental protection, culture, firefighting, etc. County responsibilities include regional planning and development, roads and public transport, upper-secondary education, dental health, culture, environmental protection, etc.

Norway also has a separate Parliament for the Sami people: [The Sami Parliament](#) [Sámediggi – Sametinget]. The Sámediggi is an elected assembly that represents the Sami people in Norway. Thirty-nine members of parliament are elected from seven constituencies every fourth year. The purpose of the Sámediggi is to strengthen the Sami's political position and promote Sami interests in Norway, contributing to equal and

equitable treatment of the Sami people and paving the way for Sami efforts to safeguard and develop their language, culture and society.

Read more about: [The Act of 12 June 1987 No. 56](#) concerning the Sameting (the Sami parliament) and other Sami legal matters (the Sami Act).

### Main legal principles concerning elections

The Norwegian electoral system is based on the principles of direct election and proportional representation in multi-member electoral divisions. Direct election means that the electors vote directly for representatives of their constituency by giving their vote to an electoral list. Proportional representation means that the representatives are distributed according to the relationship to one another of the individual electoral lists in terms of the number of votes they have received. Both political parties and other groups can put up lists at elections.

Voting in Norway is not compulsory. Votes are cast by ballot, either on Election Day, or in advance at an official voting locality. It is the municipal authorities that are responsible for receiving the inland advance votes. Norwegian expats may also vote at their local embassy or consulate.

Where an elector who is outside the realm has no possibility of getting to a returning officer, they/she/he may vote by post without the presence of a returning officer at the casting of the ballot. A postal vote is deemed to be relevant only in exceptional cases and for electors who would otherwise not have been able to vote.

Norway has not had a top-level referendum since 1994 (on a potential Norwegian membership of the European Union).

## 5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

### Young people as voters

Any Norwegian national who reaches the age of 18 by the end of the year of election and who is registered at the Population Registry as resident in Norway is qualified to vote at parliamentary elections. The latter qualification does not apply to members of the diplomatic corps or members of the consular service and their households. Qualified to vote at local government elections is any person who is entitled to vote at parliamentary elections. In addition Nordic nationals (Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, Finland) are qualified to vote if they were registered as resident in Norway no later than 30 June in the year of election. Other foreign nationals are qualified to vote if they have been registered at the Population Registry as resident in Norway for a continuous period of three years immediately prior to Election Day.

Norway is not a member of the European Union and does not participate in the European Parliament elections.

National referendums are very seldom utilized in Norway.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation initiated [a pilot project of reduced voting age to 16](#) during the municipal and county council elections in 2011, and then again in 2015. An evaluation of the trial projects found that:

- Voter turnout does not change. The trial-voters, aged 16 or 17, have a rate of turnout that is similar to the population as a whole, though quite a bit higher than other young voters. Overall turnout therefore remains stable when the voting age is lowered.
- There is no evidence to suggest that a lower voting age has an effect on long-term turnout.

- There are large differences in turnout by social background among the youngest voters. It does not appear that a lower voting age, in itself, can bridge social inequalities with respect to voter participation.
- The political voting preferences of the youngest voters do not deviate substantially from the adult population. A lower voting age will therefore likely not affect the political composition of elected assemblies, such as municipal councils.
- When the voting age is lowered to 16, young politicians are elected at a higher rate. This is the most concrete effect of the two voting age trials: the political representation of people below the age of 25 went up. In 2011, this happened because young political candidates received more preferential votes; whereas in 2015, parties were ahead of the curve and nominated young candidates at ballot-positions that secured their election.

There are no special provisions for young people in the Norwegian electoral law and rules.

Despite an increase in voter turnout for both first and second-time voters in 2013 and 2017, and also in the local elections in 2019, the participation rate is still much lower than that of older voters. From the age of 26, voter turnout increases with age and then falls dramatically after 80. In the Nordic region Norway has the second largest voter turnout age gap in the Nordic region.

### **Young people as political representatives**

In Norway young people who have reached the age of 18 and are eligible to vote may also run as candidates in elections. There are no quota of seats reserved for young people .

The average age of the members of the Norwegian Parliament [Stortinget] in the current term (2021-2025) is 46. The average age has been steadily declining from 1965 and evened out around 2000.

The proportion of young people in the representative assembly in the present term (2021-2025) is currently 14/169 (8%) under the age of 30.

The youngest representative was 20 years old at the time of the last parliamentary election (2021).

There are no specific functions within the representative assembly reserved for young people.

## **5.3 Youth representation bodies**

### **Youth parliament**

Norway has no regular formal consultation body at state executive or legislative level (a national youth parliament, or institutionalized youth council). An expert committee reporting on youth participation in 2011 recommended against such an arrangement proposing the need to strengthen regional representative bodies for youth first ([NOU 2011:20](#)).

A pilot project assembly 'the Youth National Assembly' took place in 2010. The Youth National Assembly was represented by under-18 youth delegates from the various counties of Norway. The Youth National Assembly voted in favour of an institutionalized state level political body.

From 2019 and with the revision of the [Local Government Act](#) it became mandatory with formal consultative bodies/youth councils for youth at municipal and county levels. The municipal council and the county council decide on the composition of the youth council or other participation body for young people. They also decide how many members and deputies the councils should have. Organizations representing young people have the right to submit proposals for members of the council that represents their interests. The councils themselves elect their chairman and deputy chairman from among the members. The



councils have the right to express an opinion before the municipal council and the county council set up a secretariat, lay down the case processing rules and adopt a budget for them. The councils have a term of office of up to two years. Members shall not have reached the age of 19 at the time of election. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed a [guide](#) for youth councils.

In 2019 the Government also suggested to set up national youth panels in cases that are relevant to youth. The youth panel is based on the principles of real influence, representation, information, reciprocity, competence and involvement. It is up to the various ministries to decide in which cases they want to use a youth panel. In 2020 the Ministry of Children and Families established one [youth panel](#) in the work on the Cooperation Strategy for children in low-income families, and another [youth panel](#) in the work on the "recreational card" [fritidskortet].

## Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

[The Norwegian Children and Youth Council \(LNU\)](#) is an independent umbrella youth organization, representing 100 youth organizations. Member organisations must be voluntary, independent, and democratic organizations that represent children and youth. The organization also needs to have a national scope/representation.

The roles and responsibilities of LNU is to:

- Assists and offers expertise to their membership organizations
- Be an important agent in lobbying for the interest of youth and children
- Be a 'go to' consultant from the government in the processing of new laws and initiatives
- Distribute grants by applicant basis. LNU administers several grant schemes: the bulk grants are provided by different ministries; among them the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, the Norwegian Ministry of Knowledge and Research, and the Norwegian Ministry of Culture (Frifond). LNU distributes grants on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Equality, called LNU Mangfold og Inkluderings [LNU Diversity and Inclusion] LNU also distributes grants to facilitate exchanges, and to encourage north-south encounters.
- Organise the annual children and youth parliament ([Barne- og ungdomstinget, BUT](#))

LNU receives funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, and is financially accountable to the ministry. [Regulations on grants to voluntary children's and youth organizations](#) constitutes the legal basis for funding.

## Higher education student union(s)

Norway has two main bodies representing the interests of tertiary education students:

[The National Union of Students in Norway](#) [[Norsk studentorganisasjon – NSO](#)]: NSO is the largest organisation for students in Norway. The organization has 30 member unions from higher education institutions across the country. The member unions represent more than 240 000 students.

NSO is an independent organisation that works with politicians, administrative officials, the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen), and the managements and leadership of higher education institutions across the country to improve the conditions of students financially, academically and socially.

One of the main pillars of the NSO statutes is matters of inclusion and equality. The main areas of focus are (list not complete):

- Universal access to higher education.
- Emphasis on recruiting from sub-populations that are less represented in current academia.
- Equal gender balance (actively facilitated through use of quotas etc).

- The representation and safe spaces of all religious affiliates and ethnicities/cultures.
- Active institutional arrangements and routines to handle bullying, discrimination and harassment.

The organizations has a set of stated 'Principles of good standing and organizational culture' [[Prinsipper for oppførsel og organisasjonskultur i NSO](#)] and a [Platform on Diversity, Inclusion and Equal opportunity](#) [Mangfalds- inkluderings- og likestillingspolitisk platform].

NSO receives public funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is financially accountable to the ministry.

The main organs of the union are:

- The General Assembly [[Landsmøtet](#)] which is held annually and in which all member unions are represented.
- The Central Executive Committee [[Sentralstyret](#)] which is the highest authority of the organization in-between general assemblies and which meets regularly (minimum 6 meetings annually). The committee has 13 members and 13 deputy members elected at the General Assembly, and has a one-year mandate
- The Working Committee [[Arbeidsutvalget](#)] which is the executive branch of the central organization. It consists of 6 full time positions hired by the Central Executive Committee for a fixed term of 4 years.
- There are several committees Political Committees [[Politiske komiteer](#)] with members elected at the General Assembly .
- The Professional Council [[Fagrådet](#)] elected at the General Assembly
- The Electoral Committee [[Valgkomiteen](#)] which pre-selects candidates for honorary positions. The committee consists of five members elected at the general assembly and has a one-year mandate
- The Control/Audit Committee [[Kontrollkomiteen](#)] which oversees that the organization honours the current steering documents and regulations. The committee has a one-year mandate, and the four members are elected at the General Assembly
- The Statutory Committee [[Vedtekstkomiteen](#)] which manages incoming suggestions to changes of the organization's statutes. The committee has a one-year mandate and the three members are elected at the General Assembly
- The Committee on the Declaration of Principles [[Prinsippprogramkomiteen](#)] which manages revisions to the Declaration of Principles. The committee has a one-year mandate and the five members are elected at the General Assembly

[The National Union of Students in Higher Vocational Education and Training in Norway](#) [Organisasjon for Norske Fagskolestudenter] is a politically independent organization that represents students in vocational schools in Norway. The organization has 30 member unions from tertiary VET institutions across the country. The member unions represent more than 10 400 students.

The Union works to provide information on student rights, and to influence the national and local school politics in Norway. The organization offers professional counselling for vocational students.

NSO receives public funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is financially accountable to the ministry.

The main organs of the union are:

- General Assembly [Landsmøtet] which is held annually and in which all member unions are represented.

- The Central Board [Hovedstyret] which the highest authority of the organization in-between general assemblies. It is also the executive unit of the organization. The committee has 5 members and 5 deputy members elected at the General Assembly, and has a one-year mandate
- Electoral Committee [Valgkomiteen] which pre-selects candidates for honorary positions. The committee consists of five members elected at the general assembly and has a one-year mandate
- Control/Audit Committee [Kontrollkomiteen] which oversees that the organization honours the current steering documents and regulations. The committee has a one-year mandate, and the two members are elected at the General Assembly
- The General Assembly may also initiate Ad-Hoc committees.

## School student union(s)

School Student Union of Norway (SSUN) [[Elevorganisasjonen \(EO\)](#)] is a national, politically independent organization that organizes and represents students in Norwegian schools.

SSUN works to provide information on student rights, and to influence the national and local school politics in Norway. The organization currently organizes students in lower- and upper secondary school, and apprentices under secondary education training [ungdomsskole og videregående skole].

The organization has 18 county unions [Fylkeslag] and over 400 school (organizational) members [Medlemsskoler] across the country. The organization represent more than 140 000 school students.

SSUN is based on institutionalized membership. A school can become a member if the majority of the students at the school vote yes during a ballot held by SSUN. Students doing their apprenticeship period can become a member of an apprentice council within SSUN. School students, who are not a part of the organization through their school, can become an individual member.

SSUN works with politicians, administrative officials, the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen), and the managements and leadership of schools across the country to improve the conditions of pupils and students financially, academically, and socially.

The SSUN statutes state that committee and board representatives are to be equally divided between the genders, and by geographical representations. Ethnic or other minority identities are not mentioned.

SSUN receives public funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is financially accountable to the ministry.

The main organs of the union are:

- The General Assembly [Landsmøtet] which is held annually and in which all county unions are represented.
- The National Committee [Landsstyret] which the highest authority of the organization in-between general assemblies. The committee has 18 members elected at the General Assembly, and has a one-year mandate
- Central Executive Committee and the General Secretary [Sentralstyret (SST) og generalsekretæren] are elected at the General Assembly, and has a one-year mandate
- County Committees [Fylkesstyrene] which are the executive branches of the organization at county level are elected at the General Assembly, and has a one-year mandate

## Other bodies

[The Norwegian Association of Youth with Disabilities](#) [Unge funksjonshemmede] is an umbrella organisation representing 37 organisations for children and youth with disabilities or chronic disease.

It is an independent organisation that works to improve the rights of youth with disabilities, particularly to the right to education, rehabilitation, and to inform youth with disabilities about their rights.

The association receives funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Families and is financially accountable to the ministry. [Regulations on grants to voluntary children's and youth organizations](#) constitutes the legal basis for funding.

## 5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

### Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

#### Consultation at state level

The involvement of young people or youth organisations in the policymaking process at state level is consultative and not legally binding.

#### Method and regularity of consultations

Many youth organizations engage actively with the policy making process by providing consultation statements in connection with proposed bills from the government (both the executive and legislative bodies).

The Government declared through its political platform in 2019 that it will strengthen youth participation in democratic processes at the national level. Ministries are establishing ad hoc youth panels to advise the government on various policy issues. Several panels have been established, including among others:

- The Ministry of Local Development and Modernisation set up a panel focusing on regional policy development.
- The Ministry of Children and Families set up a panel focusing on measures for children growing up in low-income families.
- The Ministry of Children and Families set up a panel focusing on the development of a national 'Recreation Card' with the aim of giving children and young people 6 to 18 years the opportunity to participate in organised leisure time/recreational activities regardless of economic resources.
- A panel was set up to provide advice to the Government to [White Paper no. 9](#) (2020-2021) [Mennesker, muligheter og norske interesser i nord] which presents the government's High North policy for the coming years.

#### Consultation at municipal level

From 2019 and with the revision of the [Local Government Act](#) it became mandatory with formal consultative bodies/youth councils for youth at municipal and county levels. See section [5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy](#).

## Actors

### Youth actors

At state level, the relevant youth actors involved in the consultation process vary depending on the content of the bill. Youth are represented through interest organisations or national umbrella associations, such as the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU), Elevorganisasjonen [School Student Union of Norway (SSUN)], Norsk

Studentorganisasjon [[The National Union of Students in Norway](#)], Youth Work Norway [[Ungdom og Fritid](#)] and the Norwegian Association of Youth with Disabilities [Unge Funksjonshemmede].

All major political parties in Norway have their own youth party organization. They work mostly independently as organizations and differ in varying degrees to their mother organization in terms of political priorities and topics. They are, however, the predominant source of direct representation of youth issues and priorities to the mother parties. The political youth parties have local branches [lokallag] that meet annually at a national assembly. Each youth party has a central administration, or board that works directly with the main party they are affiliated under.

### Specific target groups

The very process of public consultations and the setting up of national youth panels is meant to ensure all affected sections of the population are consulted.

### Public authorities

All ministries are obliged to consult all relevant public authorities and organisations. The Ministry of Children and Families has [published information](#) about the setting up of ad hoc youth panels.

### Additional stakeholders

One of the main duties of the Ombudsman for Children is ensure that the opinions of children and young people are heard and that their rights are upheld.

## Information on the extent of youth participation

There is no systematic information gathering on the extent of youth participation.

As part of the International [Civic and Citizenship Education Study \(ICCS\)](#) the ICCS 2016-study took place in Norway in the spring of 2016. [The ICCS 2016-study investigates](#) students' knowledge and understanding of societal values, civic society and political systems, their capability of applying democratic principles, together with their attitudes and preparedness to take up the role in the future as active citizens in a democratic society. NOVA – Norwegian Social Research, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences was as the National Research Coordinator (NRC) for the study, which is a continuation of two previous civic education studies: CIVED in 1999 and ICCS in 2009. Approximately 6,000 students and 2, 000 teachers of 9th grade from 148 schools across the country participated in the 2016 study.

## Outcomes

There is no systematic documentation the outcome, or impact of youth participation in policy making at the national level. However, official documents (reports, White Papers, and proposed bills) may reference specific recommendations put forward through youth participation processes such as consultations.

### Public availability of outcomes

The [Act on the right of access to documents in public activities](#) [Offentlighetsloven] contains provisions on the right to view (access) documents from the public administration. The main rule is that everyone can demand access documents. The law also contains provisions on what is considered a document and when a document becomes public.

All municipal and county council meetings and subsequent notes of council member's suggestions, responses, debate introductions or statements [innlegg], or votes, are made publicly available after the council meetings have ended. Documents include meeting

minutes [referat], voting results [voteringsresultat], and sometimes deliberative summaries.

## **Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people**

[Arendalsuka](#) is a week-long and annual event open to the public that gathers political leaders, business leaders, entrepreneurs, governmental organizations, media and NGO's. It has grown to become the largest political gathering in Norway. Originally a private initiative the event is hosted by Arendal municipality. There is also a separate programme for children and young people that reflects current topics in the public debate for children and young people, such as democracy, hate speech, science, the environment, research, tax and economics, coding, human rights, fake news, exclusion, war history, cyberbullying, religion, and culture.

## **5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation**

### **Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation**

Norway does not have a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation. However, youth participation is an important component of Norway's overall youth policy initiatives as expressed in the [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#). The document states that all children and young people should be provided with opportunities for participation and influence. The importance of youth participation is also expressed in the national budget and through earmarked funding for youth organisations.

#### **Scope and contents**

Not applicable.

#### **Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy**

Not applicable.

#### **Revisions/Updates**

Not applicable.

## **5.6 Supporting youth organisations**

### **Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations**

The legal framework for support to youth organisations is determined by the [Regulations concerning grants to voluntary youth organisations](#) of 29 November 2007, amended on 15 September 2009. The grants are meant to stimulate youth organisations' activities nationally and / or internationally as arenas for young people's participation and democratic practice. To qualify for grants organisations must meet a set of criteria related to organisational structure and democratic participation.

#### **Public financial support**

The Ministry of Children and Families provides basic support to voluntary youth organisations. This is administered by the Grant Allocation Committee, whose secretariat is at the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. The allocation of grants is regulated by the [Regulations concerning grants to voluntary youth organisations](#).

Youth organisations can also apply for funding through grant schemes that are administered through relevant sector ministries, or on behalf of the relevant ministry by underlying government agencies or civil society organisations. The Ministry of Culture has published a cross-ministerial guide [Veileder: [Forenkling av statlige tilskuddsordninger for frivillige organisasjoner](#)] to make it easy for voluntary organisations to apply for and report on state grants.

## **Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants**

The grant scheme Diversity and Inclusion [Mangfold og inkludering] was set up in 2008 as an extension of the European youth campaign All Different – All Equal, and the support scheme Idébanken [the Ideas Bank]. The scheme is aimed at projects that focus on diversity and participation. The Norwegian Youth Council (LNU) administers the support scheme on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Families.

## **5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning**

### **Policy Framework**

Norway does not have a designated national strategy on citizenship education, but social and civic competences and their development are an integrated component of the [National Core Curriculum](#). The core curriculum applies to primary and secondary education and training in Norway.

### **Formal learning**

The core curriculum elaborates on the core values in the [Education Act](#) which are:

- Human dignity
- Identity and cultural diversity
- Critical thinking and ethical awareness
- The joy of creating, engagement and the urge to explore
- Respect for nature and environmental awareness
- Democracy and participation

The core curriculum emphasises that primary and secondary education and training is an important part of a lifelong process which has the individual's all-round development, intellectual freedom, independence, responsibility and compassion for others as its goal. The teaching and training shall give the pupils a good foundation for understanding themselves, others and the world, and for making good choices in life. It shall also provide a good point of departure for participation in all areas of education, work and societal life.

### **Non-formal and informal learning**

The Education Act spells out requirements for student participation in decision making at primary and lower secondary schools.

Participation in the running of the school (budget, optional subjects in curriculum, decision related to common room facilities):

- § 11-1 Education Act: At each primary and lower secondary school there shall be a coordinating committee with two representatives for the teaching staff, one for other employees, two for the parents' council, two for the pupils and two for the municipality. One of the representatives for the municipality shall be the head teacher of the school.
- § 11-5 Education Act: At each upper secondary school there is to be a school committee consisting of representatives for the staff and the county authority and two



representatives elected by the pupils' council. The head teacher of the school is to be a representative for the county authority

Participation in student bodies (pupils' parliament, pupils' councils):

- § 11-2 Education Act: At each primary and lower secondary school there shall be one pupils' council for grades 5–7 and one for grades 8–10 with pupil representatives. The municipality shall determine the number of pupils' representatives.
- § 11-6 Education Act: At each upper secondary school there is to be a pupils' council consisting of at least one member for every twenty pupils. The pupils' council shall be elected by written ballot.

Participation in maintaining a good learning and school environment:

- § 11-1A Education Act: At each primary and lower secondary school there shall be a school environment committee. The pupils, the parents' council, the employees, the school management, and the municipality shall all be represented on the school environment committee. The school environment committee shall be composed in such a way that the representatives of the pupils and the parents together comprise a majority.
- § 11-5a Education Act: At each upper secondary school there is to be a school environment committee. The pupils, the employees, the school management and the county authority shall all be represented on the school environment committee. The school environment committee is to be composed in such a way that the pupils' representatives constitute a majority.

Supporting non-formal learning initiatives focusing on social and civic competences:

Mock elections in upper secondary schools are used as a pedagogical tool to make the teaching about politics more interesting and contribute to increased political awareness and competence among the pupils. Mock elections have been arranged prior to all parliamentary and local elections in Norway since 1989, including the referendum about Norwegian membership in the European Union in 1994. In addition to the mock elections, an election survey among pupils and a representative sample of the Norwegian population is conducted. The data makes it possible to analyse sub-groups of the age-cohort 15–19-year-olds. Further, it is possible to compare the pupils' attitudes and values to the general population, and to analyse changes over time. All high schools in Norway are invited to participate, and each school decides whether it will take part in the election, and whether it also will participate in the survey. The project is financed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) is responsible for running the elections and surveys. To ensure that the school election and the election survey result in contextual learning, NSD also develops various teaching resources. These teaching resources may be used by all teachers and pupils in the Norwegian upper secondary schools.

The Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU) together with several other non-governmental organisations typically organise campaigns aimed at encouraging young people to participate in the mock elections. Such campaigns sometimes receive funding from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) has [developed digital games, learning resources and films](#) about local democracy, participation, and the municipal sector. The resources are free and suitable for students in upper secondary schools. KS also has a visitor's centre which is open to schools.

## Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

There is no national system of quality assurance of non-formal learning. Instead, funds, ministries, associations and municipalities have their own quality criteria depending on the type of funding they provide.

## Educators' support

Continuous training and certification related to the development of social and civic competences is not something that is offered separately in Norway, as citizenship and democracy is not an isolated subject in Norway, but integrated in all subjects taught.

A certification programme that has a significant focus on developing social and civic competences is the strategy "Competence for Quality."

The Strategy "Competence for Quality" [[Kompetanse for kvalitet - Strategi for videreutdanning for lærere og skoleledere frem mot 2025](#)] aims to provide teachers and school leaders with Professional development opportunities

The competence development is provided by the University Colleges and financed by The Directorate for Education and Training. The teachers and school leaders can apply for scholarship and the local school authorities can apply for grants for substitute teachers. Local school authorities make the decision and distribute the grant and the scholarships.

The main goal for the strategy is to improve learning outcomes for the pupils.

The subjects prioritised are Norwegian, English, Mathematics, Norwegian sign language and Sami.

## 5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

### Information providers / counselling structures

Through the [core curriculum](#), pursuant to section 1-5 of the Education Act, schools have a responsibility to provide the children and young people with the opportunity to participate in and learn what democracy means in practice. The teaching and training shall promote belief in democratic values and in democracy as a form of government. It shall give the pupils an understanding of the basic rules of democracy and the importance of protecting them.

The Parliament [Stortinget] is an "open house" and normally conducts guided tours for the public. [Stortinget.no](#) is a dedicated website to increase the public's understanding of the Parliament's [Storting] work, and to contribute to individuals and organizations being able to make use of their democratic rights. The website provides digital tours, exhibitions, information brochures, and online learning resources about democracy and the role of Parliament.

Many institutions and public initiatives provide information about democratic rights and democratic values, as described in section [5.7 "Learning to participate" through formal, non-formal and informal learning](#). The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for state support to seven independent foundations that promote democratic values and attitudes, especially aimed at children and young people, as described in section [4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness](#).

[Ung.no](#), which is run by the Directorate for Children Youth and Family Affairs, is the state's information channel for young people aged 13–20. Ung.no is based on Articles 13 and 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which state that children and young people have the right to information, and that the state shall ensure this. The website aims to provide young people with easy access to quality-assured information about their rights, duties and opportunities.

### Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

Mock elections in upper secondary school, described in section [5.7 "Learning to participate" through formal, non-formal and informal learning](#), is an initiative that is not only meant to increase political awareness among youth, but also contribute to a higher turnout among first time voters in real elections.

[The Norwegian Directorate for Elections](#) has a funding scheme to support information campaigns targeted at voters who are not as easily reached through ordinary information channels, or voters who need specially adapted information. In preparation for the general election in 2021 NOK 2,2 million has been set aside for projects and campaign targeting young and first time voters.

[The Norwegian Children and Youth Council \(LNU\)](#), with financial support from the Norwegian Directorate for Elections, organised a national campaign through its member organizations to increase turnout among first-time voters in the 2019 parliamentary elections.

## **Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people**

See section [4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness](#).

## **Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication**

The website [klarspråk.no](https://klarspråk.no) ["clear language"] has been developed by the Norwegian Language Council, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and the Norwegian Directorate for Digitalisation to provide guidance on how public servants can practice clear and transparent communication.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernization hands out annual "clear language" prizes to state bodies and municipalities that carry out long-term and systematic "clear language" work.

## **5.9 E-participation**

Experiments with electronic voting have been carried out twice in Norway, in the municipal council and county council elections in 2011 and in the parliamentary elections in 2013. A separate regulation, issued on the basis of the Election Act § 15-1, regulated the experiments. The Parliament voted against further use of online voting in 2014.

The Election Law Committee whose mandate was to make a proposal for a new election law and consider changes to the election system, and which submitted its report [NOU 2020: 6 Free and secret elections - New election law](#) on 27. May 2020, has recommended not to introduce electronic voting. However, the Committee did recommend that secure solutions for electronic voting at polling stations should be investigated further, among other things to improve accessibility for voters with disabilities

Polls or online petitions are commonly used both by adults and youth in political processes, but there is no existing legal framework or key policy programmes enabling or encouraging young people to participate in political processes online.

## **5.10 Current debates and reforms**

The possibility of lowering the voting age limit is being debated, as this is one of the proposals by the Election Law Committee whose mandate was to make a proposal for a new election law and consider changes to the election system. The committee submitted its report [NOU 2020: 6 Free and secret elections - New election law](#) to the Minister of Local Government and Modernization on 27. May 2020. The majority in the committee proposed to lower the voting age in local elections to 16 years, but did not propose to reduce eligibility age. The ministry has opened for a public consultation process over the recommendations in the report.

## 6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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### Introduction

Norwegian local administrations (municipalities and county-municipalities) have a high degree of autonomy to solve appointed tasks by top level authorities. The same is true for education. The 'Knowledge Promotion' reform introduced in 2006 gave municipalities more authority for decision-making in methods of instruction, free choice of learning materials, development of curricula, and the organization of instruction.

There is emphasis on the formal educational route. Non-formal learning is acknowledged as important, particularly as provided through the voluntary sector, but there are few arrangements of formal recognition that makes informal learning directly transferrable/applicable to formal education and training.

### 6.1 General context

#### Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

The standardized duration of upper secondary education is between 3 and 4 years, pending on the specialization route of the programme, and between academic and vocational programmes. 3 out of 4 complete upper secondary education within 5 years. The completion rate in general studies is 89% in total and about 5% lower for boys versus girls, while the completion rate in vocational studies is only 68% and about 4 percent lower for boys versus girls ([Statistics Norway, 2020](#)).

As for young men and women between the ages of 18 and 24, the level of early leavers of school and training has decreased for young women from 14.1 percent in 2007 to 8.9 percent in 2020, and for young men from 22.7 percent in 2007 to 12.9 percent in 2020 ([Eurostat, 2020](#)).

#### Organisation of the education and training system

Compulsory education covers 10 years and comprises two stages:

- Primary school: grades 1-7 (age 6-12)
- Lower secondary school: grades 8-10 (age 13-16).

Upper secondary school (grade 11 – 13) is not mandatory. Young people who have completed primary and lower secondary education, have a right to three years' upper secondary education and training leading either to admission to higher education, to vocational qualifications or to basic skills.

[The Education Act](#) (Opplæringsloven) with [regulations](#) and the Independent Schools Act [[Lov om frittstående skolar \(friskolelova\)](#)] are the legal foundation for respectively the public and private primary and secondary education in Norway.

#### VET

VET programmes run through the course of 4 years, whereof either two or three years are spent in an enterprise as an apprentice. The programme awards a successful student a 'Certificate of Upper Secondary Education' and a 'Journeyman's Certificate' or a 'Trade Certificate.'

Alternatively, the experience-based certification scheme 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 Board.

## Adult education

Adult education includes adult education at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level, folk high schools, adult education associations and independent distance learning institutions.

Adults who have not completed sufficient primary and lower secondary education are entitled to education at these levels. Adults from the age of 25 years who have completed primary and lower secondary school or the equivalent, but not upper secondary education, have the right to such education upon application.

A study association consists of two or more voluntary organisations and offers a selection of courses, ranging from basic education/training to work training and studies at university level. Study associations offer courses in most municipalities and can apply for government funding.

The folk high schools are free, and are general education schools that also have a clear integrative goal. Folk high schools do not have a curriculum or examinations. Folk high schools offer both short courses lasting at least two days and a maximum of 94 days, and long courses with a duration of 4-10 months.

Web-based schools offer a high degree of flexibility as teachers and students may communicate with each other regardless of time and place. The teaching is organised as web-based tuition or combined web-based tuition and central or regional collections of students. Approved web-based schools can apply for state funding.

The labour authorities in cooperation with the education authorities offer [labour market training](#) (Arbeidsmarkedsopplæring) by the [Work and Welfare Authority](#) (NAV - Arbeids- og velferdsetaten). The courses lead to professional qualifications, and are conducted by various actors, primarily high schools, and own resource centres affiliated to the schools, but also study associations or other private providers. The business is fully financed by the state.

## ISCED levels

**ISCED 1-2: PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION** covers education for children aged 6 to 15 and grades 1 to 10. Local authorities are required to offer before and after-school care for pupils in 1st to 4th grade.

**ISCED 3: UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION** normally provides three years of general education or four years of vocational training after the 10-year compulsory 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 enterprises.

**ISCED 4-5: TERTIARY VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES** are post-secondary, but are not defined as higher education. The duration is a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years.

**ISCED 6-8 HIGHER EDUCATION** Higher education is based on general admission, normally completed secondary education. The main structure is a 3+2+3 model; a three-year bachelor's degree, two-year master's degree and three- to four-year doctoral programme.

## Main concepts

### Students

PISA 2018 shows a clear decline in Norwegian students' performance in reading from 2015, back to the level from previous PISA surveys. The results in mathematics are the same as in 2015, and in science there is a slight decline. Norway is still at or above the OECD average in all three disciplines. For the first time, Norwegian girls perform significantly better than boys in all three subject areas reading, mathematics and science.

In Norway, there is less correlation between students' home background and school performance than in most other countries. There is also little variation between schools compared to other countries. This indicates that Norwegian schools are to a large extent able to provide an equal school offer to pupils with different backgrounds, and that the vast majority of schools have pupils at different levels of achievement. ([The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training - PISA 2018 results](#)).

## Institutions

With large within-school variation in performance, learning environments in schools are less positive than the OECD average according to views of students at age 15. Schools leaders focus more on administrative than pedagogical tasks.

Teachers report a high degree of self-efficacy and motivation to teach, but they receive less feedback and participate in fewer professional development activities than the TALIS average. Schools leaders focus more on administrative than pedagogical tasks ([OECD 2013: TALIS - Teaching and Learning International Study](#))

Norway has developed a multifaceted system for evaluation and assessment in education: A quality assessment system [[Kvalitetsvurderingssystemet](#)]. The aim is to promote quality development throughout kindergarten, primary education and secondary education and training. National and local plans and goals are the basis for this systematic process. The quality assessment system consists of a knowledge base, tools, procedures and goals for key actors on different levels.

## Governance and funding

Norway's central government sets the goals and framework, and decision-making is highly decentralised, with primary schools run by municipalities and secondary schools run by county municipalities.

Tertiary institutions are mostly autonomous in their decisions, including those on how they allocate resources.

Norway has generous funding at all levels of the education system: public and private educational institutions at all levels get most of their funding from public sources. Public education is free.

In 2006, the Government introduced **the Knowledge Promotion** for primary and secondary education ([The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2006: The Knowledge Promotion Reform](#)).

The reform placed increased focus on basic skills and entailed a shift to outcome-based learning, new distribution of teaching hours per subject, a new structure of available courses within education programmes and more autonomy at the local level. The main elements of the reform are:

- **Basic skills:** In the subject curricula, five basic skills (reading, oral expression, writing, numeracy and use of digital tools) are integrated to adapt to each subject. The number of lessons in primary school was increased, especially in the first four years, in order to improve pupils' basic skills. The reform stresses that individual students receive learning adapted to their abilities. In addition, for Years 1-4, municipalities shall ensure that adapted teaching in Norwegian/Sami language and mathematics is provided and is especially directed towards pupils with weak abilities in reading and mathematics.
- **Clear standards for learning:** Subject curricula include clear objectives specifying the level of competence expected from students after Years 4, 7 and 10 and after each level in upper secondary education and training.
- [A Quality Framework](#) defines the principles for developing optimal learning environments and learning achievements.



- Decentralisation of decision-making: The reform also gives municipalities more authority for decision-making in methods of instruction, choice of learning materials, development of curricula, and the organization of instruction.

## 6.2 Administration and governance

### Cross-sectorial cooperation

The “0-24 cooperation” is a cross-sectorial initiative of the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education to support and strengthen necessary coordination and cooperation in counties and municipalities, for the benefit of children and young people and their families. There is a specific emphasis on increasing the successful completion rate in upper secondary school [videregående skole].

[The Ministry of Culture](#), and the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) cooperate on drafting and implementing policy on youth culture, as many of the youth culture programmes are aimed towards young people in schools.

### Governance

The Norwegian Parliament and the Government define the goals and decide the framework for the education sector. The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) is responsible for primary and secondary school, upper secondary and tertiary vocational education and higher education sectors, kindergartens, cultural schools, vocational education and training and adult learning. The Ministry is also responsible for research and integration.

The ministry is supported by several subordinate agencies, which include:

- [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#) - the agency responsible for kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools.
- [The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education \(NOKUT\)](#) - the agency responsible for assuring the quality of higher education in Norway, and assessing and providing information about the quality of courses in other countries.
- [Skills Norway](#) - the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, which promotes access and participation in formal, non-formal and informal adult education through research, basic skills, integration, career guidance and programmes and subsidies.
- [The Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education \(DIKU\)](#) - the agency for international programmes and measures related to education.
- [The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund](#) – the agency responsible for administering student grants and loans.
- [Universities and University Colleges](#) - Norway currently has 10 universities, 6 university colleges and 5 scientific colleges owned by the state. Norway also has a large number of private higher education institutions, 15 of which receive government support.

The main non-public actors taking part in the development of policies in the field of education and training for young people include:

- The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions [[Universitets- og høyskolerådet - UHR](#)] - a co-operative body for higher education institutions in Norway.
- [The National Union of Students in Norway](#) [Norsk studentorganisasjon – NSO] - the largest organisation for students in Norway. The organization has 33 member unions from higher education institutions across the country. The member unions represent more than 230 000 students. NSO’s goal is to ensure students’ academic, social and economic rights.



- [School Student Union of Norway](#) [Elevorganisasjonen - EO] – union for students in lower- and upper secondary school [ungdomsskole og videregående skole]. The Union works to provide information on student rights, and to influence the national and local school politics in Norway.
- [Organization for Norwegian Vocational Students](#) [Organisasjon for Norske Fagskolestudenter - ONE] – union representing students in vocational schools in Norway. The Union works to provide information on student rights, and to influence the national and local school politics in Norway. The organization offers professional counselling for vocational students.

The administration of the education system is divided into three levels: central level, county level, and municipal level with different responsibilities:

- The Ministry of Education and Research has the overall responsibility for the institutions of higher education and research.
- The counties are responsible for upper secondary education, for the running of the schools, the intake of pupils and the appointment of teachers.
- The municipalities are responsible for kindergartens, primary and lower secondary education (compulsory education), for the running of the schools, the building and maintenance of school buildings, the intake of pupils and the appointment of teachers.

See also Eurydice Country Description Norway, Chapter 2 on:

- [2.6 Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level](#)
- [2.7 Administration and Governance at Local and/or Institutional Level](#)

## 6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

### National strategy

*White Paper No. 20 (2012-2013)* [[På rett vei](#)] introduced measures to strengthen the quality of basic education. Challenges in vocational and vocational education and training in upper secondary education are central to the paper, and includes measures linked to vocational and practical training, to give students and apprentices better conditions to complete education and training.

The Lied-committee, chaired by Ragnhild Lied, was appointed by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) on 1 September 2017. The committee's mandate has been to assess the strengths and weaknesses of today's upper secondary education, and to propose changes in the structure, organization and composition of the education. On December 17, 2019, the committee handed over the Official Norwegian Report on the structure and content of upper secondary education [[NOU 2019: 25 Med rett til å mestre – Struktur og innhold i videregående opplæring](#)]. The committee proposes measures to help students master their education so that they are qualified for further education, working life and active participation in society. The report has been presented for public consultation. This will lay the foundation for a parliamentary report on upper secondary school, which will be presented in the spring of 2021.

### Formal education: main policy measures on ELET

The 'programme for fulfilment of upper secondary education' [[Program for bedre gjennomføring i videregående opplæring](#)] is the overarching national initiative to reduce ELET in upper secondary education. The initiative is centred on establishing lasting collaboration between the central government, the regional county authorities and local municipalities in order to get more young people to complete upper secondary education. The initiative put forward a national target to increase the completion rate from 70% to 75% and consists of a series of initiatives on national, regional and municipal level. The

programme contains national, regional and local measures and is organised along two tracks:

Track 1 – systematise and develop the county council's overall knowledge and experience with measures aimed at the target group.

Track 2 systematically test measures aimed at getting more people to complete upper secondary education. Research communities and counties have collaborated to develop measures, and obtain funding to develop, pilot, test and then evaluate the impact of the measures.

It is too early to say anything about the effects of the measures. The final reports from the programme will be delivered in 2020.

### **Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work**

There are no top-level initiatives for actions aiming at preventing and reducing ELET through non-formal or informal learning or youth work.

### **Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions**

From 2015 the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families, the Directorate for Labor and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education, cooperated through the "[0-24 collaboration](#)" ([0-24 samarbeidet](#)). The purpose of the collaboration was to help ensure that all children and young people receive the support and help they need to master their own lives. With a specific emphasis on increasing the successful completion rate in upper secondary. The 0-24 collaboration was terminated during March 2021, after 5 years. The collaboration will be continued, but it is not yet completely clear in what form.

## **6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning**

### **Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning**

Adults who are entitled to primary and lower secondary education, have a statutory right to have their prior learning validated. Their competences are assessed against learning outcomes in the national curricula, and approved subjects are certified in their final primary education diploma. Prior learning comprises all the competence a person has acquired through paid or unpaid work, in-service training, continuing education, leisure activities in addition to the competence documented through basic education and training.

A candidate may apply for an assessment of prior experiential learning both when

- Seeking admission to higher education.
- Seeking recognition of education if they want to take a Norwegian apprenticeship examination for a Norwegian craft certificate.

National regulations and guidelines set up general frames for local provision of validation in the counties or in the higher education institutions. The responsibility for the local provision in primary, lower and upper secondary education is decentralised to county education administrations. Other national regulations and guidelines apply to post-secondary VET colleges and institutions in higher education where each learning institution has more autonomy in defining validation procedures.

For more information and background see Eurydice chapter 8 Adult Education and Training, section 8.5 Validation of non-formal and informal learning and [2016 Norway Country Report: update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

## Information and guidance

General information about validation of prior learning can be found on the websites of [Skills Norway](#), the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, and [The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education \(NOKUT\)](#). For upper secondary education and training, staff at the regional assessment centres provide information and guidance. In lower secondary education the adult education centres are responsible for advice and guidance. For validation in relation to admission to post-secondary VET colleges and higher education institutions, information and guidance is part of enrolment services. See [2016 Norway Country Report: update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

## Quality assurance

[Skills Norway](#), in cooperation with relevant stakeholders from the sector, developed guidelines for validation towards enrolment in tertiary vocational education and towards exemption in higher education. In 2013, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training developed national standards for validation in lower and upper secondary education.

The municipalities and counties are responsible for quality assurance of validation relating to lower and upper secondary education and training. In higher education it is up to the individual institution to ensure the quality of their validation services. The [Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education \(NOKUT\)](#) is responsible for external quality assurance in higher education.

## 6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

### Policy framework

White Paper No. 16 (2016-2017) “[Kultur for kvalitet i høyere utdanning](#)” on quality in higher education defines cross-border learning mobility as a prerequisite for quality in higher education and sets specific goals for cross-border learning mobility: all higher education institutions should have professional environments that participate actively in international cooperation, including exchange programmes, and it is a stated goal that 20 percent of those taking a higher education degree in Norway in 2020 should have been on an exchange. The long-term goal is 50 percent.

### Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education

[The Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education \(DIKU\)](#) manages a number of international programs and schemes and programs for the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission, and the Nordic Council of Ministers. Examples of mobility programmes are [Nordplus](#), cooperation in education within the Nordic and Baltic countries, and [NORPART - Norwegian Partnership Programme for Global Academic Cooperation](#), supporting institutional cooperation and mobility in higher education. A full list of programmes and grants can be found on the [DIKU website](#). In addition to programme administration, DIKU is responsible for promoting Norway as a cooperation and study destination, as well as providing information and advisory services within the field of internationalisation in education.

Erasmus+ supports transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation. DIKU hosts the national office for [Erasmus+ sports](#), while the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) hosts the national office for [Erasmus+ Youth in Action](#).

However, most Norwegian students abroad are full degree students and not related to any organised or formal student exchange programme. Full degree students are eligible, and can receive funding from [The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund](#) [Lånekassen]. The

degree may additionally be funded by other scholarships or other sources of funding. Norwegian students who do an exchange stay abroad as a part of their degree in Norway are also eligible to receive funding from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund. The loans and grants from the State Educational Loan Fund are portable. Portable funding means that additional funding is awarded where school tuition surpasses the expenses that the Norwegian student will typically have in their home country.

Norwegian colleges and universities usually have an exchange coordinator/advisor that assists students abroad who do exchange stays as a part of their degree in Norway. The exchange coordinator/advisor is also responsible to promote student mobilisation, and promote active exchange programmes, like the Erasmus+ programme for student mobility in education.

[The Association of Norwegian Students Abroad \(ANSA\)](#) is a student interest and support organization for Norwegian students studying abroad. They offer information and guidance, expat support and network opportunities, and work for the interest and value of education mobility.

### **Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work**

Apart from Erasmus+ Youth in Action Norway does not have a top-level measure/initiative/programme to promote mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work.

### **Quality assurance**

In addition to specific quality assurance and annual mechanisms in Erasmus+ for formal and informal learning and other international mobility programmes DIKU publishes a series of report covering data and analysis on cross-border mobility, motives and experienced barriers for mobility, user surveys and reporting on how students themselves experience the quality and benefits of international mobility. A full list of reports can be found on the [DIKU website](#).

## **6.6 Social inclusion through education and training**

### **Educational support**

Inclusion is the basic principle and goal of the Government's educational policy. This is supported by a wide range of services focusing on inclusion in mainstream education. [The Education Act](#) which concerns primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary education ensures the pupils right to special needs support. The Education Act also ensures the right to adapted language education for pupils from language minorities who have a mother tongue other than Norwegian or Sami. If necessary, such pupils are also entitled to mother tongue instruction, bilingual subject teaching, or both. The formal responsibility for adapting education to the needs of all pupils, including those with special needs, lies with the county municipality and municipal sector. In higher education, there is no legal basis for the policy of equal right to education. However, according to [the Act on Universities and University Colleges](#) of 2005, higher education institutions should, where possible, provide facilities suitable for students with special needs.

The most recent policy document reinforcing the principle of inclusion in schools is [White Paper No. 6 \(2019-2020\)](#) [Tett på – tidlig innsats og inkluderende fellesskap i barnehage, skole og SFO]. The paper spells out early intervention and inclusive measures to ensure opportunities for all children and young people - regardless of social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, gender, cognitive and physical differences. The paper is primarily concerned with measures relating to kindergartens, elementary and lower secondary education and after school facilities, but several measures also apply to upper secondary education. Other defining policies with emphasis on early intervention and effective learning environments for children and adults with special needs are [White Paper No. 18 \(2010-2011\)](#) [Læring og

fellesskap: Tidlig innsats og gode læringsmiljøer for barn, unge og voksne med særlige behov] and [White Paper No. 20 \(2012 – 2013\)](#) [På rett vei: Kvalitet og mangfold i fellesskolen]. The [Government's action plan](#) (2016) on universal design is another important policy document dedicated to removing obstacles to the participation of young people in education and training.

[Statped](#) is the national centre of expertise within the field of special pedagogics in the education sector. Statped's social mandate is help children, youth and adults with special education needs in the best possible way can master their own lives and participate actively in education, work and society. Statped may offer programmes for young people to overcome obstacles to their participation in formal and non-formal education and learning. These services need to be accessed through municipal and county-municipal agencies.

As most special needs provision and adaptive education measures are provided at local level (county municipal and county municipal level, the amount of funding and services offered vary greatly.

## Social cohesion and equal opportunities

The legal and policy framework seeks to ensure equal access to and equal opportunities to succeed in, and successfully graduate from, formal education. Important priorities in formal education are democratic participation, cultural development and each individuals' sense of self-esteem and identity.

Policy documents relating to social cohesion and equal opportunities through education are the Government's [action plan against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression \(2021-2024\)](#) and the [action plan against discrimination based on ethnicity and religion](#) (2020-2023).

## 6.7 Skills for innovation

### Innovation in formal education

Norway's current national strategy for the development of entrepreneurship competence and of an entrepreneurial mind-set among young people is described in the action plan [Entrepreneurship in Education and Training – from compulsory school to higher education 2009-2014](#) [[Handlingsplan Entreprenørskap i utdanningen – fra grunnskole til høyere utdanning 2009–2014](#)]

Entrepreneurship for both compulsory education and for upper secondary education and training is embedded in the Core Curriculum (under revision), the [Quality Framework](#) and in the various subject curricula. A more detailed description can be found in the strategy '[See the Opportunities and Make them Work!](#)'.

See YouthWiki chapter 3 on Employment and Entrepreneurship in Norway where entrepreneurship training/teaching is described separately for:

- Upper Secondary Education.
- Vocational Education and Training.
- Higher Education.
- Adult Education.

Entrepreneurship education is not a compulsory topic in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Norway.

Teachers in general upper secondary education are offered CPD activities (Continuing professional development) related to entrepreneurship education.

No central guidelines are provided for any curriculum area.

Several European countries are developing entrepreneurship education at school through the Lifelong Learning Programme (which has now become the ERASMUS+ programme) aiming to enable people, at any stage of their life, to take part in stimulating learning experiences.

The Norwegian Directorate for Teaching and Training and the Norwegian Center for ICT in Education offers teaching materials, good practices, and pedagogical approaches through the website [pedent.no](https://pedent.no). The target practitioners are primary school teachers and other formal educators.

The organisation JA-YE Norway [[Ungt Entreprenørskap](#)] also offers teaching materials for primary school [[grunnskole 1. – 7. trinn](#)], lower secondary school [[Grunnskole 8. – 10. trinn](#)], upper secondary school [[videregående opplæring](#)] and higher education [[høyere utdanning](#)].

There is currently no separate formal certification on entrepreneurship teaching or training.

There is currently no national initiated development of networks for teaching Entrepreneurship outside the [pedent.no](https://pedent.no) initiative.

### **Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work**

Norway has no top-level policy measures regulating the recognition and validation of entrepreneurial learning in non-formal and informal learning environments (e.g., in accordance with the proposed European Commission recommendation).

Norway has no top-level policy measures setting up specific tools (e.g., learning kit, self-assessment, portfolio for entrepreneurial competence) in non-formal or informal learning settings.

## **6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media**

### **National strategy**

The Government's Digitization strategy for basic education 2017–2021 [[Digitaliseringsstrategi for grunnsopplæringen 2017–2021](#)] aims to make new technologies readily available to empower young people's learning and creativity, including capacity for innovation. The main goals of the strategy are:

- Pupils should have digital skills that enable them to experience life's challenges and succeed in further education, work and community participation.
- ICT should be well utilized in the organization and implementation of training to increase pupils' learning outcomes.

Specific measures include developing safe digital infrastructures and raising skills among teachers as well as measures for:

Student learning and school content

- Technology and coding into school curricula.
- Elective in coding permanent scheme from 2019.
- National pilot on coding as a program in higher education.
- Universal design of digital teaching materials.
- Spread knowledge about the use of technology and digital learning materials for students with special needs.
- Stimulating grants to develop new, digital teaching tools in vocational and vocational education.



In 2021 the Ministry of Children and Families released a [National strategy for safe digital upbringing](#) (Rett på nett. Nasjonal strategi for trygg digital oppvekst). The purpose of the strategy is to develop an overall, future-oriented and comprehensive policy in the area. The strategy points to positive aspects and opportunities for children and young people's internet use, but also risks and challenges.

## Media literacy and online safety through formal education

### Curriculum/steering documents

Media literacy and online safety is signified as “digital skills” [digitale ferdigheter] in the Norwegian [Core Curriculum](#). Digital skills are defined as one of five basic skills (oral skills, reading, writing, digital skills, and numeracy).

Obtaining digital skills is considered fundamental to learning in all subjects as well as a prerequisite for learners to be able to demonstrate their competences and qualifications.

In addition to the strategy official documents addressing media literacy within the context of the national curriculum, are:

- White paper No. 28 (2015-16) – A renewal of the Knowledge Promotion (In Norwegian: [Meld. St. 28 \(2015–2016\) Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse – En fornyelse av Kunnskapsløftet](#)).
- Official Norwegian report (NOU) 2014:7 Pupil's learning in the school of the future (in Norwegian: [NOU 2014: 7 Elevenes læring i fremtidens skole](#). English summary available)
- Official Norwegian report (NOU) 2015:8 The school of the future – renewal of subjects and competences. (In Norwegian: [NOU 2015:8 Fremtidens skole – fornyelse av fag og kompetanser](#))
- White paper (Meld. St.) No. 16 (2015-16) – From exclusion to new opportunities – coordinated efforts for adult education (in Norwegian: [Meld. St. 16 \(2015–2016\) Fra utenforskap til ny sjanse – Samordnet innsats for voksnes læring](#))

### Main topics addressed

[Framework for basic skills](#) (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013) defines and describes the five basic skills – oral skills, reading, writing, digital skills and numeracy. All subject-specific curricula describe how the five basic skills contribute to developing learner competence and qualifications and how they are integrated into the subject.

Digital skills involve being able to use digital tools, media and resources, efficiently and responsibly, to solve practical tasks, find and process information, design digital products and communicate content. Digital skills also include developing digital judgment by acquiring knowledge and good strategies for using the Internet. They are seen as a prerequisite for further learning and for active participation in working life and a society in a constant change.

The framework defines five [subcategories of digital skills](#): Use and understand, search and process, produce, communicate, and digital judgement.

### Pedagogical tools and teacher support

Framework for the Teacher's Professional Digital Competence (In Norwegian: [Rammeverk for lærerens digitale kompetanse](#)) is a guidance for teacher students, teachers, policymakers and others to improve the teachers digital knowledge, skills and general competence in the teacher initial education (ITE) and in the teachers continuing professional development (CPD).

As a continuing support, Skills Norway [Kompetanse Norge] offers a launch site for teachers and care takers on digital skills [\[Digitale Ferdigheter\]](#).



The site offers:

- Tools, tests and questionnaires on digital skills and safety.
- Web-based courses, training programmes and mapping tools.
- Educational programmes, like online educational quizzes and games for children and youth.

Equivalent pedagogical tools and teacher support is also offered by the Norwegian Directorate for Education e.g. for the national project Lower Secondary Education in Development (2012-2017) [[Ungdomstrinn i utvikling](#)].

## **Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning**

Norway does not have national policy, programme, project or initiative enhancing young people's media literacy and awareness about online safety issues in the context of non-formal or informal learning.

Youth workers and others in non-formal/informal learning environments have access to digital resources and tools offered by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and from Skills Norway (see description above).

## **Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media**

Information providers/ counselling structures

The Center for ICT in Education (IKT-senteret), The Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet) and The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Utdanningsdirektoratet) has developed a common web site with resources for children, youth and adults to strengthen privacy, safe use of Internet and digital judgement: [Dubestemmer.no](#) (You decide).

[The Norwegian Data Protection Authority](#) [Datatilsynet] acts as the Ombudsman for Privacy (Personvernombud) in Norway. The authority protects the right to privacy and strives to prevent misuse of personal data and offers several practical online resources of particular relevance to children, youth, parents, and schools on digital safety:

- [Children, Youth and Schools](#) (Barn, ungdom og skole) Relevant regulations, guidance etc.
- [Personvernbloggen](#) ['Privacy blog'] General blog on issues regarding privacy.
- [Dubestemmer.no](#) ['You decide'] Particularly for the age groups of 9-13, and 13-18. Presents facts, stories, exercises and videos about privacy and digital responsibility
- [Slettmeget.no](#) ['delete me'] The aim of the service is to help people who experience privacy violations online.
- [ID-tyveri.no](#) ['ID theft'] Providing information for prevention and assistance to those who have been exposed to ID theft and fraud.

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is the main information provider in terms of a dedicated website to youth ([ung.no](#)), and topics addressed includes bullying/cyber bullying, grooming, identity theft, social media sharing etc.

## **Awareness raising initiatives**

The Ombudsperson for Children has been advocating for coordinated and long-term joint efforts for safer digital spaces for children and young people. It organised an expert group of youth aged 14-18 that delivered a [report on youth and digital media](#) in 2019, including a number of recommendations to improve digital safety for young people.

The Norwegian Media Authority [Medietilsynet] is coordinating the [National strategy for safe digital upbringing](#) (Rett på nett. Nasjonal strategi for trygg digital oppvekst) and offers a wide range of [teaching and conversation tools about online hate](#).

## 6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

### Information providers / counselling structures

Outside of the mandate of the National office of Erasmus+ Youth in Action, Norway clusters non-formal and informal learning most-often under volunteering.

Recognition of voluntary activities is closely linked to the recognition of the work of non-governmental organisations, or more loosely organized grass root activity/volunteering. The fact that financial support is given by local, regional and national government to non-governmental youth organisations indicates that voluntary activities are recognised by government at all levels.

Norway has no policy framework or official document in the national system (e.g. parliament's bill, government's decree, or framework law) that defines and regulates the transferability and recognition of skills and competencies acquired through volunteering.

Norway has further no national policy framework or official document that defines and regulates the transferability and recognition of skills and competencies acquired through volunteering to formal education.

### Awareness raising initiatives

There are no top-level initiatives to raise awareness among the public about the value of non-formal and informal learning, including through youth work.

## 6.10 Current debates and reforms

There are several current debates and political initiatives on every educational level. Education is high on the political agenda in Norway.

Eurydice Country Description Norway, Chapter 14 [Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments](#) reflects the latest policy actions and decisions. The chapters are regularly updated with news.

# 7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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## Introduction

Norwegian local administrations (municipalities and county-municipalities) have a high degree of autonomy to solve appointed tasks by top level authorities. Municipal health provision and services thus vary between the municipal health providers. Youth health stations are organized under municipal administration and funding.

## 7.1 General context

### Main trends in the health conditions of young people

[Ungdata](#), a cross national collection scheme designed to conduct young people surveys at the municipal level, and which is financed through the national budget, is regarded as the most comprehensive source of information on adolescent health and well-being at the

municipal and national levels. Data is used in municipal planning and developmental work related to public health and preventive measures aimed at young people.

Ungdata covers various aspects of young people's lives such as relationship with parents and friends, leisure activities, health issues, local environment, well-being, and school issues. The surveys also include questions about tobacco and drug use, and participation in various forms of antisocial behaviour such as violence and bullying.

Data for 2019 show that in general, young people in Norway are doing well. Most young people enjoy the life they live. They are happy with their parents, with the school they attend, and with the local community in which they live. Nine out of ten young people have close friends. Most have an active free time where social media, computer games, exercise and sports, organized leisure activities, schoolwork and being with friends, characterize everyday life. The majority report good physical and mental health, and most are optimistic about their own future. The report also shows that there are systematic differences related to how young people with different social backgrounds feel and what they do in their free time. On most indicators, young people who grow up in families with high socio-economic status and many resources come out better compared to young people from lower social strata. The 2019 report also documents some recent trends: increased youth crime, cannabis use and violence, increased prevalence of mental health problems, less future optimism and more screen time. The report also shows that an increasing number of young people are not enjoying/thriving in school, and that there is an increasing number of young people who perceive school as boring.

A [2016 literature review](#) published by [the Centre for Welfare and Labour Research, OsloMet](#) indicates that there has been an increase in mental health problems, especially among young girls and with a clearer increase in the 1990s than after the year 2000. The '[Student Health and Well-Being Survey' \(SHoT\) 2018](#) maps students' health and well-being in a broad sense, with an emphasis on psychosocial conditions. It is Norway's largest student survey on the topic. As many as 50,055 students responded to the SHoT 2018 survey. The survey is national and is carried out on behalf of the student associations [SiT](#), [SiO](#) and [Sammen](#). Survey results also confirm an increasing trend of mental health issues among Norwegian students.

Finally, the [first national survey on child abuse and neglect among a representative sample of Norwegian 12-16-year-olds was completed in 2019](#). The Norwegian Ministry of Child and Family Affairs gave the [Norwegian Centre for Traumatic Stress Studies](#) (NKVTS) the task to carry out the survey. The study had a cross-sectional design and participants were recruited from schools. A total of 9240 adolescents participated in the study. The results indicate that children and adolescents are still not sufficiently protected against child abuse and neglect, and that some groups of children and adolescents are more at risk than others. Most of the youth who had been subjected to one type of violence or abuse had also experienced other forms of violence or abuse. Girls had more often been exposed to several types of violence, than boys. Only a minority of youth who were subjected to violence and abuse say that they have been in contact with health care services after the abuse had ended.

## Main concepts

The Norwegian government employs a broad definition of public health to include factors that directly or indirectly promote the health and well-being of the population, prevent mental and somatic illness, injury or suffering, or protect against health threats, and work for a more even distribution of factors that directly or indirectly affect health. Targeting young people's health and well-being often fall under overall public health measures, but the current government health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people health 2016 – 2021 [[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)], focuses specifically on:

- Health and poverty
- Sports and volunteering,

- Bullying, prejudice and discrimination
- Violence and abuse
- Drugs tobacco and alcohol
- Sexual health
- Mental health
- Young people health services, and the utility of digital platforms and services for young people

## 7.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

There is no top-level authority that is singularly responsible for 'youth health' but the [Ministry of Health and Care Services](#) is responsible for providing good and equal health and care services for the population, including young people. The ministry directs these services by means of legislation, annual budgetary allocations and through underlying agencies such as the [Norwegian Directorate of Health](#) and the [Norwegian Institute of Public Health](#).

Everyone in Norway is entitled to essential medical and care services, including to be assigned a general practitioner (GP) in the municipality in which they live. Everyone is also entitled to essential mental health care and GPs can refer to more specialized services.

The [Public Health Act](#) stipulates that public health is a responsibility in all sectors, not only in the health sector, and at all levels of government, ie municipalities, county municipalities and state authorities. The Act imposes an obligation on the municipalities to take necessary measures to meet the municipality's public health challenges, including measures related to adolescence and young people's health such as housing, education, work and income, physical and social environments, physical activity, nutrition, injuries and accidents, tobacco use and alcohol and other intoxicants.

The [Norwegian Institute of Public Health](#) monitors the development of public health prepares annual public health profiles for each municipality and county municipality. Furthermore, the Public Health Institute operates the Municipal Health Statistics Bank. The Public Health Institute and the [Norwegian Directorate of Health](#) develop tools and guidance for municipalities to implement the Public Health Act.

Local youth health stations and school health services are statutory services provided by the municipalities, designed to safeguard physical and mental health and provide health-promoting and preventative services for children and young people. The school health services are found in all primary schools, secondary schools and upper secondary schools and may consist of a health nurse, school physician, psychologist and physiotherapist or others. The school health service is responsible for vaccination and, in collaboration with the school, offers tuition for classes, groups and individual conversations. Youth Health Stations provide free and multidisciplinary services for young people up to the age of 20. The service can consist of a health nurse, doctor and psychologist, and is usually open in the afternoons.

Main non-public actors that take part in the development of youth health and well-being policies include:

[The Norwegian Association of Youth with Disabilities](#) [Unge Funksjonshemmede] - represents several member organizations for youth with different types of disabilities and chronic diseases.

[Sex og samfunn](#) - works for sexual and reproductive health and rights through clinical and educational activities, as well as through professional development and political lobbying.

[Skeiv ungdom](#) - member organization open to anyone under 30 (gay, bisexual, lesbian, trans and queer youth, and supporters) that works to ensure equal, legal rights and improve public services 'queer' youth.

[Juvente Norway](#)- is a youth organisation focused on drug prevention and public policies on substance abuse.

## Cross-sectorial cooperation

The [Public Health Act](#) stipulates that public health is a responsibility in all sectors, not only in the health sector. [White Paper No. 19 \(2018-2019\)](#) on Public Health [Folkehelsemeldinga: Gode liv i et trygt samfunn] which has a separate chapter on youth also emphasises public health work as important in all sectors and at all levels of government. In 2016 the Government launched a youth health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021 [[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)] signed by seven ministries – the Ministry of Health and Care Services, the Ministry of Children and Families, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation.

The overall objectives of the strategy are:

- All sectors of society must contribute to create good conditions for growing up, good mental and physical health and reduced social health inequalities.
- Enhance accessibility to low-threshold healthcare, more interdisciplinary collaboration and good patient care in all parts of health and care services
- The voice of youth and young adults must be heard in the design of services that affect them
- Ensure accessible and high-quality services on digital platforms
- Improved knowledge base on health, living conditions and health services for young people and young adults

The "0-24 cooperation" is a cross-sectoral initiative of the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education to support and strengthen necessary coordination and cooperation in counties and municipalities, for the benefit of vulnerable children and young people and their families.

## 7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

### National strategy(ies)

[White Paper No. 19 \(2018-2019\)](#) on Public Health [Folkehelsemeldinga: Gode liv i et trygt samfunn] mentions physical activity explicitly. However, the Government has initiated development of a new national action plan for physical activity with concrete measures in several social areas and arenas, such as day care, school, workplace, elderly care, transport, local environment and spots/recreation. The goal of a 10 percent reduction in physical inactivity by 2025 is being pursued, with a long-term goal 15 percent reduction in physical inactivity by 2030, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Directorate of Health has developed [national guidelines on Physical activity](#) with specific recommendations for children and adolescents. The guidelines include national recommendations, information about the evidence base for the recommendations and practical information about how the recommendations can be implemented.

One of the topics of the Government's youth health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021

[[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)] is related to sports and recreation with the following goals:

- All children and adolescents should, regardless of socioeconomic background, have the opportunity to participate in at least one organized sports/recreational activity with others
- Limit youth sports dropouts
- Create healthy sports arenas for both girls and boys - through dietary knowledge and sports nutrition, changing attitudes to eating disorders in sports and reducing incidences of eating disorders among young athletes.

## Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

The '[Recreation Declaration](#)' [Fritidserklæringen] is a collaborative effort between municipalities, the voluntary sector and top-level authorities to ensure that all children, regardless of their parents' social and financial situation, have the opportunity to participate regularly in at least one organized recreational/sports activity with other children.

As part of the declaration the previous Government initiated a 'Recreation Card' trial [Fritidskortet]. All children aged 6-18 in selected municipalities received a partial subsidy to cover organized recreational/sports activities. The goal was to make participation in recreational/sports activities less dependent on socio-economic background. In 2021 the new Government decided not to make the Recreational card a national scheme and the pilot in selected municipalities will thus end by 1. July 2022. The Government proposes to instead strengthen the new [subsidy scheme for children and young people](#) by NOK 50 million. With the proposal, the subsidy scheme is about NOK 555 million.

## Physical education in schools

Physical education and sports are incorporated into the national curricula, is mandatory, and taught as a separate subject. Physical education is meant to 'help pupils acquire knowledge about exercise and training, lifestyle and health, and motivate them to have an active life and continue physical training into adulthood.' ([Directorate for Teaching and Training, KRO01-04/purpose](#)).

Teaching hours are given in 60-minute units, 223 hours in **lower secondary school and 56 hours in upper secondary school for both general studies (except the programme for music dance and drama) and vocational education programmes.**

**Pedagogical tools and support provided to teachers responsible for physical education include the following:**

- **The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Udir)** provides some pedagogical tools and support through their [website](#) where acquired skills and recommended tests and approaches are reviewed.
- **The Norwegian National Centre for Food, Health and Physical Activity** [[Nasjonalt senter for mat, helse og fysisk aktivitet](#)] is one of several national centres under The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, and The Ministry of Education and Research, and runs a resource platform dedicated to physical education and outdoor leisure activity.
- **The Norwegian Digital Learning Arena** is a joint enterprise operating on behalf of the county councils in Norway. Its aim is to develop and publish high quality, internet-based open educational resources (OER) in subjects taught at upper secondary school level and make these freely available. The Norwegian Digital Learning Arena offers pedagogical tools and support through their platform: [Nasjonal digital læringsarena – NDLA Kroppsøving](#).



## Collaboration and partnerships

The aforementioned '[Recreation Declaration](#)' [Fritidserklæringen] is a collaborative effort between municipalities, the voluntary sector and top-level authorities to among other things promote physical activity among children and young people.

## 7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

### National strategy(ies)

The Government's youth health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021 [[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)] sets out a number of goals and measures for promoting healthy lifestyles, including in the areas of alcohol and drugs, tobacco, physical activity and nutrition, and sexual health.

Recent national strategies and plans in the area of public health support the implementation of the youth health strategy:

- The Government's National Action Plan for a Better Diet (2017-2021) [[Nasjonal handlingsplan for bedre kosthold \(2017-2021\) – Sunt kosthold, måltids glede og god helse for alle!](#)] will help to achieve the youth health strategy goals related to nutrition through:
  - Promoting healthy meals and meal arrangements in schools
  - Help ensure that schools adhere to the [national guidelines on nutrition and meals in schools](#)
  - Engage young people through various activities for healthy and sustainable diets
- [White Paper No. 19 \(2018-2019\)](#) on Public Health [Folkehelsemeldinga: Gode liv i et trygt samfunn], which includes a new national tobacco strategy for 2019-2021, supplements the youth health strategy's focus on creating a tobacco-free youth generation, and with a particular goal on preventing an increase in the use of snus (snuff) among young people.
- The National Plan to strengthen efforts in drug prevention and rehabilitation (2016-2020) [Prop. 15 S (2015-2016) [Opptrappingsplanen for rusfeltet \(2016-2020\)](#)] includes measures reiterated as goals in the youth health strategy such as increasing knowledge and skills on drug and addiction problems in all sectors and strengthen and increase the use of routines related to the detection and mapping of drug problems in municipalities and in somatic hospital wards.
- One of the measures set out in the youth health strategy is the development of the Government's Sexual Health Strategy "Talk about it! (2017 – 2020)" [[Snakk om det! Strategi for seksuell helse \(2017 – 2020\)](#)], which includes activities for increasing young people's knowledge and skills to safeguard their own sexual health.

### Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

The Directorate of Health has developed [national guidelines on nutrition and meals in schools](#) with specific recommendations for young people in secondary education. The guidelines include information about the evidence base for the recommendations and practical information about how the recommendations can be implemented.

The Directorate of Health has also developed a [digital tobacco prevention education program](#) with five lessons at each stage of secondary school. The goal is for students to learn how to make independent choices and set boundaries.

The [national programme for public health](#) [Folkehelseprogrammet] run by the Directorate of Health aims to strengthen mental health and substance abuse prevention as part of the



municipalities' public health work, as well as raising the municipalities' capacity in developing, implementing and evaluating knowledge-based measures. The programme has a focus on children and youth. Counties apply for grants to implement projects in the municipalities. In 2017, grants totalling NOK 42.1 million were awarded to six of the counties that applied. An additional NOK 28.4 million were awarded to five new county municipalities in 2018. A baseline survey was conducted in the initial stages of the programme to establish a basis for a mid-term and a final evaluation.

## **Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools**

In upper secondary school health education is an integral part of physical education and sports which is incorporated into the national curricula. The official description of the subject can be accessed (in English and Norwegian) through the website of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training: [Curriculum for Physical education \(KRO1-04\)](#) [Læreplan i kroppsøving (KRO1-04)]. Physical education is meant to 'help pupils acquire knowledge about exercise and training, lifestyle and health, and motivate them to have an active life and continue physical training into adulthood.' ([Directorate for Teaching and Training, KRO01-04/purpose](#)). Physical education is a common core subject for all the education programmes in upper secondary education.

Sex education and personal relationships education usually include biological as well as emotional aspects of sexuality such as knowledge of sexual health and responsible sexual behaviour, awareness of different sexual orientations, reproduction, contraception, pregnancy and birth (EACEA/Eurydice, 2010).

Sex education is primarily given in primary and lower secondary school. Sex education is not taught as a separate subject, but as a part of science, philosophy and ethics, and social science.

Sex education is described as a part of the national curriculum descriptions of the above-mentioned subjects ([The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training – National Curriculum](#)).

## **Peer-to-peer education approaches**

Norway does not have any top-level guidelines, programmes, projects or initiatives facilitating or relying on peer-to-peer education as a form of non-formal or informal learning to health education/healthy lifestyles.

## **Collaboration and partnerships**

Norway does not have an official policy or legal framework that instruct top-level authorities to support the collaboration and the formation of partnerships between schools, youth workers and health professionals in the promotion of youth health.

## **Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people**

The public authorities responsible for disseminating information about youth health and related areas are the Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir).

[ung.no](#), run by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is a public website on which young people can receive information about health and related areas. **#ikkegreit** [**#not\_OK**] is an ongoing campaign initiated in February 2017 targeting young people between the ages of 15 and 23 on domestic violence, 'date rape', sexual assault, and unsolicited sharing of private content online. A dedicated website is hosted on [ung.no](#) which includes information about services that offer help and support.

Local youth health stations and school health services are statutory services provided by the municipalities, designed to safeguard physical and mental health and provide health-promoting and preventative services for children and young people. The Directorate of

Health has developed [national guidelines and recommendations](#) for youth health stations and school health services which includes youth information and counselling.

## 7.5 Mental health

### National strategy(ies)

The Government's youth health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021 [[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)] sets out a number of goals to promote the mental health of youth in public health work:

- Mental health should be equated with physical health and included as an equal part of the local public health work aimed at children and young people
- All children and young people should feel belonging to a community
- Fewer young people should experience body pressure
- Increase the knowledge level of youth about the importance of sleep for health and school performance
- Students should experience good health and coping skills

### Improving the mental health of young people

Top-level measures that have been undertaken to achieve these goals related to mental health in Government's youth health strategy include:

- [The national programme for public health](#) [[Folkehelseprogrammet](#)] run by the Directorate of Health which aims to strengthen mental health and substance abuse prevention as part of the municipalities' public health work, as well as raising the municipalities' capacity in developing, implementing and evaluating knowledge-based measures.
- [The National Plan for children and young people's mental health for the period 2019-2024](#) [Prop. 121 S (2018–2019) Opptappingsplan for barn og unges psykiske helse (2019–2024)]. The plan covers measures to ensure that more children and young people between 0-25 experience good mental health and a good quality of life, and that those who need it should receive appropriate and effective treatment. The plan contains both health-promoting, preventative and treatment-oriented measures. The plan is drawn up in collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Care Services, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- The establishment of a [national grant scheme](#) administered by the Directorate of Health to promote good health and well-being among students and prevent problems related to drug use. The grant scheme will promote new thinking, collaboration and knowledge sharing on preventive substance abuse and mental health work for students. The scheme will be used to follow up the findings in the [Student Health and Well-Being Survey](#) (SHoT) which maps students' health and well-being and which is Norway's largest student survey on the topic. Universities, colleges and vocational colleges as well as student organizations can apply for grants when there is a cooperation agreement with the student union on the specific project / initiative. In addition, the ANSA student organization for Norwegian students abroad is eligible.
- In March 2020 Statistics Norway (SSB) conducted [a national survey on Quality of Life](#). The main purpose of the survey was to get knowledge on Norwegian's quality of life, and study differences between population groups. Questions on general satisfaction with life, satisfaction with different areas of life, optimism for the future, general

engagement, management of life, social relations and positive and negative feelings were asked in the survey.

## 7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

### Policy framework

There is no overall policy or legal framework establishing early detection mechanisms or guiding the signposting of young people at risk. Early detection mechanisms are applied locally through statutory services implemented by municipalities such as youth health stations and school health services, or primary health care services. In schools, priority is given to universal prevention activities that are comprehensively integrated into a learning environment, while the implementation of curricular school-based prevention programmes is decreasing. Programmes to integrate parents into prevention activities are also supported.

### Stakeholders

Municipal services are usually the arenas that youth meet adults that can detect and accommodate to potential health risks. The front-line services may then refer to specialists or longer-term follow-up care/support, should it be required or requested by the youth themselves. Stakeholders include:

- School teachers and personnel
- Social workers
- Youth workers (particularly in youth clubs/youth houses, and organizational/volunteer work)
- School nurses
- Youth health station and sexual health stations
- Primary health care services/General practitioners

### Guidance to stakeholders

The Directorate of Health develops guides for comprehensive patient care for specific diagnoses or groups of patients, national professional advice to improve quality and ensure comprehensive patient care, national guidelines linked to statutory duties in the municipalities and the provision of services. Examples specific for young people in the area of early detection and intervention are:

- National guidelines on early intervention on drug abuse [[Tidlig intervensjon på rusområdet](#) – Fra Bekymring til handling – En veileder om tidlig intervensjon på rusområdet].
- [National guide for patient care - children and youth suffering from mental distress](#) [Pakkeforløp Psykiske lidelser – barn og unge].

The Directorate of Health is also responsible for [Forebygging.no](#), a comprehensive national online resource for stakeholders working in the area of prevention and early detection. The website is meant to:

- Be an up-to-date national knowledge base for substance abuse prevention and preventative health work, including early detection and intervention among children and youth
- Provide experience and research-based knowledge and recognized strategies to practitioners
- Function as an arena for current debates in the field

- Communicate news, current debates, present existing initiatives and highlight effective strategies in the field
- Be the gateway for up to date overview of reports, public documents, courses and conferences related to the field
- Professionals that implement substance abuse prevention and health promotion work, including early detection and intervention (e.g., teachers, health and social workers, voluntary organizations, youth workers)
- Researchers and students
- Policy and management decision makers responsible for substance abuse prevention and health promotion

## Target groups

As there is no overall policy or legal framework the target groups depend on the specific intervention. Target groups may include:

- Youth vulnerable to exclusion, discrimination or bullying
- Youth from low income families
- Families where domestic violence and/or drug abuse has been present
- Domestic and/or sexual abuse survivors
- Youth with disabilities
- Youth who display tendencies of isolation, recidivism, or criminal behaviour.

## Funding

Municipal services usually receive funding in bulks, meaning there are no separate budget posts on mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing risks. Detection and prevention measures and efforts are usually integrated as a part of larger measures and efforts targeting youth.

The Directorate for Health provides several [grants](#) to support substance abuse prevention and preventative health work, including early detection and intervention among children and youth. Beneficiaries of these grant schemes are:

- Municipalities.
- County Municipalities.
- Voluntary organizations and NGOs.
- Foundations
- Private actors or businesses.

The type of activities supported vary greatly but examples are:

- Coordinating functions/staff that help youth access and utilize already existing services.
- Specific programmes and/or activities containing well-being, preventive, or treatment measures/initiatives towards youth health.
- Support to youth organizations working with youth health (youth representation/participation, and activities).
- Measures that support and educate youth workers.

## 7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

One of the goals in the Government's youth health strategy #Young people health – the Norwegian Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021

[[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)] is related to improvement of health facilities for young people through better access, increased multidisciplinary collaboration and good fast track options in all parts of the health and care services.

## 7.8 Current debates and reforms

Youth health is often discussed in the context of policies and initiatives for the entire population. Norway does not have a separate youth law, and youth are judicially (and most often politically) addressed as either children or adults.

Current, ongoing, and suggested new initiatives in youth health policy are described in the Government's strategy for young people's health 2016 – 2021 [[#Ungdomshelse – regjeringens strategi for ungdomshelse 2016-2021](#)].

A new [digital platform for youth health](#) [DIGI-UNG] is under development. The aim is to provide easily accessible and quality-assured health information, guidance and services to youth through a comprehensive digital offering across sectors that contribute to coping and self-help.

The Government initiated a drug reform process with the goal of transferring responsibility for responses to the use and possession of illegal drugs for personal use from the justice sector to the health sector. A committee was set up in 2018 to prepare for the implementation of the reform and handed over an Official Norwegian Report on Drug reform [[NOU 2019: 26 Rusreform – fra straff til hjelp](#)] to the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security on 19. December 2019. On 19. February 2021 the Government submitted a proposal to the Parliament for an amendment to the penal code largely based on the committee's proposals. Use and possession of illicit drugs would continue to be illegal, but such use and possession of smaller quantities for personal use would no longer be punishable. This would apply to purchase, use, possession and storage of smaller quantities of illicit drugs for personal use. However, Norway's main opposition Labour Party rejected the plan. Although the Labour Party is in principle in favour of removing penalties for heavy drug users, it is against decriminalising drug use for the wider population.

## 8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

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### Introduction

In Norway art, culture, sports and volunteering [[Kultur, idrett og frivillighet](#)] are often regarded as interrelated and defined as 'kulturlivet' which translates into 'cultural life'.

The main policy instruments to ensure that all children and young people have access to a diversity of art and high-quality cultural experiences are nationwide "culture schools"/municipal schools of music and the arts, [The Norwegian Youth Festivals of Art](#) [Ung Kultur Møtes – UKM] and the national programme [The Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] through which the cultural and education sectors cooperate in providing school pupils with the opportunity to understand and enjoy all forms of artistic and cultural expression.

### 8.1 General context

#### Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

In March 2019, the Ministry of Culture commissioned research about children and youth culture which resulted in the report [Ung kultur: et kunnskapsgrunnlag](#) (Hylland, Haugsevje, Schnell and Miland, Telemarksforskning: 2019). The report provides an

overview of existing knowledge about children and young people's cultural and media use/participation in Norway by reviewing studies, surveys and statistics. It does point out the difficulty in determining trends over time given the variation between how studies and surveys are structured, the questions asked, and which age groups and categories of cultural and media use are included. This means that it is difficult to compare data over time and comparatively between countries.

The report does point to some trends:

- In general, cultural consumption and participation among children and young people is high and has remained stable over time. This applies to traditional cultural activities such as the use of libraries and museums.
- The research shows that far less time is spent on paperbased media, and there is a drastic decline in the use of linear TV. Social media, streaming and computer games are key activities for children and young people.
- New technology opens up for the development of new cultural activities, which largely overlap with more traditional activities rather than replacing them.

[Ungdata](#), a cross national collection scheme designed to conduct youth surveys at the municipal level, and which is financed through the national budget, has a section on free time/leisure activities. The 2016 report '[Socioeconomic differences in living conditions among Norwegian youths](#)' using data from Ungdata demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between participation in organized activities (such as culture/music schools) and high socio-economic background. When it comes to access and use of youth clubs there is an opposite relationship between socio-economic background and participation.

## Main concepts

[White Paper No. 18 \(2020-2021\)](#) on children and youth culture [«Opplæve, skape, dele — Kunst og kultur for, med og av barn og unge»] defines children and youth culture as artistic cultural expressions that have children and young people as a target group, both as recipients, participants, and actors.

White Paper No. 8 (2018–2019) [The Power of Culture – Cultural Policy for the Future](#) [«Kulturens kraft. Kulturpolitikk for framtida»] defines children and young people's access to and participation in the artistic and cultural sector as "access to art and culture that they [children and young people] find relevant, and which offers them basic cultural references, learning and joy." Access to culture is further described as involving the opportunity of children and young people to create their own voluntary activities and organise their own youth culture.

## 8.2 Administration and governance

### Governance

[The Norwegian Ministry of Culture](#) is responsible for the development of national cultural policy through legal and financial instruments. National funding for art and culture is primarily allocated via the Ministry's budget.

The [Arts Council Norway](#) is the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy. Development and production of the art fields and cultural heritage aimed at young audiences is one of the focus areas of the Council. In total, the Council grants approx. NOK 125 million annually for arts and cultural initiatives aimed at children and young people through several different schemes. This may include collaborative projects between established artists and young people.

[Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken], is the Norwegian Ministry of Culture's agency responsible for art and culture for school pupils. The agency is responsible for the nationwide programme [The Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken], which is one of the main tools for implementing national cultural policy for children and youth in schools.



Municipalities are responsible for public libraries and school libraries, while the counties are responsible for tasks related to supervision, coordination and development. The Ministry of Education is responsible for academic and research libraries affiliated with universities and colleges. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for overall national library responsibilities, primarily through allocation of funds appropriated by Parliament over the state budget.

Municipalities are responsible for local cultural schools that focus on music and the arts for children and young people. The cultural schools are both owned and run by the municipalities, and it is the municipalities themselves that determine the content and scope of the provision in their schools.

### **Cross-sectorial cooperation**

The Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education and Research (and its underlying executive agencies), cooperate on drafting and implementing policy on youth culture, as many of the youth culture programmes are aimed towards young people in schools. Although Arts for Young Audiences Norway [Kulturtanken], is an agency of the Ministry of Culture, it works very closely with the Ministry of Education and Research, which is responsible for the institutions where The Cultural Schoolbag [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken], is implemented.

## **8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people**

### **Existence of a national strategy**

[White Paper No. 18 \(2020-2021\)](#) on children and youth culture [«Opplæve, skape, dele — Kunst og kultur for, med og av barn og unge»] affirms children and youth culture as a unified policy area at the national level.

### **Scope and contents**

The policy goals presented in [White Paper No. 18 \(2020-2021\)](#) are:

- all children and young people, regardless of background, should be provided with access to art and culture,
- art and culture that is created for and disseminated to children and young people, is of high quality,
- all children and young people should be provided with the opportunity to experience and to create culture on their own terms.

These goals are to be achieved through:

- The development of children and youth culture as a distinct policy area
- Strengthening the role and responsibilities of counties and municipalities, including by reviewing the current [law on public authorities' responsibility for cultural activities](#)
- Maintain municipal schools of music and the arts and [the Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] programme as key policy instruments.

### **Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy**

[White Paper No. 18 \(2020-2021\)](#) spells out the Government's policy priorities and is not a strategy or action plan. The primary responsibility for following up policy priorities lies with the [Ministry of Culture](#), in collaboration with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). [Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken], municipalities, counties and other cultural institutions are responsible for the strengthening of municipal schools of music and the arts and [the Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] programme.



## Revisions/updates

There are no revisions or updates.

## 8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

### Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

The main policy instruments to ensure that all children and young people have access to a diversity of art and high-quality cultural experiences are:

- **Nationwide “culture schools”/municipal schools of music and the arts:** By law all municipalities, alone or in collaboration with other municipalities, are required to have a school of music and the arts for children and young people. The cultural schools are both owned and run by the municipalities, and it is the municipalities themselves that determine the content and scope of the provision in their schools.
- **The Norwegian Youth Festivals of Art** [Ung Kultur Møtes – UKM]: UKM arranges 400 local and 19 regional festivals every year all over Norway where young artists between the ages of 13 and 20 can perform and express their artistic vision. During the festivals, participants also attend workshops, where they can explore their interests and be inspired by the works of other artists. UKM is open to all artistic genres and methods of cultural expression like music, dance, theatre, circus, video, visual and digital art, photography, stage-technicians and journalists. The management system of the UKM is made up of a network that consists of municipalities, county councils, and UKM Norway which is an independent body funded by the Ministry of Culture.
- **The Cultural Schoolbag** [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] The Cultural Schoolbag programme is a national effort in which the cultural and education sectors cooperate in providing school pupils throughout the country with the opportunity to become acquainted with, understand and enjoy all forms of artistic and cultural expression at the professional level. In 2016 [Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken] was given national responsibility for the programme, and today every pupil at primary and lower secondary school in the country is able to participate in the programme. [White Paper No. 8 \(2007–2008\) A Cultural Rucksack for the Future](#) [Kulturell skolesekk for framtiden] sets out the principles for the development and implementation of the programme.

### Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

[Ung.no](#), a public information website aimed at youth aged 13 and 20 run by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has a segment on [youth culture](#).

The municipal schools of music and the arts, [the Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] programme and [the Norwegian Youth Festivals of Art](#) [Ung Kultur Møtes – UKM] described in section 8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation constitute the main policy instruments to reach young people with information and knowledge about opportunities to access cultural environments.

### Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

[Arts Council Norway](#), which is the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy and fully funded by the Ministry of Culture, allocates grants for cultural heritage projects in which children and young people get the opportunity to learn about and appreciate history and national heritage. The aim is to better equip young people to encounter different cultural expressions with respect. Projects can include the active involvement of young people in collection, documentation, preservation and dissemination.

Various cultural heritage events are organised through the nationwide programme [The Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken]. In this context ‘cultural heritage’ covers

various disciplines and topics. It can refer to the art of storytelling, traditional handicrafts and cultural heritage management, as well as humanities disciplines like museology, history and ethnology. It also covers social science fields like social anthropology, sociology and human geography. Events organised through the [programme](#) may include guided tours, workshops, performances, lectures and guided walks.

## 8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

### Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

Creative competencies are fundamental elements described in the [Norwegian core curriculum](#) and are as such integrated in all subjects.

Art, Crafts and Music are compulsory subjects in primary education. At secondary school level cultural and creative subjects are offered as electives. Dance is included as a compulsory part of physical education and drama is integrated in the Norwegian language subject. Moreover, aesthetics is often included in interdisciplinary work.

In upper secondary education, the following specialised programmes are offered in General Studies:

- Music, Dance and Drama
- Art, Design and Architecture
- Media and Communication

The following are offered as Vocational Education Programmes:

- Design and craftsmanship
- Media production

For more on attaining cultural and creative competences in formal education, see Youth Wiki on Education and Training Chapter [6.7 Skills for innovation](#).

### Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

A vocational teacher acquires cutting-edge expertise in a subject or subject area such as music, design, sports or another school subject. The vocational teacher education is a 3-year bachelor's education. In addition to general study competence, there are requirements for certain subjects to pass an entrance examination in the teaching subject.

The vocational teacher education includes the specialization opportunities:

- design, arts and crafts
- physical education and sports
- music, dance and drama
- practical and aesthetic subjects

The education qualifies for work in the subject in the primary and lower secondary school (for some subjects also in the primary school level), in upper secondary education, in various types of adult education and in the municipal schools of music and the arts.

### Providing quality access to creative environments

[The Norwegian Youth Festivals of Art](#) [Ung Kultur Møtes – UKM] arranges 400 local and 19 regional festivals every year all over Norway where young artists between the ages of 13 and 20 can perform and express their artistic vision. During the festivals, participants also attend workshops, where they can explore their interests and be inspired by the works of other artists. UKM is open to all artistic genres and methods of cultural expression like

music, dance, theatre, circus, video, visual and digital art, photography, stage-technicians and journalists. The management system of the UKM is made up of a network that consists of municipalities, county councils, and UKM Norway which is an independent body funded by the Ministry of Culture.

## 8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

### Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

Youth clubs run at the municipal level in Norway generally have a focus on culture, creativity, and project work/entrepreneurship approaches to youth work. However, there is no national policy or programme specifically focused on supporting the development of entrepreneurial skills by participating in cultural and creative opportunities.

### Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

[Arts Council Norway](#), which is the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy and fully funded by the Ministry of Culture, provides counselling, [competence programs](#) and [project support](#) to develop entrepreneurial skills among Norwegian artists and individuals in the cultural field. However, these programmes do not apply to the youth population specifically.

## 8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies

### New technologies in support of creativity and innovation

The Government's [Digitization strategy for basic education 2017–2021](#) [Digitaliseringstrategi for grunnsopplæringen 2017–2021] aims to make new technologies readily available to empower young people's learning and creativity, including capacity for innovation. The main goals of the strategy are:

- Pupils should have digital skills that enable them to experience life's challenges and succeed in further education, work and community participation.
- ICT should be well utilized in the organization and implementation of training to increase pupils' learning outcomes.

[Norway Makers](#) is a non-governmental organization that aims to create spaces and initiatives that foster creation and innovation in the intersection between art, technology, and science. Norway Makers further arranges festivals and conferences throughout the country to promote its work. The organization also directs its efforts towards policy initiatives in the field of culture, science and innovation. The initiative is not a youth programme per se but offers its outlets in environments where youth and young professionals are spending a large bulk of their time, such as schools, libraries, and institutions of higher education.

### Facilitating access to culture through new technologies

[Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken] ran the project Communication and new technology (FoNT) between 2018 and 2020. The project goals were:

- to use technology in a new way in communication in [the Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] programme
- to strengthen the competence in the use of digital technology in dissemination to children and young people
- to make visible and increase knowledge of technological possibilities in dissemination in [the Cultural Schoolbag](#) [Den Kulturelle Skolesekken] programme
- to establish cooperation between different actors and competence environments

The project explored how different technologies affect children and young people's encounters with art and culture. Experiments with dissemination models that utilize virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) technologies, video calls (telepresence), and apps were launched.

The [final evaluation report](#) concluded that the project has been important in terms of competence development and sharing related to digital dissemination and provided an opportunity to investigate how new practices with digital technologies affect the dissemination of art and culture. [Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken] was encouraged to continue the development work initiated through the project.

## 8.8 Synergies and partnerships

### Synergies between public policies and programmes

Although [Arts for Young Audiences Norway](#) [Kulturtanken] is an agency of the Ministry of Culture, it works very closely with the Ministry of Education and Research, which is responsible for the institutions where TCS is implemented, namely schools. Other partners include county councils and municipalities, schools and cultural institutions at national and local level.

### Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

The primary arena for fostering partnerships between stakeholders of the cultural sector and youth organisations and youth workers are youth clubs, open meeting places for youth and culture schools at the municipal level. National public grant schemes administered by the [Norwegian Children and Youth Council](#) [Landsrådet for Norges barne- og ungdomsorganisasjoner - LNU] and [Youth Work Norway](#) [Ungdom og Fritid] contribute to culture and creativity projects run by youth.

The [Norwegian Youth Festivals of Art](#) [Ung Kultur Møtes – UKM] described in section [8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people](#) is the main publicly funded national arena in which partnerships between stakeholders of the cultural sector (professionals, entrepreneurs, cultural institutions and associations) and youth organisations and youth workers are fostered.

'[The Dream Stipend](#)' [Drømmestipendet] is a collaboration between the [Norwegian Cultural Schools Council](#) [Kulturskolerådet] and National Lottery [Norsk tipping]. The grant scheme's purpose is to highlight youth work being done at municipal level in supporting cultural and creative youth projects. Each municipality may nominate a candidate for the grant scheme (either a singular person, or a youth group) within one of the following categories: dance, music, creative writing, visual art, circus, theatre, or other. Eligible grant scheme recipients are between the ages of 13 and 20.

## 8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

### Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

Information about cultural policies and programmes funded by public authorities aimed at promoting social integration amongst young people is available in sections [8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people](#) and [8.4 Promoting culture](#) and cultural participation in the description of initiatives. [The Cultural Schoolbag](#) in particular is designed to provide all children living in Norway with a shared frame of reference and joint experiences, irrespective of their nationality, address, wealth and social background.

## **Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities**

For general measures/policies promoting and safe-guarding social inclusion, go to Youth Wiki chapter 4 on Social Inclusion in Norway, and 4.4 Inclusive Programmes for Young People. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family affairs administers a national grant scheme (approx. NOK 310 million in 2020) for the social inclusion of children and young people. Under this scheme government agencies, private actors and NGOs can apply for project funding to cover activities aimed at assisting children and adolescents affected by poverty to participate in cultural activities.

## **8.10 Current debates and reforms**

# **9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD**

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### **Introduction**

Global policy issues are for the most part integrated into other already existing youth policy areas, like formal education, volunteering, organizational activities etc.

NGO's and youth organizations in Norway are the main arenas where youth participate in issues that are directly or indirectly related to global issues.

## **9.1 General context**

### **Main concepts**

There is no official definition of what counts as a global issue, or country specific concepts related to youth participation in, and contribution to, policy-making and youth cooperation at global level.

### **Youth interest in global issues**

There are no national surveys documenting general trends and/or challenges related to young people's interest or participation in global issues and policy decision making.

NGO's and youth organizations in Norway are the main arenas where youth engage with global issues such as human rights, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and environmental activism.

## **9.2 Administration and governance**

### **Governance**

There no specific governance approach to youth's contribution to global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up, including youth cooperation at the global level.

### **Cross-sectorial cooperation**

There is currently no cross-sectoral cooperation at government level which fosters young people's involvement in global policy-making.

## 9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

### Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

Young people's opportunities to exchange views on global issues with national policy-makers happens through consultations and hearings on specific issues, or through statements or reports put forward by youth organizations.

### Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

Since 1971, the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU) has sent youth delegates to the UN General Assembly as part of the official Norwegian delegation. Through the delegate scheme LNU collaborates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Climate and the Environment, the Ministry of Children and Families, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization on UN processes related to issues such as human rights, youth participation, education, climate and environment, sustainability and urbanization.

## 9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

### Formal, non-formal and informal learning

#### Formal Learning

The core curriculum emphasises human dignity, identity and cultural diversity, critical thinking and ethical awareness, respect for nature and environmental awareness, democracy, and participation as core values.

The elective subject [International Cooperation](#) [Internasjonalt samarbeid] is offered at upper-secondary level and meant to provide an understanding of global contexts and challenges. The course is meant to give students practical experience in communicating with people in other countries and contribute to the students taking part in a global citizenship and be prepared for a social and working life where ethics and sustainability are central values. The course encourages students to get involved in international cooperation and development work, with an emphasis on global justice, equality and respect for human dignity.

Operation Day's Work (ODW) is an annual student organization driven campaign focusing on international cooperation and development. The ODW information campaign takes place in lower and upper-secondary school. ODW consists of two interconnected components: the information campaign "International Week" (IW) and the ODW day. International Week usually takes place in mid-October every year when schools abandon their normal curriculum and focus on global issues like poverty, inequality and development. At the end of IW students volunteer to carry out "a day's work" and donate their salary to the ODW project. ODW supports education projects in more than 60 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. ODW is the largest youth campaign in Norway with over 4000 volunteers. The annual general meeting (AGM) of the School Student Union of Norway chooses the annual ODW campaign.

#### Non-formal and informal learning

Global issues are promoted through

- The Erasmus + Youth in Action [Erasmus+ Aktiv ungdom] programme, and its national agency in the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir).
- Youth organizations and interest organizations particularly focusing on global issues (e.g. environment/sustainable development, and human rights).



## Educator's support

In the context of continuous training and certification related to the promotion of global issues among young people, educators are offered resources and teaching material through the website '[Global skole](#)' [Translates into 'global school', or 'global education'].

The website 'Global skole' is run by the mother website 'Globalportalen' [Translates into the Global Portal], which in turn run by an independent editorial, and owned by

- NORAD - The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.
- The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- The Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment.

The website offers teaching materials and approaches to tackle global issues. The content is provided by organizations who work with global issues, and who receive grant support from NORAD.

## Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

[Operation Day's Work](#) (ODW) is an annual student organization driven campaign focusing on international cooperation and development. The ODW information campaign takes place in lower and upper-secondary school. ODW consists of two interconnected components: the information campaign "International Week" (IW) and the ODW day. International Week usually takes place in mid-October every year when schools abandon their normal curriculum and focus on global issues like poverty, inequality and development. At the end of IW students volunteer to carry out "a day's work" and donate their salary to the ODW project. ODW supports education projects in more than 60 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. ODW is the largest youth campaign in Norway with over 4000 volunteers. The annual general meeting (AGM) of the School Student Union of Norway chooses the annual ODW campaign.

## Information providers

There is no public authority or body responsible for disseminating information on global issues among young people. However, there are several youth organizations that disseminate information on global issues among young people:

The Norwegian Children and Youth Council has published a [report](#) on youth perspectives on UN resolution 2250 Youth, Peace and Security.

[Changemaker](#) is Norwegian Church Aid's youth organization and is Norway's largest youth organization that focuses exclusively on development policy issues. The organization organizes campaigns and publishes [reports](#) regularly on issues such as climate change, the Norwegian oil fund and global investments, arms exports, the international tax system, and ethical licensing of medical research. The organisation actively contributes to public debates and public hearings on global issues.

[SAIH – Students' and Academics' International Aid Fund](#) [SAIH -Studentenes og Akademikernes Internasjonale Hjelpesfond] is a solidarity organization of students and academics in Norway. Members pay an additional 10 NOK [a little more than a Euro] of their annual/semester university fee to support SAIH's foreign aid and development projects. SAIH also has local membership groups of which students may engage actively towards informational projects, and engagement in SAIH's foreign aid and development projects. SAIH arranges between 200 – 300 events and gatherings nationwide. SAIH receives funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation – Norad

Other youth organisations that focus on global issues and who regularly organize events and information campaigns are:

- Norwegian People's Aid Youth.
- Press – Save the Children Norway



- Red Cross Youth Norway

## Key initiatives

See description above

## 9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

### Green volunteering

There is no top-level public programme or action aimed specifically at helping young people to engage in green volunteering activities.

The following civil society/youth organizations work specifically at helping young people to engage in green volunteering activities:

[Natur og Ungdom \(NU\)](#) [Nature and Youth – Young Friends of the Earth Norway] Nature and Youth is the largest environmentalist youth organisation in Norway, working actively for protection of the environment. The organization has 7 600 members distributed through 80 local groups. Members need to be under the age of 25.

[Greenpeace Norway](#) Greenpeace Norway has a large young membership base, and works in particular towards the closure of the Norwegian oil production, to protect the particularly vulnerable environment in the Arctic, and to stop Arctic pollution and waste dispersion. A major membership group of Greenpeace Norway is under the age of 30.

[Framtiden i våre hender \[The Future in Our Hands\]](#) The organization is committed to the global environment and fair distribution of wealth. The organization has about 24.500 members in Norway, of which a substantial part are youth. The organization focuses on information on fair and sustainable consumption, ways of fair wealth distribution, and sound business ethics.

### Green production and consumption

There is no recurring top-level public programme aimed at helping young people orientate themselves towards green consumption or production patterns.

## 9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

### Intercontinental youth work cooperation

The Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO (2017-2020) consists of 8 members appointed by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. All members have special skills in at least one of UNESCO's four disciplines.

Each year Norwegian non-profit organizations can apply to the National Commission for [grants](#). The grants are used to implementing UNESCO projects supporting the National Commission's priorities. In addition to allocating economic support, the National Commission is an advisory body to Norwegian authorities on UNESCO issues. Co-operation with other National Commissions and international actors is a priority for the Commission.

Norway participates in the Associated Schools Project Network ([ASPnet](#)).

### Development cooperation activities

[The Norwegian Peace Corp Youth](#) [Fredskorpset – Fredskorpset Ung] funds more than 20 different exchange programs, including south-south exchanges. The different partners of FK are in charge of recruiting, and have the executive responsibility of participants and projects.

An exchange consists of three different parts: Preparation course, the stay abroad, and follow-up work in the participant's home countries.

Objectives of the exchange

- Developing young leaders
- Increase capacity in partner organizations
- Each partnership is to agree on goals related to their thematic field (e.g. advocacy, health, education, entrepreneurship)

Countries involved: Norway, and the countries receiving aid/exchanges.

## 9.7 Current debates and reforms

Norwegian civil society and youth organizations regularly challenge national authorities on Norway's international role in promoting development and human rights. Recurring themes are climate change, the Norwegian oil fund and global investments and arms exports.

## 10. YOUTH WORK

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Even though youth work is integral to national youth policy priorities in Norway responsibility rests at the local level. Youth work is a municipal responsibility, determined and financed at local level. This applies to outreach activities and to youth centres/clubs and open youth work.

Youth work is primarily defined in terms of leisure activities [fritid] which denotes anything from membership-based activities to open meeting places for young people such as youth clubs or recreational centres.

The Ministry of Children and Families is responsible youth policy, including youth work. However, the Ministry of Culture also has an important role, primarily through policy relating to the voluntary sector.

### 10.1 General context

#### Historical developments

Youth work in Norway has its origins in the voluntary sector from the mid-19th century onwards, particularly represented by the missionary, temperance, and labour movements. The expansion of the welfare state following WW2 into fields that had previously been run by voluntary organizations included areas such as health and social work, culture, sports, and recreation. In a 1949 [bill to parliament](#), principles of state support for youth work were described primarily as facilitating organisational life and youth associations as the mainstay of youth work. Annual government grants for youth work were allocated to youth organisations and the National Youth Council [[Statens Ungdomsråd](#)], which was established in 1953, played a key role as an adviser to the government on youth policy issues and in allocating funds for youth work.

The Committee on public support for youth organisations [Komiteen for offentlig støtte til ungdomsorganisasjonene] which presented its [recommendation](#) in 1959 argued against strong public sector involvement in the implementation of youth work on the grounds that it would stifle the democratic potential of youth organisations and young people's leisure/recreational time activities. However, as in the rest of Europe as well as in the USA free/unproductive time among "unorganized" youth was increasingly considered problematic and there was a concern about youth and crime, particularly in urban areas.

It was in this context that the first municipal recreational youth club was established in 1953 in Oslo.

In 1968, a committee was set up to examine youth work. The committee presented his recommendation in 1971. The committee's principle assessment was that the public had a duty to facilitate conditions for a better leisure/recreational environment, and that young people had a right to access varied activities and environments. The report also contributed to a gradual and substantial shift in the understanding of public responsibility for young people's free time - from prevention based on an at times negative view on youth as potential delinquents into service, facilitation, and non-formal learning to harness young people's potential and resources.

## **National definition or understanding of Youth Work**

While there is no official definition of youth work, collective terms like "leisure/recreational clubs/houses" and "open meeting places for youth" are used to describe the areas in which youth work is exercised. The [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) characterise the informal learning that occurs through municipally supported leisure/recreational time activities and open meeting places for youth as crucial for young people's personal and social development. Youth work is informed by the needs of young people and their participation, and through spaces where they engage with competent and caring adults. In addition, open meeting places for youth often function as spaces for the exercise of, and participation in, cultural activities.

## **10.2 Administration and governance of youth work**

### **Governance**

There is no single ministry or governmental department that is responsible for youth work policy, but the Ministry of Children and Families is the main actor involved in policymaking on youth work. While the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has a national advisory function towards municipalities and the voluntary sector in the field of youth work and provides funding through national grants, Youth Work Norway [Ungdom og Fritid] is the main non-public actor at the national level. The organisation represents young people, employees and volunteers in municipal-supported youth clubs and youth centres. Youth Work Norway receives public funding through the national annual budget and is recognised as a leading source of information and expertise on youth work. The organization trains youth workers, sets quality standards, contributes to research on youth work, and works with policy makers, educators, and employers to promote youth work.

Municipalities are expected to deliver youth work in accordance to national priorities in the area of children and youth. However, the delivery of youth work is not a statutory function and funds are not earmarked for this purpose. Youth work is delivered either directly through the municipal services or through the voluntary sector (or by co-operative efforts between the two).

### **Cross-sectoral cooperation**

There are no established frameworks for ensuring cross-sectoral cooperation specifically in the area of youth work. The "0-24 cooperation" is a cross-sectoral initiative of the Directorate of Health, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Directorate for Integration and Diversity and the Directorate for Education to support and strengthen necessary coordination and cooperation in counties and municipalities, for the benefit of children and young people and their families.

## 10.3 Support to youth work

### Policy legal framework

As described in section 10.2 municipalities are expected to deliver youth work in accordance to national priorities in the area of children and youth. The [Government's 2015 plan on child and youth policy initiatives](#) and the national annual budget describe government priorities in the field of children and youth. In the area of youth work the Government encourages cooperation between municipalities, city boroughs and the voluntary sector in the creation and development of inclusive youth work efforts (meeting places, activities, clubs etc) at the local level. The importance of youth work is acknowledged in other policy documents such as White Paper No. 19 (2018-2019) on [Public Health](#) [Folkehelsemeldinga — Gode liv i eit trygt samfunn] and White Paper No. 8 (2018–2019) [The Power of Culture – Cultural Policy for the Future](#) [Kulturens kraft. Kulturpolitikk for framtida].

The '[Recreation Declaration](#)' [Fritidserklæringen] is a collaborative effort between municipalities, the voluntary sector and top-level authorities to ensure that all children, regardless of their parents' social and financial situation, have the opportunity to participate regularly in at least one organized leisure/recreational activity with other children.

### Funding

Top-level support for local efforts is made available through several national grants, mainly administered by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, from which municipalities, city boroughs and voluntary organisations can apply for funding. The size of these grants is adjusted in the national annual budget.

Municipalities are also at the liberty to allocate funds from their own annual budgets.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is the Norwegian National Agency for [Erasmus+: Youth in Action](#) in Norway and administers project grants to informal youth groups, NGOs, foundations, municipalities and in some cases commercial actors for courses and training activities to increase the skills of youth workers. The projects require, with few exceptions, international partnerships. In the allocation of funds priority is given to projects that demonstrate grassroots efforts.

### Cooperation

The Government encourages cooperation between municipalities, city boroughs and the voluntary sector at the local level. At the national level the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs organizes an biannual youth conference that promotes cooperation between diverse stakeholders such as voluntary organisations, municipalities, youth councils, youth workers and practitioners in the youth field, researchers and experts as well as private organisations and social enterprises. At the conference a NOK 250 000 prize is awarded to the "youth municipality of the year" for outstanding work in the area of youth, including youth participation, youth friendly welfare services and youth work. This is an opportunity to showcase and incentivise concerted efforts for youth at the municipal level. In 2021 the price was awarded to [Vefsn municipality](#) in the county of Nordland, for actively facilitating that young people are involved in being heard and influencing their own municipality.

## 10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work

### Quality assurance

There is no national system for quality assurance applying to professional youth work. However, application criteria for national grants supporting youth work emphasise specific

principles and standards to ensure universal access, inclusion and participation as well as low/no costs for participants.

[Youth Work Norway](#) [Ungdom og Fritid] and the Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees have published a brochure outlining what their members consider key quality criteria for municipal-supported youth clubs, youth centres and open meeting places for youth. These relate to outreach, commitment to democratic values and youth participation, facilities and resources, competencies of youth workers and interdisciplinary collaboration.

## Research and evidence supporting Youth Work

[Ungdata](#), a cross national collection scheme designed to conduct youth surveys at the municipal level, and which is financed through the national budget, has a section on young people's access to/use of youth clubs, youth centres and open meeting places for youth. The Ungdata Conference is an annual meeting place between youth researchers and the field of practice, where the goal is to gain more knowledge about trends and trends among youth. The conference is relevant for those who work with youth daily, including youth workers.

The Norwegian Directorate of Health has funded a [research project](#) at the Centre for Welfare and Labour Research, OsloMet, mapping municipalities' potential to actively use youth clubs to promote issues concerning health and well-being. The mapping is based on survey data from Ungdata and qualitative interviews with young people.

[The Centre for Research on Civil Society and Voluntary Sector](#) is a collaboration project between [the Institute for Social Research](#) and [NORCE Norwegian Research Centre](#). Since its establishment in 2008, the centre's objective has been to conduct independent and socially relevant research on voluntary engagement and voluntary organisations in Norway. The project is funded by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Health and Care Services, the Ministry of Children and Families, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The project includes research on [youth participation in organized youth work activities in multicultural urban](#) areas.

## Participate Youth Work

The design and implementation of youth work initiatives takes place at municipal level. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs facilitates cooperation and the sharing of best practice at the national level through its biannual youth conference.

From 2020 and with the implementation of a new Local Government Act it will be mandatory with formal consultative bodies for youth at municipal and county level. There is a strong tradition of involving young people and their representatives in the design of youth work programs and initiatives these new provisions are meant to strengthen young people's influence in setting local priorities, including in the area of youth work.

## Smart youth work: youth work in the digital world

On behalf of the Ministry of Children and Families the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs hosts [Ung.no](#), a public information website aimed at youth aged 13 and 20. The website contains information on matters that concern youth, including their rights, opportunities and obligations. Articles on the site are regularly updated, quality assured, and user adapted. Youth can post questions on the site which will be answered by professionals within the specific field. The site has around 1.4 million visitors per month.

During 2020 and 2021, and as a consequence of the global pandemic, Youth Work Norway [Ungdom og Fritid] developed core principles for digital youth work and disseminated a number of [resources](#) on digital youth work for youth work practitioners. This includes webinars, toolkits and best practices.

## 10.5 Youth workers

### Status in national legislation

There are no top-level policies, measures or guidelines regulating the status of youth workers.

A 'childcare certificate' as described in the [Police Register Act](#) [Politiregisterloven] may be issued to persons who work or have tasks in youth clubs or in child and youth camps and where the tasks involve responsibility with minors or persons with learning disabilities.

### Education, training and skills recognition

Child Care and Youth Work is a designated route in upper secondary school which consists of two years of school-based education and training, followed by two years of apprenticeship in a training enterprise. Training completed and passed in the subject will lead to a Trade Certificate with the professional title is Child Care and Youth Worker. A Child Care and Youth Worker can organise and carry out pedagogical programmes offered to children and adolescents 0 to 18 years of age.

There is no college level training programme for youth workers. There is a [practitioner focused bachelor level semester course at the University of South-Eastern Norway](#). It is meant to qualify students for leadership positions within cultural and social pedagogical work in youth clubs and youth projects.

Apart from [Erasmus+](#) public authorities do not organize or fund any training for continuous professional development of youth workers.

There is no procedure for the validation of skills and competencies gained by youth workers through non-formal or informal learning.

### Mobility of youth workers

[Erasmus+](#) provides organisations engaged in youth work with opportunities to travel abroad to attend seminars, training courses, networking events, study visits, and job shadowing/observation periods. Youth work organisations can apply to either send youth workers abroad or receive organisations and be responsible for hosting a group and developing a programme of activities for participants.

## 10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work

Except for the EU initiated [youth pass](#) there is no policy framework or formal recognition/system for validating the skills young people acquire through participating in youth work.

## 10.7 Raising awareness about youth work

There are no top-level efforts available to young people to know about youth work and opportunities for engagement. There are also no top-level initiatives to raise public awareness amongst, for example, young people, their families, youth workers and employers, about the value of youth work.

[Youth Work Norway](#) [Ungdom og Fritid] which is the main non-public actor at the national level has initiated projects raise awareness about youth work and youth clubs/open meeting places for youth. Other awareness raising activities include 'leisure/recreational Club Day' the last weekend in April every year.

## 10.8 Current debates and reforms

[Youth Work Norway](#) [Ungdom og Fritid] is currently lobbying for:

- the introduction of a national incentive scheme to encourage municipalities to prioritise youth work
- earmarking of state funds for youth work
- establishment of quality standards in the area of youth work

## GLOSSARY

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<b>Allmennyttige siktemål</b>	Goals catering to the common good.
<b>Barnetrinnet</b>	Primary level (education). Consists of lower primary level (småskoletrinnet): years 1-4 (age 6 to 10) and upper primary level (mellomtrinnet): years 5-7 (age 10 to 12).
<b>Barnevernsinstitusjon</b>	Child welfare institution.
<b>Bevegelser</b>	Community movements.
<b>Bokmål</b>	Norwegian bokmål. (One of the two official forms of written Norwegian)
<b>Bostedskommune</b>	Municipality of domicile.
<b>Brukermedvirkning</b>	User participation / user involvement. The latter is used by the Research Council of Norway in their Knowledge-building Project with User Involvement (KMB).
<b>Brukerstøtte</b>	User support.
<b>Brukertilgang</b>	User access.
<b>Brukertilpassede undervisningstilbud</b>	User-adapted courses.
<b>Departement</b>	Ministry.
<b>Direktorat</b>	Directorate (executive agency /expert agency under ministry).
<b>Drøfting</b>	Consultation/ discussion.
<b>Dugnad</b>	Voluntary work.
<b>Eksempelsamling</b>	Guide.
<b>Etatsledelse</b>	Agency management.



<b>Fag</b>	Discipline/ subject.
<b>Fagbrev</b>	Craft certificate. (This entitles someone to practice the trade concerned.)
<b>Fastlegeordning</b>	Regular GP Scheme. (All citizens who are registered in the National Population Register in Norway are entitled to get a regular GP.
<b>Folkeopplysning</b>	Public education.
<b>Flertall</b>	Majority.
<b>Folkeregister</b>	National Population Registry Office.
<b>Folkeuniversitet</b>	Adult Education Association.
<b>Foretak</b>	Company/ business/ enterprise.
<b>Frafall</b>	Directly translated as 'recidivism.' 'Frafall' is used in Norwegian to describe early school leaving, and children/youth who quit participating in activities in general.
<b>Frie midler</b>	Free funding, or non-earmarked funding.
<b>Friluftsliv</b>	Outdoor recreation.
<b>Frivillighetsarbeid</b>	Volunteer work.
<b>Frivillighetssentralene</b>	The County Volunteer Centrals.
<b>Frivillige virksomheter</b>	Volunteer businesses that are catering to the common good (non-profit).
<b>Fylke(skommune)</b>	County (munucipality).
<b>Fylkesmannen</b>	The county governor's office (the central government's representative at regional level).
<b>Grasrotandelen</b>	Fund with the national lottery [Norsk Tipping].
<b>Handlingsplan</b>	Action plan.
<b>Hefte</b>	Coordinating/informational document/pamflett.
<b>Ikke anses allmennyttig</b>	That which is not considered to be catering to 'the common good.'
<b>Ikke fortjenestebasert</b>	Non-profit.
<b>Inngangskrav</b>	Entry requirements.
<b>Kommune</b>	Municipality.

<b>Konsultasjon</b>	Consultations are suggestions from the Ministry which are sent to affected parties (public and private institutions, organisations, and other ministries). The purpose is to assess economic and administrative consequences of public measures.
<b>Kontantstøtte</b>	Cash-for-care benefit: provided for parents who wish to stay at home with their children when between the ages of one and two (as an alternative to kindergarten).
<b>Kulturminnevern</b>	Cultural heritage.
<b>Lag/forening</b>	Local branches of an organization, or a local/grassroot organization.
<b>Lovlighetstilsyn og finansielt tilsyn</b>	Legal and financial auditing.
<b>Musikk og kulturskoler</b>	Music and culture schools.
<b>Naturvern</b>	Land conservation and environmental protection.
<b>NOU (Norges offentlige utredninger)</b>	Official Norwegian Reports (NOUs) are produced by committees and working groups constituted by the Ministry. They often form the basis of a bill or white paper. NOUs are sometimes, but not always based on previous reports and plans. Most NOUs have a comprehensive literature review, of which a substantial amount of references are made to research done in the field.
<b>Nynorsk</b>	Norwegian: New Norse (One of the two official forms of written Norwegian).
<b>Ombud/ombudsmann</b>	Ombudsperson/ ombudsman.
<b>Omfangsundersøkelse</b>	Point prevalence survey.
<b>Rapport/plan/handlingsplan</b>	Reports and (action)plans are generally produced by external researchers or committees, and encompass reports, analyses and documentation presented to the ministry.
<b>Regelverk</b>	Set of rules – often related to official documents, legislation, grant schemes, etc.
<b>Regionalt helseforetak (RFH)</b>	Regional health authorities.
<b>Regjering</b>	Cabinet.
<b>Rettslig handlingsvene</b>	Legal capacity.
<b>Rundskriv</b>	Circular notes are information from the Ministry to affected parties about interpretations of laws and regulations.

<b>Stiftelse</b>	Foundation.
<b>St.Meld (Stortingsmelding)</b>	Draft resolutions, bills and white papers (Report to Storting/the Norwegian Parliament.) are documents that the Government presents to the Storting. White papers are almost always based on previous reports, plans, or official reports (NOUs), which again utilizes research literature actively.
<b>Storting</b>	The Norwegian Parliament.
<b>Stortingsrepresentant</b>	Member of the Norwegian Parliament (MP).
<b>Strategi(plan)</b>	Strategy (plan).
<b>Tilskuddsordning</b>	Grant scheme.
<b>Tiltak</b>	Measure.
<b>Veileder/ brosjyre</b>	Handbooks and brochures give an overview of the Government's policies and practice, and are written with the general public in mind.
<b>VG1/VG2/VG3</b>	The three levels/years of upper secondary school.
<b>Videregående skole</b>	Upper secondary school.

### Other public dictionaries:

The Norwegian-English/English-Norwegian [Dictionary](#) for the Primary and Secondary Education Sector is under revision.

The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) [Termbase](#) for Norwegian higher education institutions

[Glossary of the Norwegian Parliament's](#) [Stortinget] titles, offices, and positions. Dictionary and explanations of terms that are frequently used in the Norwegian Parliament.

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## ARCHIVE

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Information from previous years can be accessed and freely downloaded through the PDF files below.

### 2020

[Norway 2020](#)

### 2019

[Norway 2019](#)

### 2018

[Norway 2018](#)

