

Kindergartens

Kindergartens are managed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, but the responsibility for the operation lies in the municipalities. Many day care centers are privately run. These are subject to municipal control and may also receive municipal guidance. The state covers 35-40% of the cost of kindergartens, while the municipality and parents pay the rest. By the end of 2012, more than 90 percent of children aged 1-5 years had kindergarten.

Primary school

The ten-year elementary school is mandatory and free for children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 16. It is divided into the childhood (1st to 7th year) and the youth stage (8th to 10th year).

The education in elementary school is based on the curriculum for primary and secondary education that was introduced over a three-year period from the school year 2006/07. Sami students and students with sign language as a first language have their own custom curricula.

Elementary school is based on the unit school principle, an equal and adapted education for all in a coordinated school system. All children and young people should participate in a common knowledge, culture and value foundation. The curricula for the subjects contain objectives, main areas, discussion of basic skills, competence objectives and determinations of final assessment in the subject. For subjects that are common to primary and secondary education, the curricula are throughout the entire 13-year basic education. The curricula in the subjects assume that the specific content of the training, how the training is to be organized and the work methods to be used in the training are determined at the local level at the individual school.

The right to elementary education applies to all children staying in Norway for more than three months. All pupils with a mother tongue other than Norwegian or Sami have the right to special Norwegian education until they can follow the usual teaching at school. Pupils receiving special education in primary and lower secondary schools have the right to an individual education plan. All municipalities must have a school freedom scheme (SFO) for students in 1st to 4th. Year.

Upper secondary education

All youth between the ages of 16 and 19 have a statutory right to three years of upper secondary education. This training will lead to academic qualifications, professional qualifications or sub-competencies. The county municipality has a statutory duty to follow up youths between the ages of 16 and 19 who are not in training or at work (follow-up service).

Norway has a unified high school with coordinated general education and vocational education. Upper secondary is organized with 12 different study preparation and vocational education programs. The apprenticeship scheme, a combination of education at school and working life leading to a certificate, is part of the upper secondary education system. The first two years of training will be given at the school, while the final specialization for a normal two-year period will be given by training in the workplace.

Students receiving special education in upper secondary education are entitled to an individual education plan. In the fall of 2012, 92 per cent of all 16-18 year olds in Norway were registered as a student or apprenticeship in upper secondary education.

There are 78 folk high schools in Norway. The schools have over 7000 students on a full-year course, and most students are between 18 and 25 years old. In addition, they have shorter courses. Most are internship schools owned and run by Christian organizations, independent foundations and counties.

Vocational school

Professional schools offer shorter, vocational education with an extent of half to two years of study. In 2013 there were 111 publicly recognized vocational schools, with a total of 1413 study programs and 16 420 students. The vocational schools gather educational programs with very different histories and professional traditions.

Higher education

Higher education includes education at universities, academic colleges, state colleges, art colleges and private colleges.

Norway has eight universities:

University of Oslo (UiO)

University of Bergen (UiB)

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

Norway's Arctic University (UiT)

University of Stavanger (UiS)

University of Nordland (UiN)

University of Agder (UiA)

Norway's Environmental and Biological Sciences University (NMBU)

There are also eight state, scientific colleges:

Architecture and Design College in Oslo

Norway's music college

Norway's sports academy

Norway's Veterinary College

Oslo Academy of Fine Arts

Molde University College

NHH

Art and Design College in Bergen

The Theological Faculty of theology in Oslo is a private science college.

The universities and the university colleges have education and research as their main tasks. Furthermore, there are 19 state colleges in Norway. These mainly offer shorter, vocational studies with a study period of two to four years. The Armed Forces have four military colleges. There are also some private colleges, especially in economics, health science, media and art education and theological education. Most of these are small. BI Norwegian Business School is by far the largest private college with approx. 20,000 students at full- and part-time.

With the introduction of the Quality Reform in 2003, higher education institutions gained greater responsibility and freedom. A new degree structure has been introduced with the international bachelor, master's and doctoral degrees.

National Agency for Quality in Education (NOKUT) was established in 2003 to control and evaluate higher education institutions and study offers. More focus on student learning and new assessment methods were also emphasized in the reform. University and Higher Education Council (UHR) is a cooperative body for the state higher education institutions. Every fourth Norwegian has education at university and college level. In Oslo, 43 per cent of the citizens have higher education (2008).

Read more in the article Higher Education
adult Education

At all levels of education, adult education is conducted in parallel with the teaching given in the school. Responsibility for adult education is shared between public and study associations, which are the joint bodies of the voluntary information organizations.

Furthermore, a labor market course, which is a professional qualification course, is organized in collaboration between the authorities, the study associations and the school.

The 1998 competence reform strengthens adults' right to education and emphasizes that adults can develop new skills on the basis they already have and that the acquired knowledge must be recognized and documented. All adults over educational age are entitled to primary and lower secondary education. From 2001, adult literacy will be acquired through professional practice, organizational work or otherwise seen as an integral part of upper secondary education and counting on admission to higher education (real competence assessment).

Private schools

There are private schools at all levels of education. Private schools that fall under the Public Health Act receive public support and must be approved by the Directorate of Education.

Most private schools are life-vision schools or schools with alternative educational programs. All private schools must follow the curricula for the public school. In the school year 2010/2011 there were 159 private primary schools in Norway. About 2.6% of primary school pupils and 7% of upper secondary education students attend private schools (2011). There are also private colleges.