

# NORWAY

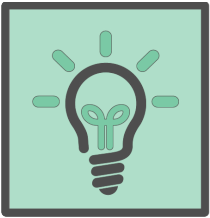
Population: **5,084,000** | Income Level: **High Income** | Policy Decisions: **National** |  
Level of Career Development Initiatives on Scale of 1-5: **3**

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## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Please describe how technologies are CURRENTLY used to support workforce preparation, placement, and development policies for young people in your country.

On a national level there are a number of online resources; some are funded by authorities, others by private companies. Broadly speaking, the resources offer information (about education, work life and support services), career development tools, and job search resources. A major resource is the publicly funded and nationwide [www.utdanning.no](http://www.utdanning.no), which provides educational and vocational information, and adherent self-help tools. The Public Employment Services in Norway are called Nav, and includes welfare services. Nav strengthened its online presence last year with a Facebook page specifically aimed at young people <https://www.facebook.com/navjobblyst>, in which the services share relevant information and answer questions raised on the pages. Some commercial actors have developed career development tools for practitioners to use in cooperation with their clients. A handful of these tools have become fairly widespread, e.g. within schools and vocational rehabilitation organizations.

### Top 3 Barriers for Youth Employment:

1. Disconnect between jobs available and education received.
2. Lack of motivation or disengagement from youth.
3. Lack of engagement from employers.

How does the use of technology connect with existing structures or provisions of career guidance?

The use of technology is connected to existing structures or provision in varying degrees in different sectors and organizations. Broadly speaking, it is currently connected in the following four ways:

#### Provision of information

- On schools and the educational system/programs
- On the labor market
- On job search and career development
- On benefits and mandatory rights, support services

During the last years, these types of information have increasingly been made available online by a number of organizations and authorities. The information is presented for self help, but is also used by practitioners in career education and guidance sessions.

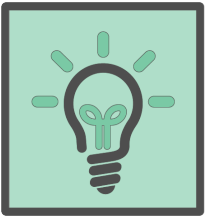
#### Provision of self-help and career tools, e.g.

- Career inventories
- Career planning tools
- Career portfolios
- CV tools

There are some tools of this kind available online. Public authorities and a variety of actors provide free and generic tools. Commercial actors have developed more elaborate tools which are used by some organizations and practitioners as part of their services.

#### E-guidance provision

A few organizations offer career guidance services online, through questions and answers services, or more comprehensive guidance on chat, email or e.g. Skype for targeted clients. On a national level there have been two pilot projects for online guidance linked to the nationwide web page [www.utdanning.no](http://www.utdanning.no). However, no permanent, comprehensive and national service is established.



## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

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### Quality assurance and organization of services

There are examples of new technologies being put to use to increase efficiency and to develop quality. Within some sectors, career guidance providers make use of online tools for their clients to sign up for guidance and to provide feedback on the services. E.g. all the public County Career Centers use the same online user satisfaction survey. Moreover, an online professional resource page for career practitioners, [www.veiledforum.no](http://www.veiledforum.no), was established in 2013.

What are the challenges your country faces related to Emerging Technologies?

### Fragmented provision

Fragmented provision of online resources is a major challenge; there has been little coordination of such developments. As a consequence, public funding at different levels and in different sectors is used to finance partly overlapping resources. Pooling of funding and a coordination of resources could contribute to a provision of higher quality and which would be easier for the public to navigate. The National Unit for Lifelong Guidance has taken the initiative to such a coordinating process. In relation to this process, broad cost-benefit analyses have been undertaken in which different degrees of integration has been considered – from the coordination of resources to a merging of resources. The coordinating process is at an exploratory stage.

2015 International Symposium Goal:

**“We hope to learn from others and to share our experiences, as well as to develop our international network.”**

### Developing online guidance without undermining face to face guidance services

While development of online guidance services constitutes one important strategy for increasing access, a recent public opinion poll documents that 85% of the Norwegian population would prefer to meet with a guidance counsellor in person rather than online (<http://www.vox.no/statistikk-og-analyse/publikasjoner/en-av-tre-er-interessert-i-karriereveiledning/>). A challenge is to encourage the establishment of professional online guidance without undermining the face to face guidance provision.

### Insufficient ICT competence

Quality assured online service provision does not only require sufficient funding and well developed systems; it requires good ICT competency among the providers. While there are examples of good practice in this regard, the general competency level among potential providers is not satisfactory for a professional delivery to take place. Hence a systematic development of such competences is needed.



## WHY ROI MATTERS

Please describe how the value and impact of policies for workforce preparation, workforce placement, and development of young people is assessed (if at all) in your country.

Several current Norwegian and international surveys and related summaries document results and effects of labor market means and measures. PES is dependent on external evaluations and research to provide evidence of impacts of labor market means and measures. The surveys have different angles of incidents focusing on different user groups (like immigrants, disabled, people with reduced work ability), specified measures, and not at least on young people, f.i. the NEETs.

Several of the studies give reason to state that there is evidence that transition to work is promoted by measures closely linked to ordinary work, like wage subsidies and methodologies like Supported Employment. Ordinary education as well is likely to have good effects on job probability.

Over the last years there have been great, ongoing efforts by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research to deal with high dropout rates in upper secondary school (+/- 30%). Many projects have been set out regionally and in the schools, with the Norwegian PES (Nav) being one of the strategic co-operating actors. Actors in the health-/psycho-social field also increasingly have become involved in cross-sectorial collaborative services, to address issues documented by research. Projects combining work practice with elements of curricula in VET subjects have resulted in a trend towards retaining school.

A research literature has evolved over these years elaborating the diversity of issues in this field. NOVA report 1/2015 evaluating results and experiences of the great effort "New Possibilities" 2010-2013, is one example. The report document impacts of a national comprising project aiming at increasing completion of upper secondary education and VET. Nav (PES) has evaluated projects combining services from all sectors mentioned above, f.i. AFI report 1 and 2/2014. The results in general confirm that long term efforts unveil the results within a longer time perspective, and by now are moving in the right direction.

How is the value of career guidance provision in supporting such policies measured?

There is no extensive research on career guidance provision and return on investment in Norway. There have been conducted a few research projects on guidance in schools, but they are mainly focused on investigating the system, the provision and the different challenges, not the ROI. When it comes to the PES-sector (as mentioned above), several studies have been undertaken. However, none of them have a design that measures the effect of career guidance provision in particular; they look into the effect of the whole program/methodology on workforce preparation. There has been undertaken some research on the County Career Centers, but it has mainly focused on the user-perspective and the service provision. One study looks into the self-reported effects of the career guidance, including changes in educational and vocational situation as a result of the received career guidance (report in press).

What are the challenges your country faces related to measuring Return on Investment (ROI)?

There is a prevalent understanding that a public career guidance service is one of several appropriate measures to deal with educational and labor market challenges. However, measuring the ROI of career guidance is methodologically challenging, and it has not been allocated public or private resources to do this. Moreover, the diversity in provision as well as the way in which these services are integrated in larger programs makes it complicated to discern the effects of guidance specifically.

### Top 3 Barriers for Youth Employment:

1. Disconnect between jobs available and education received.
2. Lack of motivation or disengagement from youth.
3. Lack of engagement from employers.



## ENGAGING EMPLOYERS

Please describe the formal and informal roles and mechanisms that employers play/participate in to support workforce preparation, workforce placement, and development of young people in your country.

In Norway there is a well-developed cooperation between the three partners; the government and employers' and employee associations. The cooperation provides a basis of mutual trust that supports workforce preparation and placement. Formal vocational training for young people in Norway (aged 16 – 20) consists of two years of education at school and two years as an apprentice in the workplace. This implies that the school sector and the workplaces both contribute to education of vocational workers and have a shared responsibility for the content and results.

Schools and PES follow up young people who quit school in the age of 16 – 20. In this follow up they cooperate with employers in giving workplace training or other work based activities.

In higher education there is some cooperation between education providers and employers, including brief information meetings, cooperation around educational content and delivery, and internships and trainee programs. Some institutions have established student career services that facilitate contact with employers.

What policies exist, if any, to support employer engagement? Please refer to occupational and labor market information, work experience, interventions in education and training institutions, and career guidance.

The three party cooperation mentioned above, provides a general basis for engagement from both employers and employees associations. The main employers' association, The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises (NHO), is active both in influencing policies and providing labor market information.

The formal vocational training, as being a combination of school provision and apprenticeships, make it necessary for employer to engage in the training given in the workplace. Without engagement from employers linked to their contribution as training arenas for apprentices, this system will not work.

Local PES offices cooperate with local employers to be able to provide workplace training for people at risk. This may partly be financed by PES as they may cover parts of the salaries for these kinds of employments.

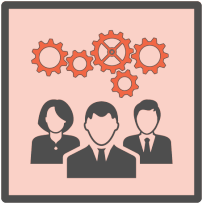
What are the challenges your country faces related to Engaging Employers?

In our formal vocational training, there is a challenge within some of the branches to get enough apprenticeships to cover the demand from the cohort of pupils.

It is a general challenge to re-employ people who have been outside the workforce for some time. Many employers are reluctant to employ workers who need special follow up or who are not able to work full time.

### Major Challenges:

1. Coordination of career guidance within and between different counties, sectors and levels.
2. Weak professionalization constitutes a challenge.
3. The National Unit for Lifelong Guidance does not have a mandate to instruct and achieve its objectives through the use of "Soft power" and gaining other actors' consent to make changes.



## INTEGRATED POLICIES: CREATING SYSTEMS THAT WORK

Please describe how policies for workforce preparation (including entrepreneurship) and workforce placement are integrated or coordinated, if at all, in your country. Who and/or what is driving the integration or coordination? How are local communities and public service users involved, if at all, in those policies?

In Norway the upper secondary level of education in the public school system involves both academic education, up to entry level of higher education, and vocational education and training (VET), up to journeyman certificates/craft certificates. At this point normal students are 19 (academic studies) or 20 (VET) years of age. Norwegian VET normally consists of two years of school training and two years as an apprentice in the relevant trade. This presupposes that there is a close connection between schools and employers.

If a youth leaves upper secondary education before graduation s/he is followed up by the education administration in cooperation with the work and welfare services, Nav (PES). In this follow up, the youth may have tailored education or work based training. After the age of 20, the Nav will take full responsibility for the follow up of persons without job or training (NEETs). Nav will cooperate with relevant educators or employers to facilitate actions for the NEET. In addition to this public support system, many private actors and companies act to enhance entrepreneurship and recruitment of young, educated workers.

To what extent do these sectors coordinate such policy or program initiatives? To what extent do they include career guidance/advice/information provision? How useful and efficient are these to support the policy initiatives?

In recent years career guidance has been on the political agenda in Norway. As a result of this, national government has instigated that most counties have established regional partnerships for career guidance comprising both education and employment sectors (PES), and County Career Centers are founded on these partnerships.

In 2011 Norway established a National Unit for Lifelong Guidance. Its main aim is to strengthen quality and stimulate development of provision and access to career services for young people and adults in all different phases of life. The unit endeavors to enhance co-operation and co-ordination among key actors, and co-ordinate activities across sectors.

The Unit has established and chairs a National Co-ordinating Group and a National Forum for Career Guidance. Participation in the National Forum reflects representation in the regional partnerships already established to enhance development of lifelong career guidance in the regions.

What are the challenges your country faces related to Integrated Policies: Creating Systems that work?

In 2014 OECD undertook a major skills review in Norway, involving a number of stakeholders. The review resulted in a Diagnostic Report and was followed by an Action Report [http://skills.oecd.org/developskills/documents/OECD\\_Skills\\_Strategy\\_Diagnostic\\_Report\\_Norway.pdf](http://skills.oecd.org/developskills/documents/OECD_Skills_Strategy_Diagnostic_Report_Norway.pdf), [http://skills.oecd.org/developskills/documents/OECD\\_Skills\\_Strategy\\_Action\\_Report\\_Norway.pdf](http://skills.oecd.org/developskills/documents/OECD_Skills_Strategy_Action_Report_Norway.pdf).

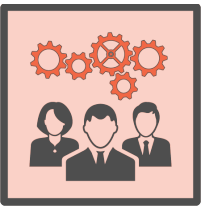
These reports confirmed the systemic challenges that have been pointed out in various earlier publications: a lack of coordination of career guidance and education provision, unequal access, and a weak professionalization.

OECD pointed to three challenges for the Norwegian system at large:

1. To develop relevant skills.
2. To activate skills supply.
3. To use skills effectively.

One of their five recommendations links specifically to the field of career guidance: OECD suggests that Norway “apply a whole-of-government approach to establish a comprehensive career guidance system covering all stages of lifelong learning and providing high quality services”. The Government has stated it will follow up on this recommendation, and an expert group has been established to explore the challenges and suggest solutions. The main challenges for creating systems that work are reflected in the main questions that the expert group has been asked to consider and give their recommendations on:

1. How should a comprehensive system for lifelong guidance (including online provision) be organized and developed to improve access to career guidance for pupils, apprentices, students and adults, increased quality and professionalism, and more efficient and effective use of resources? There must be a flexibility in the services that appropriately accommodates regional variation.



## INTEGRATED POLICIES: CREATING SYSTEMS THAT WORK

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2. The interface and cooperation between different actors that provide career guidance: Propose how cooperation and interfaces should be clarified, deepened and developed, in order that the provision in different sectors is appropriately supplementary.
3. Consider the scope of the career guidance system and prioritized target groups according to cost/benefit considerations.

The group will conclude its report in April 2016.

As part of Norway's participation in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network's Career Management Skills (CMS) group, the National Unit for Lifelong Guidance in Norway has undertaken some work to explore whether a cross-sectorial CMS approach could be beneficial for coherence and coordination of the structure as well as the content of the CEG system. An expert group consisting of representatives from a number of CEG sectors and organizations discussed this throughout 2014. Subsequently the chair of the group wrote a report discussing the issue (<http://www.vox.no/statistikk-og-analyse/publikasjoner/cms--et-felles-perspektiv-pa-karriereveiledning/>). Moreover, the Nordic fraction of the ELGPN and the Nordic network for adult learning (NVL) commissioned a report on CMS in a Nordic perspective. <http://euroguidance.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Nordic-Perspective-on-Career-Competences-and-guidance.pdf>). In the report, it is recommended that the Nordic countries cooperate to adapt and integrate a CMS approach in order to strengthen the content and structure of their lifelong guidance systems.

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