



Vocational education and training in Norway

Anna Hagen Tønder

ECLAC Seminar on Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Santiago de Chile, March 13-14 2019

About Fafo

- Founded by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) in 1982
- Reorganised to become a non-profit independent social science research foundation in 1993
- 90 employees
- Researchers' background include sociology, political science, social anthropology, economics, history and law



The Nordic Model

- Ability to combine social equality and economic efficiency
- Based on three institutional pillars (and the interplay between these)
 - Macroeconomic governance
 - Public welfare services
 - Organized working life

Source: Dølvik et al. (2015)

Why and how is VET important?

- Important for the development of high quality systems of work and production in the Nordic countries
- Provides high quality occupational skills that are relevant to labour market needs
- Promotes social equality – can counteract increasing polarization in the labour markets
- An alternative for people who do not opt for the academic pathway

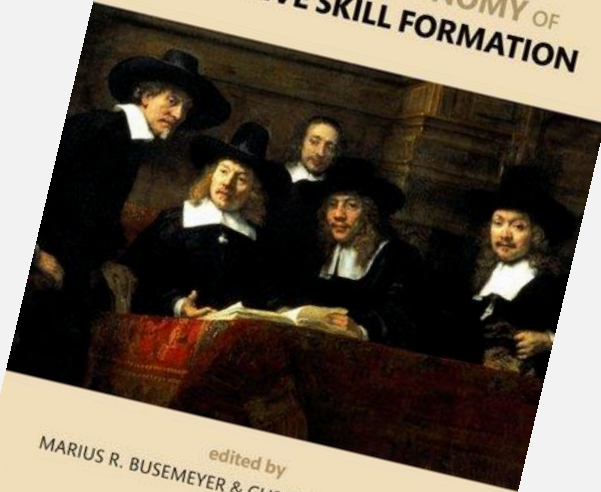
| | Market | State | Occupation |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Logic | Production | School | Occupational |
| Political culture | Liberalistic | State-centered | Neo-corporative, social consensus |
| Framework of education | Business and individuals | Educational subject, the citizen | Vocational occupation |
| Content | Needs of the individual enterprise Utility-oriented, short term Specific skills | Politically determined with focus on general academic knowledge, school-based | Determined by the organisations, occupational relevance, traditions |
| VET relates to | Internal labour markets | Internal and occupational labour markets | Occupational labour markets |

| | Market | State | Occupation |
|------------|--|--|--|
| Strengths | Flexible Cheap for the state Close to the needs of the enterprise | Strong linkage to general education Lack of training places not a problem | Broad vocational educations based on labour market needs High status based on skills and autonomy |
| Weaknesses | Under-investment in training and education More polarized labour market | Weak linkage to labour market needs | Institutional inertia Lack of training places |

Based on Clematide et al. (2005)

OXFORD

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF
COLLECTIVE SKILL FORMATION



edited by
MARIUS R. BUSEMEYER & CHRISTINE TRAMPUSCH

| State involvement | Employer/firm involvement | |
|-------------------|--|---|
| | High | Low |
| High | Collective/dual (Germany, Switzerland, Denmark) | State based (France, Sweden, Finland) |
| Low | Segmentalist (Japan) | Liberal, general skills (US, UK) |

Norway



Cross-national dimension

- Why did Britain, Germany, US and Japan develop so different skill formation regimes?
- Shows how differences can be traced back to different settlements between employers, artisans and early trade unions in the nineteenth century
- The development of skill formation systems in the early industrial period interacted with the development of collective bargaining institutions and trade unions and employer organizations in way that shaped different national trajectories

Longitudinal dimension

- Tracks the development of German VET over time as an example of how institutions change
- Shows how the unions initially opposed a firm-based training system. However, as unions recruited workers who had been trained through the system, they gradually developed an interest in maintaining and controlling the institution, thereby making it more robust



Norwegian VET – a brief historical outline

- Employer coordination from late 19th century
- Collective agreements stimulated apprenticeships in manufacturing from early 20th century (from 1907)
- Expansion of vocational schools, initiated by employers
- Organised labour chose to support apprenticeship
- Stronger state involvement after world war II
- Apprenticeship legislation from 1950, initially only for urban areas
- By the early 1970s, apprenticeship training was marginal

Tripartite cooperation in VET

- The employers' organisations and trade unions have traditionally had a strong influence on VET- especially related to apprenticeship training
- Tripartite cooperation institutionalised in Act on Vocational Training in 1981

Before Reform 94

- Steep rise in youth unemployment in the late 1980s
- Young people had no statutory right to upper secondary education
- Limited capacity in upper secondary schools
- Complex structure, early specialisation, low progression
- Lack of apprenticeships

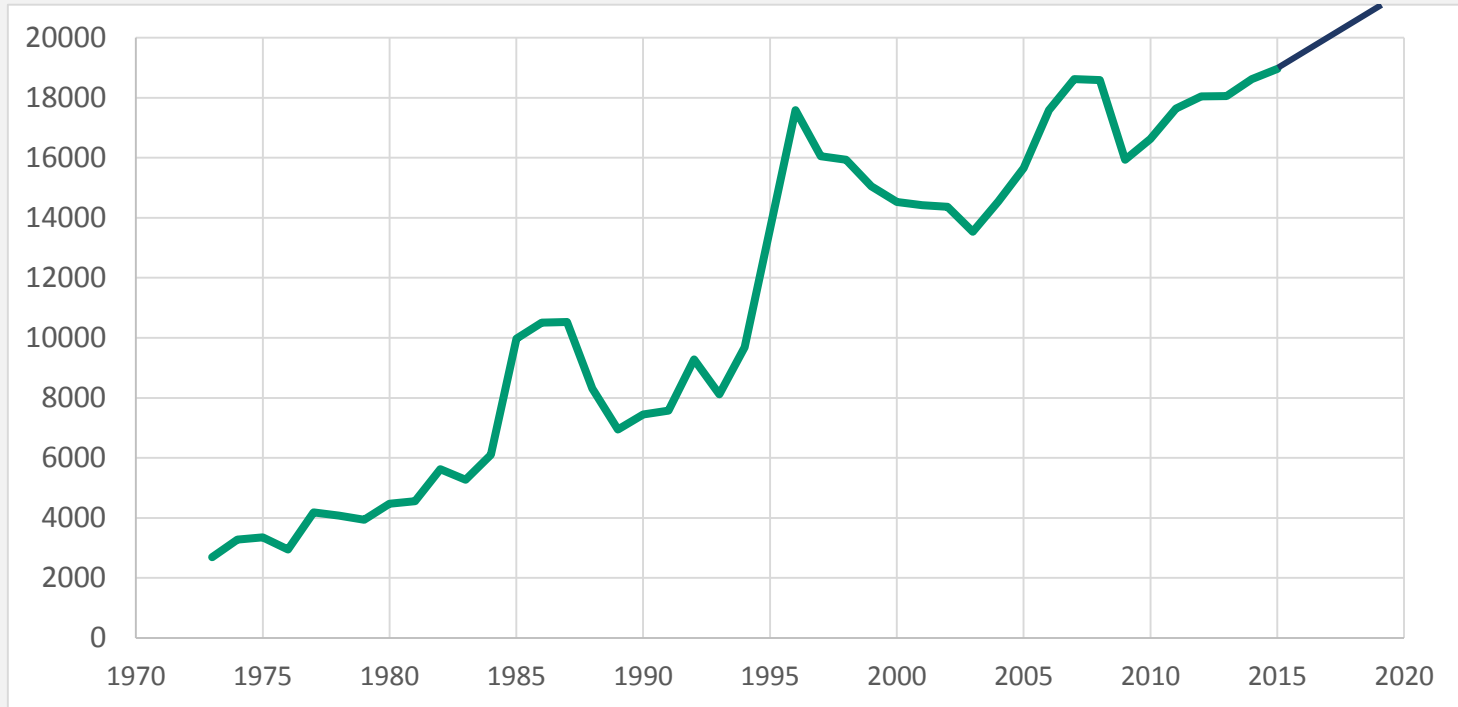
Reform 94 – main elements

- Statutory right to upper secondary education for all young people aged 16-19
- Apprenticeship training integrated in (almost) all VET programmes in upper secondary education
- 2+2 model established as the main model (two years in school, two years in apprenticeship training in a workplace)
- Trade certificate the goal for (almost) all VET programmes (ISCED level 3)

Apprenticeship regulation

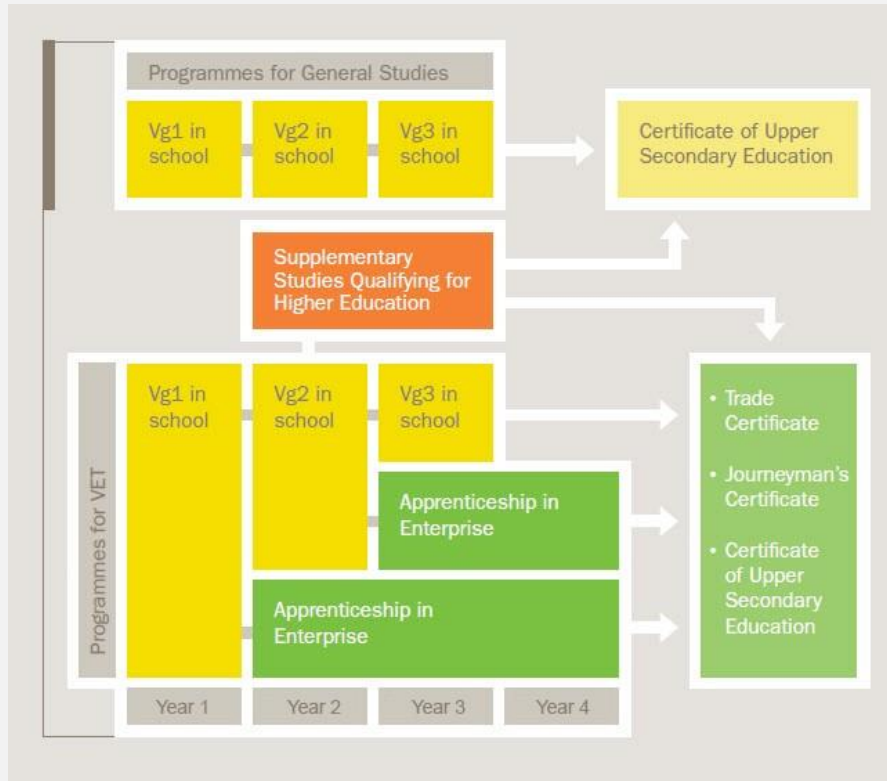
- National curricula for apprenticeship training
- Apprentices are employed by the training companies in the apprenticeship period
- One year of training, one year of productive work (in practice mixed)
- Wages for apprentices stipulated in collective agreements
- Training companies receive a state grant

New apprenticeship contracts 1973-2018



Source: NIFU Arbeidsnotat 10/2012, updated

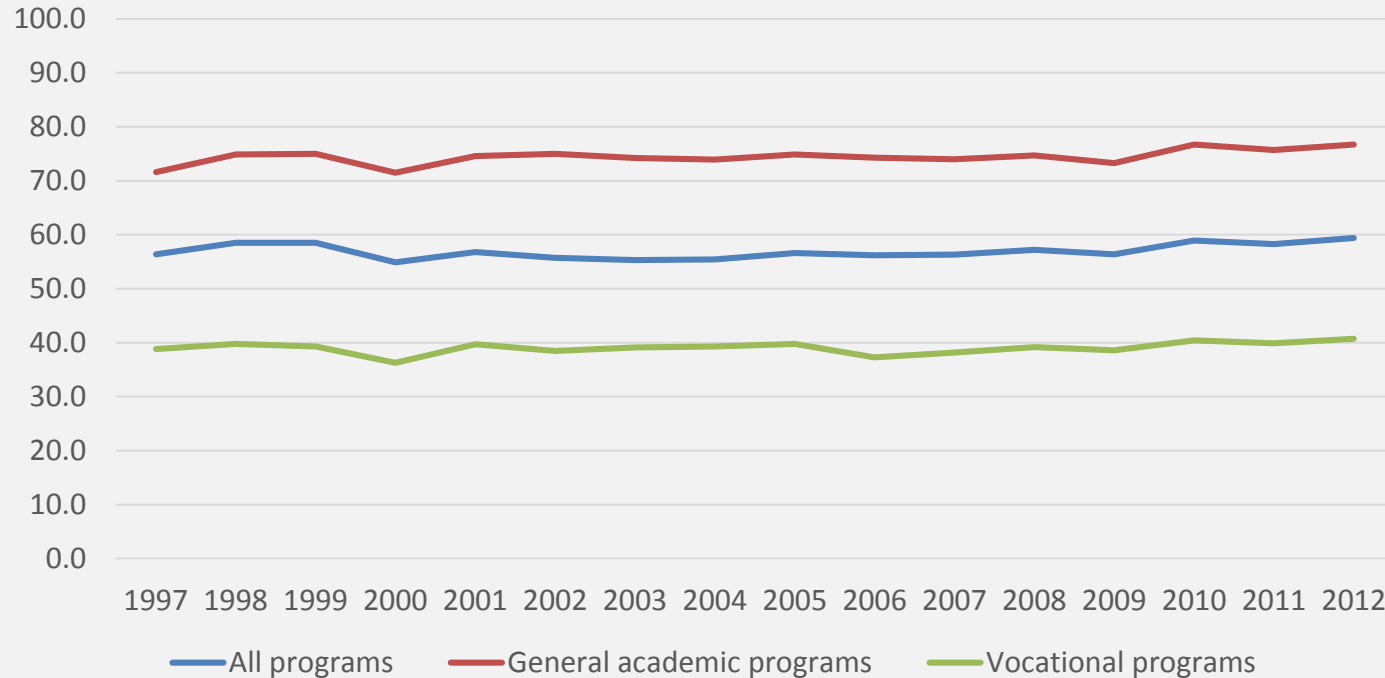
Upper secondary education in Norway



Eight vocational programs

- Building and construction
- Technical and industrial production
- Electricity and electronics
- Healthcare, childhood and youth development
- Service and transport
- Restaurant and food processing
- Design, arts and crafts
- Agriculture, fishing and forestry

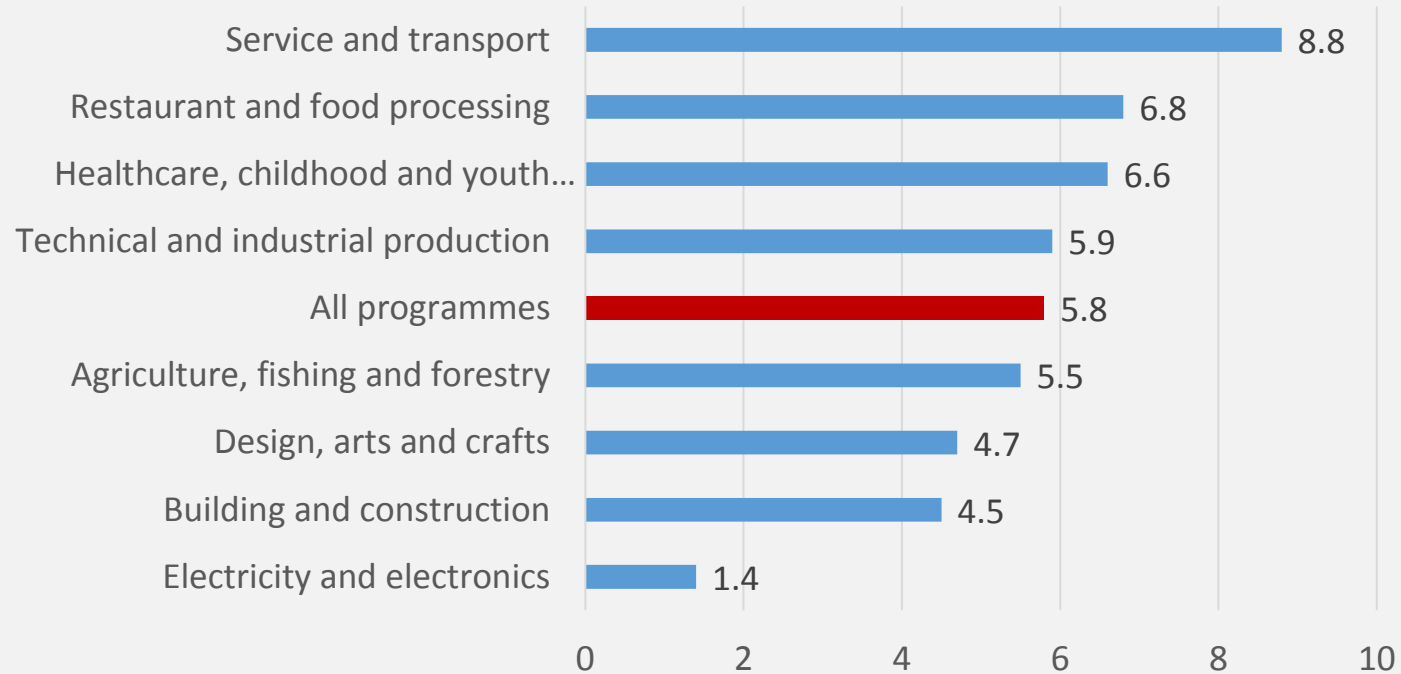
Completion rates after five years, by type of study programme



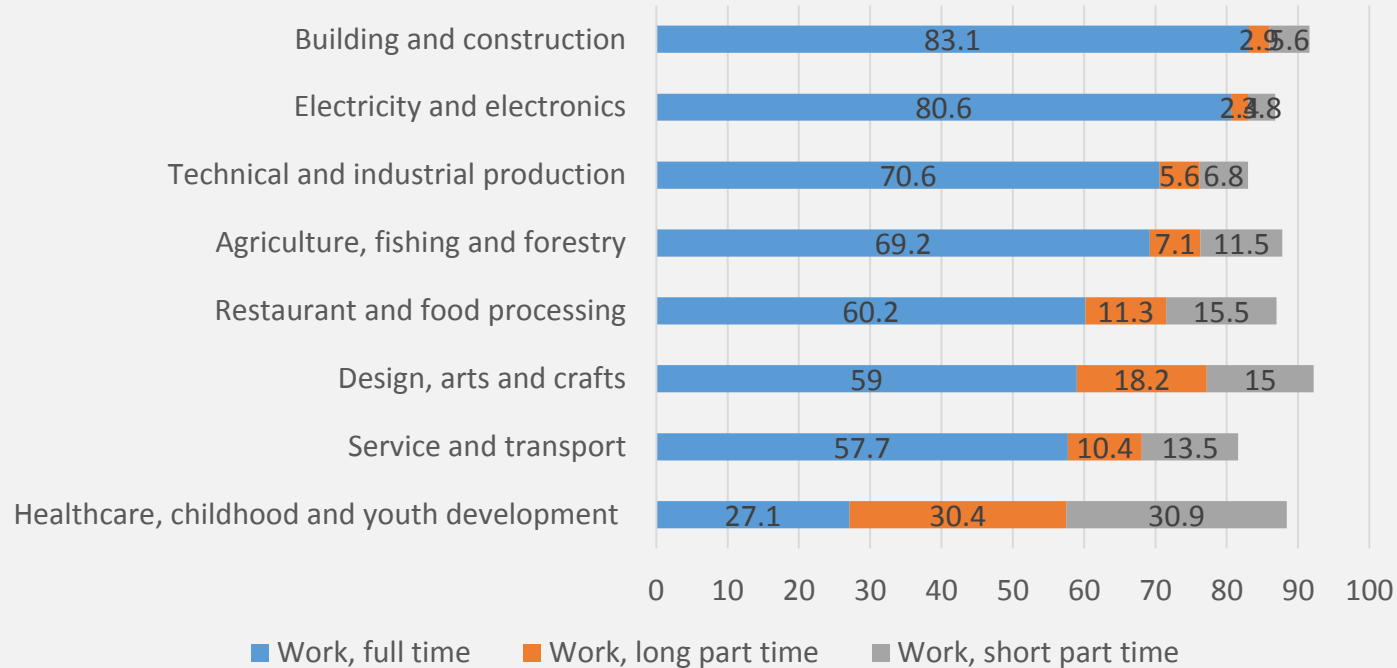
The eight vocational programs

- Building and construction
- Technical and industrial production
- Electricity and electronics
- Healthcare, childhood and youth development
- Service and transport
- Restaurant and food processing
- Design, arts and crafts
- Agriculture, fishing and forestry

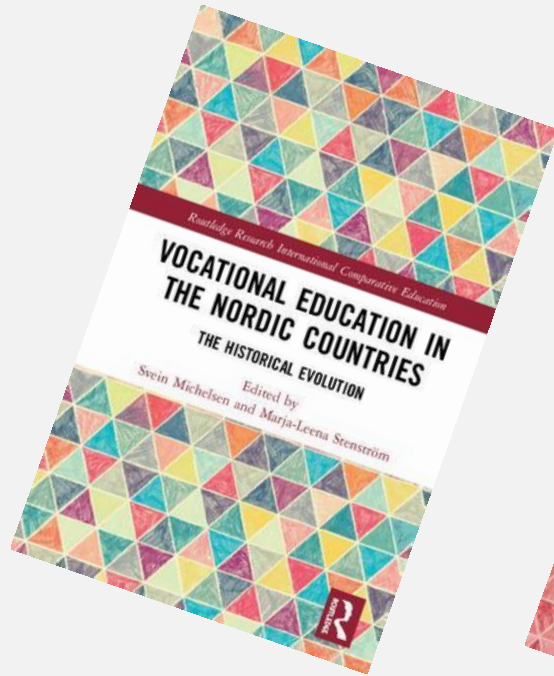
Not in employment or education 1-2 years after graduation (2012)



One year after graduation



The future of Vocational Education – Learning from the Nordic Countries



<http://nord-vet.dk/>

Youth unemployment < 25 years

(% of active population)

| | <i>2000</i> | <i>2005</i> | <i>2010</i> | <i>2015</i> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Denmark | 6.2 | 8.6 | 13.9 | 10.8 |
| Finland | 21.4 | 20.1 | 21.4 | 22.4 |
| Sweden | 10.5 | 22.6 | 24.8 | 20.4 |
| Norway | 9.8 | 11.4 | 9.2 | 9.9 |

Source: Eurostat/ Jørgensen & Tønder 2018

Enrolment of students in upper secondary VET

| | <i>1998</i> | <i>2005</i> | <i>2010</i> | <i>2012</i> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Denmark | 51.8 | 47.9 | 46.5 | 46.1 |
| Finland | 52.0 | 63.9 | 69.7 | 70.1 |
| Sweden | 40.6 | 53.6 | 56.1 | 49.4 |
| Norway | 52.5 | 60.8 | 53.9 | 52.0 |

Source: Eurostat / Jørgensen & Tønder 2018

Current policy challenges

- Growing shortage of skilled labour
- Declining enrolment in VET among youth
- Dropout from VET programmes
- Shrinking youth labour markets
- Lack of apprenticeship places
- Increased labour migration

The main challenges for VET

- Provide skills for a changing labour market and support school to work transitions
- Qualify students for progression to higher education
- Improve the esteem of VET among youth (and their parents)
- Social inclusion

Thank you for your attention!

anh@fafo.no

References

Busemeyer, M. R. and C. Trampusch, Eds. (2012). The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Clematide, B., et al. (2005). "Challenges for the Danish VET system - on a path towards a future model." bwp(7).

Dølvik, J. E., et al. (2015). The Nordic model towards 2030. A new chapter? NordMod 2030. Final report. Fafo-report 2015:07. Oslo, Fafo.

Jørgensen, C. H., et al., Eds. (2018). Vocational Education in the Nordic Countries. Learning from Diversity. London and New York, Routledge.

More references

Jørgensen, C. H. and A. H. Tønder (2018). Transitions from vocational education to employment in the Nordic countries. Vocational Education in the Nordic Countries. Learning from Diversity. C. H. Jørgensen, O. J. Olsen and D. P. Thunqvist. London and New York, Routledge: 29-50.

Michelsen, S. and M. L. Steenström, Eds. (2018). Vocational Education in the Nordic Countries: The Historical Evolution. London and New York, Routledge.

Nyen, T. and A. H. Tønder (2014). Yrkesfagene under press. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget.

Thelen, K. (2004). How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, the United States, and Japan. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.