Organisational aspects

According to the Norwegian Education Act, counties and municipalities are the local school owners, in addition to a few private school owners. School owners shall ensure that their teachers have relevant and updated competence, including good systems for following up and mentoring newly appointed teachers. Similarly, owners of early childhood institutions (kindergartens) are responsible for competence development of their staff.

Responsibility for in-service training for teachers at the national level is shared among the Ministry of Education and Research, the Directorate for Education and Training and the universities and other teacher education institutions.

It is the duty of the local owners of schools or kindergartens to have a system for in-service competence development. Schools and kindergartens are required to develop a competence development plan. In-service training and continuing education can be organised at local, regional and national levels. The organisers may be local education authorities, teachers' associations, associations for special subjects in higher education institutions, regional officer’s educational departments, county education committees, national councils or national education authorities. At school level, part of the teacher’s working time can be allocated to joint time for competence development. Teachers will be required to attend competence development activities that take place during this joint time, while individual competence development courses are agreed upon between teachers and their school managers.


In-service formal further education

Through the Teacher Promotion strategy, the Government has strengthened the requirements for teachers and school managers’ formal qualifications, and the national strategy “Competence for Quality – until 2025 (CFQ)” defines the framework and resources for further education to fulfil these. The strategy aims to

- Contribute to increased subject knowledge and didactic competence for teachers, and increased professional leadership competence for school leaders (principals)
- Support the fulfilment of new competence requirements for teachers in prioritised subjects, and contribute to the requirements of relevant competence in all school subjects
Teachers who do not fulfil the new formal competence criteria in English, Mathematics and Mother tongue are obliged to attend further education in the required subjects. CFQ gives school owners the opportunity to apply for teachers to attend courses in prioritised subjects. Admission requirements vary depending on the type of course. They may refer to initial teacher education, in-service training, continuing training, number of years in teaching, other responsibilities or posts in the school system. Teachers are released from parts of their ordinary duties, but keep their salary during the training. In addition, there are separate continuing training programmes for mentors (as an offer for those mentoring newly educated teachers) and programmes for newly employed head teachers/principals and school deputies. The content of in-service and continuing training is influenced by current school reforms as well as by the priority given to certain areas by the Ministry of Education and Research.

**New competence development model for schools**

To strengthen local responsibility and ownership of competence development, White Paper 21 (2016–2017) introduced a new model. The main principles for this model are as follows:

1. Municipalities and county authorities have chief responsibility for the schools’ quality development.
2. Municipalities and county authorities shall have greater freedom of action.
3. The State’s policy instruments shall be differentiated.
4. Municipalities and county authorities that are unable to achieve the desired development on their own will receive support and follow-up from the State.
5. Competence development shall be based on research and knowledge.

The new model consists of three different schemes:

1. A decentralised scheme to ensure that all municipalities implement competence-enhancement measures, by channelling state funds to the municipalities. In cooperation with universities and university colleges, the municipalities define and prioritise what they need, within the framework of national goals.
2. A follow-up scheme in which municipalities and county authorities that report weak results in key education and training areas over time are offered state support and guidance.
3. An innovation scheme that provides more research-based knowledge about the school system. The State defines requirements for evaluation and quality, while the local school authorities and research communities work together to develop the measures they wish to test.

The decentralised scheme is organised as a tri-partite cooperation between school owners, higher education institutions and stakeholders. At the local level, a network of the schools’ principals and stakeholder representatives help schools identify their competence development needs. At the county level, the county governors set up a cooperation forum, where representatives from the municipality networks meet with the local universities and other stakeholders. The cooperation forum then agrees on the choice of thematic areas and the allocation of funds.

**Competence development in Early Childhood**

The strategy “Kompetanse for fremtidens barnehage” (Revised strategy for competence and recruitment 2018-2022) describes the competence development strategy for Early Childhood. This strategy aims to contribute to

- an increase in the number of pre-school teachers in kindergartens
an increase in the number of child-care workers in kindergarten
providing all staff members in kindergartens with an opportunity to pursue continual
professional development
to acquiring more kindergarten teachers in kindergartens to attain master's degree-level
competence
all kindergardens developing their teaching practice through kindergarten-based competence
elevation.

Incentives, supporting measures and funding for participation in continuing professional development (CPD) activities

Support and funding for the new competence development strategy

• The Ministry defines the overall national framework for the content of the competence-raising
  measures, based on sector goals. The guidelines will not be linked to certain subjects or subject
  areas.
• The funds are allocated based on the number of full-time equivalents in the municipalities in
  each county, to municipalities, universities and university colleges that contribute to the
  scheme, via the county governors.
• The county governors shall facilitate cooperation between local school authorities and
  universities and university colleges, and facilitate long-term partnerships in local collaborative
  forums.
• The collaborative forums must agree on priorities and what projects to carry out, including the
  choice of thematic areas and the more detailed allocation of funds. The collaboration forums
  can agree on more areas if the municipalities have different needs.
• The county governors shall act as facilitator for the collaborative forums. If the forums fail to
  agree on their priorities, however, it is the county governors who will make the final decision on
  the projects to be carried out.
• The forums are not obliged to use their local university or university college. They must, however, enter into cooperation with an institution in the university and university college
  sector, if applicable with support from national centres.
• In order to receive funds, it is a requirement that the school owners contribute funding
  corresponding to 30 per cent of the state grant. Municipalities that, for various reasons, do not
  wish to participate in this development work will not be awarded funds.
• In 2017, the scheme applied only to municipalities. In the longer term, it will also include county
  authorities.
• Private schools can be included in the collaborative forums at the local level.

Funding for competence for quality

• The supply teacher scheme: The basic rate for supply teacher costs is NOK 640,000. For maths
  and science, the State covers 75 per cent of the basic rate, while the contribution is 60 per cent
  for other subjects. For other subjects, the school owner covers 15 per cent. The remaining 25
  per cent is the teachers’ contribution in the form of their own time.
• The grant scheme: The grant scheme for teachers is intended to reduce the need for supply
  teachers while also increasing flexibility and the options for the individual teachers. Through the
  grant scheme, teachers are given up to NOK 110,000 to cover the cost of taking up to 30
  credits.
• The State finances the places in the programmes under both the supply teacher scheme and
the grant scheme, while the school owner covers expenses for travel, accommodation, teaching aids etc. The State covers the expenses for places in the management programme for teachers.