

# Further growth and enhanced quality

## Strategy for tertiary vocational education

### Preface

The Government wants to see growth in the vocational college sector, and its ambition is for the quality of vocational colleges to be increased in step with this growth. The purpose of this strategy is to devise a framework for the development of tertiary vocational education.

An important characteristic of tertiary vocational education is that it is developed in close collaboration with the labour market. Vocational colleges should contribute to a knowledge-intensive labour market by offering professional top-up for those already in employment and provide study programmes for people who would like more education after upper secondary education. This special role of vocational colleges will continue to be important going forward. Vocational colleges must also offer opportunities for graduates who want to pursue their career.

New technology and the transition to a greener economy give rise to major changes in society and new labour market needs. This makes vocational colleges even more relevant, as they offer short, practical study programmes that the labour market needs. Vocational colleges are in close contact with the labour market and are capable of establishing new programmes as the need arises. At the same time, traditional vocational college programmes are becoming more and more specialised, and the duration of some of the programmes is increasing in step with the need for more in-depth skills. Vocational colleges must strike a balance between the different needs and expectations of an ever-changing society. The ambitions and goals for tertiary vocational education are based on a sector that encompasses great variety, with different goals for the programmes it represents. I appreciate all the useful input we have received on the strategy. It obviously reflects great interest in vocational colleges in society. The input has helped to give direction to an educational sector that is becoming increasingly important to Norway.



*Henrik Asheim*

Henrik Asheim, Minister of Research and Higher Education

This document has been electronically approved and signed by the Minister.

## *Part 1: From the white paper on vocational college education until the present*



### Development during the period 2016–2020

Figures on tertiary vocational education show extensive changes over just the past five years. The development during the period 2016–2020 shows that the number of vocational colleges has decreased, among other things because many vocational colleges have merged, and that the number of students has increased substantially. The gender balance has improved somewhat, and there are only minor changes in the breakdown of subject areas. The figures also show that the proportion of part-time students was 65% in 2020 and that just under half of the students attended campus-based teaching at a vocational college.

Vocational colleges	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	91	81	83	80	73
Public (%)	45%	46%	43%	45%	38%
Private (%)	55%	54%	57%	55%	62%
Vocational colleges with fewer than 50 students	39	30	29	32	34
Vocational colleges with more than 500 students	8	9	11	12	15

NSD/DBH-F.

Vocational college students	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of students	15,061	15,690	16,701	18,299	23,279
Female students (%)	42%	43%	44%	45%	47%
Male students (%)	58%	57%	56%	55%	53%
Foreign nationals	363	404	440	494	N/A
Number of graduates	6,154	5,740	6,320	6,720	8,338

NSD/DBH-F.

By subject area (FKF)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Health and welfare	22%	25%	26%	27%	26%

By subject area (FKF)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Creative subjects	15%	14%	13%	12%	11%
Transport	8%	8%	8%	8%	7%
Technical subjects	41%	39%	40%	39%	37%
Economics and administration	11%	11%	11%	11%	15%
Other	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Not stated (small modules)					2%

NSD/DBH-F.

Vocational college students, different categories	Number	Percentage
Full time	7,876	35%
Part time	14,774	65%
Web-based with sessions on campus	5,955	27%
Web-based	4,740	21%
Campus-based	11,581	52%

NSD/DBH-F.