

Report to Eurydice
Teachers' autonomy - Norway

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Preface

The purpose of this paper is to describe the formal restrictions, and possibilities, in teachers' autonomy in Norway. The paper is the groundwork for a European comparison made by the Slovenian Presidency of the European Union.

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Introduction

The last few decades have seen many reforms in the field of teaching and education in Norway, as in the rest of Europe. These reforms and changes have affected the role of teachers in many ways; for instance on the influence teachers have on their daily work situation, or the influence teachers have in central negotiations concerning wages and working hours.

This paper is an attempt to describe teacher autonomy and influence. It is written on commission from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, and is a part of the Norwegian contribution to the collection of information on responsibilities and autonomy of teachers in preparation for the working document for the Slovenian presidency of the European Union. The form of the paper is rather short and summative, characterized by a “Question and Answer” format. This is because of the specific nature of the assignment, i.e. describing the formal legislation and control governing teachers’ work, as a preparation for a European comparison.

The paper is divided in four sections. Section A is the most comprehensive, and is an overview of teachers’ responsibilities and changes to the profession. It is divided in four subsections. The first part of section A attempts to describe how the content of curricula and teaching objectives are drawn up. What opportunities do teachers have to choose subjects and subject areas, and topics within broader subject areas? Are content/curriculum objectives defined by authorities, and if so, for which units? The second part of section A describes the obligations, constraints and opportunities associated with continuing professional development in teaching. What is regulated, how are expenditures managed? The third part of section A provides an overview of teaching hours and tasks specified in employment contracts.

Section B describes the origin and development of policies which widen teachers’ responsibilities and bodies involved. Specifically, section B provides implementation dates for reforms and legislation described in section A, and specifies which bodies were responsible for defining the duties and assigning them to teachers.

Section C describes the autonomy, accountability and incentives that follow teachers’ work, with specific reference to the areas described in section A. Have new duties been accompanied by new systems of accountability?

Section D describes the implementation of policies which widen teachers' responsibilities and teachers' reactions to these policies. References are made to existing surveys and national reports.

Any faults or flaws in the paper are solely the authors' responsibility.

Section A. Overview of teachers' responsibilities and changes to the profession.

1. Teaching responsibilities

a) ISCED levels 1 and 2 – How the content of curricula and teaching objectives are drawn up

The Knowledge Promotion is the latest reform in the 10-year compulsory school and in upper secondary education and training. It introduces certain changes in substance, structure and organization from the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school to the last grade in upper secondary education and training.

The collective objectives and principles for teaching in primary and lower secondary schools are laid down in the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion which includes:

- Core Curriculum for primary and lower secondary, upper secondary and adult education
- Quality Framework (Principles and guidelines for primary and lower secondary education.)
- Framework Regulating the Distribution of Periods and Subjects (Distribution of teaching hours per subject)
- Subject Curricula (Curricula for individual subjects)

- A separate curriculum is designed for the Sámi Knowledge Promotion that will be used in Sámi administrative districts.

i. How are teachers expected to contribute to adapting them at school level?

The Subject Curricula lay down a common learning content for all pupils, which increases in scope throughout the school years. This common learning content is supplemented to adapt it to local conditions and to pupils' individual needs.

One goal of the latest reform, The Knowledge Promotion, is to increase autonomy at the local level with respect to methods, teaching materials and the organization of classroom

instruction. The subject curricula do not regulate how the subject aims should be achieved, what methods and teaching materials to be used or suggest ways to organize classroom instruction. However, the Quality Framework includes a “Learning Poster” which states 11 principles that schools must adhere to in all subjects. These include e.g. adaptive instruction, varied instruction and learning, securing the physical and psycho-social environment for pupils, as well as home-school collaboration.

The new Subject Curricula presuppose concretization of subject aims at the local level, and implicate cooperation among teachers and school management in analyzing and interpreting the national curricula in every subject. Each school must develop local syllabi for each subject on every level that outline and date teaching methods and concrete learning content.

ii. Implementation dates

The Core Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school (Den generelle delen av læreplanen) has been in effect in ISCED levels 1 and 2 since 1997. This Core Curriculum has been maintained in the latest reform in compulsory education, which has introduced new curricula for grades 1 through 9 in autumn 2006 and grade 10 since autumn 2007.

iii. Degree of freedom left to teachers regarding

1. choice of subjects or subject areas to be taught

Subjects to be taught in school are stipulated in the Knowledge Promotion national subject curricula and are compulsory. Each subject is structured into main subject areas and competence goals for each subject area are clearly formulated. The areas are, however, broad areas, and there are many professional decisions that teachers must make within each about topics to be taught.

2. courses which are optional for pupils to take

In addition to the compulsory subjects, pupils at ISCED level 2 are required to choose one of the following options:

- Second foreign language. Pupils can choose a foreign language in addition to English, i.e. German or French or another language on the basis of local or regional needs.

- Supplementary language study. Pupils can choose additional in-depth study of a language they already have a basic knowledge of, i.e. further study in Norwegian, English or Sámi.
- Practical project work. This is an activity that is planned in cooperation with the pupils. (2007 – 2008 is the final school year that this will be offered.)

To give the 10-year compulsory school pupils a foretaste of subjects in upper secondary education and training, *elective programme subjects* are introduced at the lower secondary level. These programme subjects should reflect local conditions, preferably in collaboration with local upper secondary schools and businesses in the region. Training can be arranged off school premises, which will allow pupils to choose in line with their abilities and interests; it will also give them a better foundation for selecting upper secondary education and training based on their own experience. Schools must offer this as an elective for pupils from autumn 2008.

To improve each pupil's access to differentiated education, municipalities and county authorities may reassign 25 % of the classes for a given subject at both ISCED levels. This can be done when it is likely that it will help pupils attain the goals for their subjects as a whole. The subject curricula aims cannot be deviated from, even if classes are reassigned. Any reassignment must take place in cooperation with the home and requires the consent of each pupil or apprentice, as well as their parents or guardians.

3. teachers' autonomy in choosing topics within broader subject areas

Teachers' professional autonomy is great concerning the choice of topics within broader subject areas. The new Subject Curricula implemented in autumn 2006 presuppose concretization of subject aims at the local level, implicating that teachers and school management must cooperate in choosing topics within broader subject areas and develop local syllabi for each subject for every level which outline and date teaching methods and concrete learning content.

iv. Level of detail in which educational content are defined in the curriculum and whether this constrains teachers (can use examples)

Under the latest reform implemented autumn 2006, the Knowledge Promotion, schools must prioritize pupils' development of basic skills in all subjects. This is regarded as an important foundation for all other learning. These basic skills are:

- the ability to express oneself orally
- the ability to read
- the ability to do arithmetic
- the ability to express oneself in writing
- the ability to make use of information and communication technology

Basic skills are incorporated into the subject curricula for all subjects. All teachers are therefore responsible for enabling pupils to develop basic skills through their work in various subjects. An emphasis on reading and writing from the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school is an integral part of the Knowledge Promotion. Other areas that are emphasized are motivation for learning, learning strategies and social competence.

Each subject has competence aims for each subject area after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth year in primary and lower secondary school. For example the Subject Curriculum in Norwegian is divided into four different areas: Oral texts, Written texts, Composite texts and Language and culture. The competence aims are all outlined in the same way. Competence aims after Year 4 for Oral text are formulated as follows:

“The aims for the education are that the pupil shall be able to

- interact with others through play, dramatisation, conversation and discussions, and by practising the rules of group conversations
- tell stories, explain, give and receive messages
- explain how a person may offend others through language usage
- express his or her own thoughts and perceptions relating to children's literature, drama, films, computer games and TV shows
- present texts to fellow pupils.”

Constraints placed on teachers are: they must teach the subjects specified in the national curriculum and they must teach within the areas specified. All teachers must also emphasize the development of basic skills as defined above. Teachers must also make sure

that pupils develop skills and knowledge needed to reach the national competence goals specified. Within these constraints, teachers have the professional autonomy to address and find solutions to questions of what, when, where, why, how and for whom. As referred to in section D, it appears that most teachers are favourable to the new curriculum.

b) Level of detail and changes teachers can make at the school level concerning teaching objectives.

i. Are content / curriculum objectives defined by higher authorities for a complete level of education, stage or cycle, school year, block of school time, unit of teaching?

The national Core Curriculum and Subject Curricula for all compulsory, elective foreign and supplementary language subjects are defined by the Ministry of Education and Research.

The Subject Curricula specify competence aims after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth year in primary and lower secondary school. There are no further definitions of content or objectives that are made by higher authorities.

ii. If the situation varies from subject to subject (or area), specify where they have the most autonomy

The National Curriculum for primary and lower secondary education includes subject curricula which defines subject aims for every compulsory subject and for the elective second foreign language and in-depth studies in Norwegian and English.

The owners of primary and lower secondary schools (municipal authorities) are responsible for formulating Subject Curricula for the new subjects called the *elective programme subjects*, for the teaching being carried out pursuant to the subject curricula and for the pupils being assessed based on the objectives in the subject curricula. As a stage in this work, information can be collected from upper secondary schools, local business and industry and local or regional development communities, and the lower secondary school could cooperate with them as well. Elective programme subjects will be compulsory starting in the 2008/09 school year. For the 2006/07 and 2007/08 school years the option is given to

continue "the practical project work" on the lower secondary school level within the stipulated teaching hours' framework for programme subjects.

2. Obligations, constraints and opportunities associated with continuing professional development.

a) ISCED levels 1 and 2: to what extent are requirements for CPD regulated (no. of hours, certificates, etc)?

The requirements for CPD in teaching are regulated by the Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act) of 1998 (last amended 2007-11-01), which also regulates the basic competencies and education for the teaching staff at all ISCED levels. It is stated that the municipalities (school owners) have the main responsibility for CPD, and that the National Government has a clear responsibility to point out the direction necessary to fulfil goals at a national level.

The number of hours used on CPD in ISCED levels 1 and 2 are regulated through the employment contract on working hours for teaching staff. The amount of time stipulated for CPD and school development planning is one week per academic year. The exact time for when the individual teacher will do this, is specified in the local work plans which the headmaster negotiates with each teacher.

No certificates or re-assessment is statutory for teachers.

b) Does the choice of courses depend on a training plan to meet national / local priorities – or is it up to the school or individual teachers?

The strategy plan “Competence for development. Competence development strategy in basic education 2005-2008”, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research as a preparation for the Knowledge Promotion Reform in 2006, defines the subjects and areas considered important to develop competence within. This document is not binding for local authorities or schools. Each municipality is free to investigate its own local needs for competence enhancement among teachers and can formulate own strategies. How this is carried out will vary at the local level, but CPD plans must be accepted and decided on a municipal level before funding is transferred to the municipality.

c) Specify constraints placed on teachers' choices (seniority?

Limited to subject specialisation?)

The strategy plan "Competence for development. Competence development strategy in basic education 2005-2008", issued by the Ministry of Education and Research highlights the courses and subjects considered important based on national statistics of teachers' subject matter education levels. Language is emphasised (especially other than English) since pupils at ISCED level 2 can choose a second language in addition to English, or further studies in languages they already have basic knowledge of, such as English, Norwegian or Sàmi. Besides this basic subjects such as maths and science are prioritized at a national level.

There are, however, no constraints placed on teachers due to seniority or other variables. Constraints would be whether the school wishes to prioritize a certain subject matter due to lack of competence or a desire to strengthen this subject especially at the school level.

d) Organizational level: is cpd delivered in school time?

Permission? Conditions for attendance? Who grants participation? How is absence managed with respect to pupils? Do teachers have to organize their own substitutes?

The number of hours spent on CPD for the individual teacher is specified in the work agreements negotiated at the school level. CPD is often organized within school time, but can also take place in the afternoons. Participation in CPD courses outside school time must be agreed on by the teacher in the work agreement.

The headmaster grants participation, but the courses provided are often offered by teacher education institutes and other providers.

The headmaster is responsible for finding substitute teachers to fill in for teachers attending courses.

A major constraint on teachers' participation in CPD is the lack of substitute teachers, and the cost of substitutes.

e) Do teachers have access to a specific individual training budget? How are expenditures managed?

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research has allocated substantial resources for professional development among teachers and school leaders in relation to the Knowledge Promotion reform and the Competence Strategy. NOK 300 million was allocated for this purpose in 2005 and a further NOK 375 million in 2006.

Expenditures are managed at the local municipal level. Some municipalities have chosen to distribute financial resources directly to the individual schools, others have developed municipal programs and strategies or have chosen a combination.

The headmasters are responsible for planning cpd-activities, but are encouraged to discuss their priorities with the staff. It is common for headmasters to report needs to the municipal level (school owner) who can arrange CPD courses that are intended for teachers from several schools or on an inter-municipal level.

f) Are there measures to encourage teachers to participate in CPD? Which? Incentives – sanctions?

There are few if any incentives and no sanctions. One incentive is that some CPD courses provided by universities / colleges can lead to extra study credits when completed. In some cases this can incur a higher salary for the teacher. However, most of the CPD courses do not give study credits and do not lead to higher positions or salary.

3. Teaching hours and tasks specified in employment

contracts

At present, there are two kinds of employment contracts: a central employment contract and a local one.

The central employment contract (SFS 2213): Negotiated by the employer representative organisation (The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities – abbreviated KS) and the employee representative organization (Union of Education Norway).

One year = 1687.5 hours of work. From 55 years of age, teaching hours can be reduced by 5.8% (no reduction of *total* working hours) and for teachers who are 60 or older, the number of teaching hours can be reduced by 12.5%. All Norwegian employees are given an additional week's vacation when they turn 60. A full time position in ISCED level 1 represents maximum 1300 on-site hours per year and maximum 1225 on-site hours per year at the ISCED level 2. On-site hours include teaching, team work, conversations with pupils and parents, etc. The remaining hours are flexible and are intended for personal pre- and post-planning and studies. Teachers work 39 weeks per year (38 with pupils present and 1 week for professional development).

	On-site: School/shared time	Flexible: Individual time	Total workload 1 year
1	ISCED level 1300	387.5	1687.5
2	ISCED level 1225	462.5	1687.5

The central agreement also stipulates the number of hours that teachers should teach within each subject. For ISCED level 1, the number of teaching hours is 988 (45-minute segments) per year regardless of subject. This means that 312 hours per year remain for collaborative work and other work-related tasks to be carried out at school in addition to a number of flexible working hours. For ISCED level 2, the number of hours is differentiated

by subject. First language instruction (Norwegian, Sami and sign language) is stipulated to 808 hours per year (45 minutes = 1 hour), second language (English) and food & health require 847 teaching hours / year, Arts & Crafts and Physical Education require 948 hours/year and all other subjects = 885 hours per year.

a) Supervising and supporting students after school hours

What constitutes other work-related tasks, and what constitutes instruction or teaching hours is currently being discussed among the Union of Education Norway and the Employer Organization (KS). Whether supervision and support of students after school hours should be remunerated, has not been agreed on centrally.

b) Taking classes for colleagues (substituting)

Any substitute job is given remuneration according to salary scale. There are also teachers who have agreed to include a certain number of substitute hours in their work plan to fulfil the requirements of a full time position. In these cases, the total number of hours will not exceed those provided in the table above. It is also fairly common that teachers exchange lessons if they need to have time off on a certain day.

c) Supporting student teachers and newly qualified teachers

In 2005, new Field Practice Contracts were established at a national level (Rundskriv F-04-05, dated 18.03.2005).

Field practice schools are recruited by the school owners at municipal level and sign a contract with a Teacher Education Institute. Within each school, the headmasters identify specific teachers or teams of teachers who function as teacher educators for pre-service teachers for up to a period of four years. The in-service teacher educators have a supervision period of seven weeks (this can be spread out over a whole year), and can have multiple supervision periods in one year. The maximum number of students in one group being supervised is 4. For each period the teacher or teacher team gets a reduction of workload (125 hours) and remuneration (in 2007 this was approximately 1400 €). From the 125 hours, a minimum of 18 hours must be spent on preparation in cooperation with the collaborating teacher education. The headmaster (or whoever the headmaster delegates responsibility to), who organises the contact between the school and the teacher education, receives NOK 12.000 for this work.

Per today there is no formal system of supporting newly qualified teachers. Any such function will be agreed on in the local agreements between teacher and headmaster.

d) Team-working on school development planning

e) Team-working on school wide curriculum planning

f) Team working on cross curricular planning

g) Team working on school self evaluation

h) Team working on pupil assessment

All of the above tasks are included in teachers' on-site working hours (see above). This means that teachers at ISCED level 1 and 2 have about 300+ hours per year for collaborative work that can cover all of the above areas and that can also vary from year to year based on the local work agreement that is negotiated between headmaster and teacher.

i) Any special functions (contact teacher, team leader)

Any special function gives additional remuneration and can also involve reduction in teaching load.

Since autumn 2007, schools have been able to define their own employment contract. This contract can be identical to the centrally regulated agreement, but can also differ. The contracts can be made for individual schools or be common for all schools in one municipality. The schools can define specific tasks and also have the possibility to agree on working hours within the framework of 1687.5 hours per year. By 2010, all schools should have local agreements. However, in case of disputes, the central agreement is the reference.

4) Teachers' contribution to the process of reform and education innovations

Do teachers contribute to the reform process?

Teachers contribute by responding to surveys (see for instance Section D in this document), by being representatives in panels and they contribute not least via their representatives in the labour unions. Labour unions are a party to all major decisions effecting teachers' terms and working conditions. This includes reforms to school curricula, teaching objectives, and the definition of evaluation standards for pupils. Closer to 70 organisations are included in the hearing rounds that the Ministry of Education and Research initiates in connection with all new curricula, and several of these will represent teachers.

Another way that teachers contribute is through the Demonstration School system.

The Demonstration School system was established spring 2002 and involves the nomination and selection of schools that can serve as inspiration, learning sites and catalysts for other schools in areas that the demonstration schools are especially competent within. Selection criteria for the schools are that they must show how they have implemented new curricula, their adaptive teaching and learning strategies, assessment strategies, how they work to create positive and inclusive learning environments, early intervention, transitions, and professional and organizational development. Schools that are selected as demonstration schools receive NOK 500 000 per year for two years. So far, 54 schools (including ISCED level 3 schools) have been demonstration schools and three new demonstration schools have been selected for the period 2007 – 2009 (ISCED levels 1 and 2).

In 2006, the Queen of Norway established a new prize to be awarded every year to one school that works effectively towards inclusion and multicultural education. The jury consists of representatives from teachers, pupils, and parents as well as the labour union, the ministry and educators at university level.

The yearly "Country conference" is a venue where the Minister of Education meets headmasters and teachers from the whole country and where one topic is especially in focus. In 2006 the topic was "Competence and Mastery" and both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education were present. In 2007, the topic was "Time for Quality". Selected

schools are able to present ongoing work and are able to contribute with their insights and experience.

b) The influence of research on teacher training and on teachers' professional activities:

i. Is the analysis of education research included in initial TE or cpd?

Describe its nature and time spent on it.

§ 1-3 in the University Act states that universities and colleges must provide education based on the best of research, development work and experience. §54 in this Act describes the goals and intentions of teacher education in Norway. The education is expected to conduct instruction, research, and development work that will make it possible to provide students with a relevant education. The students are expected to experience personal growth, develop work ethics, reflexive thinking skills, and an interest for substantive and pedagogical development work. There is no requirement that they receive any formal research training.

White Paper no. 16 (2001 – 2002) (Quality Reform. About a new teacher education) emphasizes that instruction in teacher education must be research based and that teacher educators should be involved in research and development work. In chapter 7.3.3 the message is that institutions that conduct research and development should include students in such work to the extent that it is possible. Students will benefit from the realization that knowledge is not static, and from the actual collection of data. Not all students can take part in research activities, but also in this case, instruction should develop an understanding of the basic ethical guidelines for scientific work.

The national Framework for the four-year initial teacher education programme (effective from 3 April 2003) refers to §54 as its foundation. Chapter 1.3 (On becoming a teacher) states that research projects being conducted by teacher educators in schools can be a valuable arena for students to learn. It is, however, not a specific requirement that students do take part in such projects. In chapter 2.3, on field experience during pre-service education, a goal of the field practice periods is described as providing an arena for students to “explore” (in Norwegian: *utforskning*), but this is not necessarily related to scientific studies. However, in chapter 2.4, on working methods and assessment used during initial teacher education, one of the nine working methods listed is: “become familiar with and analyze research, surveys/

diagnostic tools and the national assessment system.” Another main goal of initial teacher education is that students develop the capacity to change and the capacity to analyze and develop practices in schools. Although the word “research” is not used here, it is likely to assume that research methods are of importance in realizing this goal.

Three of the 18 subjects included in the Framework use the term “research” explicitly; Pedagogy, mathematics and science. In pedagogy, students are expected to reflect and give reasons for their decisions based on work ethics, relevant theory and “experience from research on school development”. In math, the students are expected to acquire knowledge on didactic research and development work, particularly within early math instruction and learning. In science, students should acquire knowledge about didactic research and on pupils’ everyday concepts, attitudes and interest for the subject.

In 2004, the Ministry of Education and Research requested an evaluation of the 4-year programme. The evaluation was carried out by The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) and was completed in 2006. The evaluation consisted of a self assessment conducted by the colleges and universities offering this programme and an external assessment which included institutional visits and interviews. One of the evaluation panel’s questions was to what degree teacher education is research based. The panel interpreted the above documents to the effect that initial teacher education in Norway should have a strong emphasis on practice, theory and research. A main conclusion of this evaluation is that the degree, to which initial teacher education is research based and involves students, varies from institute to institute. Teachers whom the students are most likely to meet during their years of training are likely to have no more than a Masters degree themselves and are therefore likely not to be involved in research projects. The panel concludes that their impression is that the intentions outlined in White Paper 16 (2001-2002) are not met.

ii. Do teachers’ workloads include time for teachers to join in or lead research activities?

Teachers on ISCED level 1 or 2 would be expected to be able to lead school development activities, not research activities. Any agreement on time for development work would be agreed on between headmaster and teacher during local work agreement negotiations.

Teacher educators at college or university level are expected to take part in or lead research activities. According to the national evaluation of teacher education, teacher educators have an average of about 30% of their time set aside for research activities. Participation in research projects varies from teacher to teacher, however, and also among teacher education institutes.

iii. Reforms – or pilot projects – Provide information.

There are numerous research projects initiated either by ISCED level 1 or 2 schools or by educators at college and university level. This is due to a national concerted effort to develop schools as learning organizations to enhance learning environments for pupils and to enhance research in teacher education.

a) “Knowledge Promotion – from words to deeds”

The programme “Knowledge Promotion – from words to deeds” is led by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. It was established spring 2005 (under the title “Programme for school development”) as a supplement to the competence development strategy accompanying the implementation of the new reform. Its main goal is to make more schools capable of creating improved learning environments and providing pupils with the possibilities for positive academic and social development. The programme will be in effect during 2005 – 2008 and has a total budget of NOK 100 million.

The programme stipulates several conditions that must be met in order to receive any funding. All projects must involve collaboration between schools, school owners, and a competence environment (e.g. a local organization, a teacher education institute or national center of competence). It is important that the schools included represent schools that are struggling, that truly need some help and effort to advance. All projects must be based on an analysis of the “here-and-now” situation at the participating school(s) and must address issues that the schools are in need of addressing. All projects must address issues of dissemination.

28 projects were granted funding in spring 2006 for the period 2006-2008. Areas represented are for instance adaptive learning, new teaching and learning methods, mentoring and coaching for teachers and pupils, classroom management, and digital portfolios. All

projects share a common concern for the coherence between pedagogy and organization.

Hundreds of schools were again involved in the 2006-2007 Call for Applications, and in total they applied for more than NOK 300 million.

b) Programme for Practice-based R&D in Pre-School through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education.

The Programme for Practice-based R&D in Pre-School through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education (Programme for Practice-based R&D) is financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. It is directed by the Norwegian Research Council. The programme lasts four years and has an overall budget of NOK 154 million.

The aim of the programme is to generate new, research-based knowledge in areas of key importance to pre-school and basic education by promoting organised cooperation between institutions responsible for teacher education, school owners and schools /pre-schools. The teacher education institutions are project owners for the R&D activities to be conducted.

22 projects are currently being funded, and a final round of grant approvals will take place in December 2007. Projects being funded cover areas such as adaptive learning, subject matter didactics, special education, drama and creative aesthetic learning, teacher education and the qualification of teachers, outdoor learning environments, and more.

SECTION B: Origin and development of policies which widen teachers' responsibilities and bodies involved

i. For each of the responsibilities outlined in Section A, provide implementation dates or decades.

1.

- National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion. *Autumn 2006*
- Core Curriculum for primary and lower secondary, upper secondary and adult education. *Carried on from previous curricula, i.e. since 1997.*
- Quality Framework (Principles and guidelines for primary and lower secondary education). *Autumn 2006*
- Framework Regulating the Distribution of Periods and Subjects (Distribution of teaching hours per subject). 01.06.2006, but continuously revised and altered since (revision dates 01.11.2006, 19.12.2006, 06.06.2007, 07.08.2007). Revisions affect specific subjects on upper secondary level.
- Subject Curricula. *Autumn 2006*
- Separate Curriculum for the Sàmi Knowledge Promotion. *Autumn 2006*

2.

- Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act). *17.07.1998, last amended 01.11.2007, number 61*
- Transference of teachers from state employment to municipal employment: 01 May, 2004
- The Central Employment Contract (SFS 2213), which also specifies the guidelines for the individual teachers' work agreement. *Central agreement implemented from 01.08.2006.*
- Strategy plan "Competence for Development. Competence development strategy in basic education 2005-2008", *issued in 2005 as a preparation for the Knowledge Promotion.*

3.

- Agreement on working conditions for supervisors in initial teacher education. Directive F-O4-05, 18.03.2005.

4.

- The Demonstration School system. *Established 2002*
- Queen Sonja's School Award. *2006.*
- The Act relating to Universities and Colleges (University Act). *12.05.1995, number 22*
- White paper no. 16 (2001-2002) (Quality Reform. About a new teacher education). *2001-2002*
- The National Framework for the four-year initial teacher education programme. *03.04.2003*
- The evaluation of the four-year initial teacher education programme by NOKUT - The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education. *Started in 2004, completed in 2006.*
- Research Programmes:
 - Knowledge Promotion – from words to deeds. *2005-2008*
 - Programme for Practice-based R&D in Pre-School through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education. *2006 - 2010*

ii. Describe the context in which decisions to transfer responsibilities to teachers took place – were they made as part of larger measures relating to school autonomy – or separately?

The Knowledge Promotion reform and curriculum

The background for the changes is to be found in the Norwegian and international research which indicates lower academic outcomes than expected as well as the political governance at the time of initiation (a coalition government with a Minister of Education from the conservative party and a Prime Minister from the Christian Democrat party). The evaluation of Reform 97 and the international PISA, PIRLS, and TIMSS studies have revealed that Norwegian schools have not succeeded in reaching the ideal objective of providing an education that is adapted to individual pupil's needs. There are large and

systematic differences in what pupils learn, and a disproportionately high number of pupils do not acquire sufficient basic skills. Too few graduate from upper secondary education, and differences between the pupils are caused inter alia by social inequality.

As a result the government at the time took upon themselves to initiate a reform to improve pupils' basic skills and academic outcomes. It was argued that basic skills (being able to express oneself orally and in writing, to read, do arithmetic and use information and communication technology) are tools for all other learning activities and therefore crucial for further education and work. Skills such as these were deemed useful and necessary for creating material values, but also to open up paths to education and life enhancement that would otherwise have been blocked. The government's solution was to equip schools to meet a greater diversity among pupils and parents/guardians by increasing autonomy at the local level, making it possible to make use of and adapt to this diversity constructively. It was pointed out that if schools should be able to achieve this, it was necessary to change the system by which schools were administered. National authorities must allow greater diversity in the solutions and working methods chosen, so that these can be adapted and customized to the situation of each individual pupil, teacher and school. The national authorities must define the objectives and contribute with good framework conditions, support and guidance. At the same time, the National authorities must have confidence in schools and teachers as professionals. It is a goal of the Knowledge Promotion to mobilise greater creativity and commitment by allowing greater freedom to accept responsibility.

Continuing professional development

Teachers' competence and knowledge, and thus continuing professional development, has been an issue in the debate on school performance and outcome for quite some time. In Report to the Storting no. 30 (2003-2004) (Kultur for læring / Culture for Learning) the importance of teachers' competence in the subjects they taught was emphasised, and this report boosted a general interest in teachers' knowledge and competence. Teachers were said to be the most important factor affecting student outcomes, and combined with Norwegian pupils doing worse than expected in the comparative PISA and TIMSS studies, teachers' competence became even more important.

The Knowledge Promotion, implemented in 2006, with its focus on fundamental basic skills, also called for a strategy to enhance competence development of teachers. This strategy

is called “Competence for development. Competence development strategy in basic education 2005-2008”, and aims at strengthening school leaders’ competence, as well as the teaching staffs’ pedagogical competence and subject knowledge. English, maths, science and Norwegian/Sàmi were prioritized, as previous studies had identified a lack of formal qualifications for teachers in these subjects.

During this period, there was also a transfer of responsibility for CPD from central authorities to the local arena. This was carried out during the Christian Democratic Bondevik II government (2001-2005), as a general downsizing in public sector, and as a part of the reorganisation of the system of collective wage-bargaining in teaching. The opportunities for local latitude in questions concerning teachers’ wages also provided the opportunity for local CPD and strategies for competence development more tuned in to local needs.

iii. For each of the responsibilities outlined in Section A, which bodies were responsible for defining the duties and assigning them to teachers (national auth-local auth – intermediate bodies, headmasters)

The Norwegian parliament (the Storting) and the Government define the goals and decide the budgetary frameworks for education.

The Ministry of Education and Research is Norway’s highest public administrative agency for educational matters, and is responsible for implementing national educational policy. A common standard is ensured through legislation and through national curricula. Legislation and decisions made at this level set standards and frameworks for teachers work conditions, field practice agreements, initial teacher education, research programmes directed at schools and teacher education, and more.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, established on 15 June 2004, is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research and is responsible for the development of primary and secondary education. In this capacity the Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations.

In each of the 19 counties, a branch of the National Education Office represents the central government at the regional level. In cooperation with municipal and county authorities, the National Education Office ensures that appropriate schooling is provided for

young people in compliance with all regulations concerning the school, and also ensures the provision of adequate adult education facilities.

In recent years considerable responsibility and decision-making authority has been delegated from the central government to municipalities and county authorities. Individual municipalities are responsible for running primary and lower secondary schools. Within the framework of statutes and national curricula, municipalities, schools and teachers are able to decide what learning materials to use and what teaching methods to adopt. The distribution of teaching hours per subject for the 10-year compulsory school is established for primary schooling as a whole (grades 1-7) and for lower secondary schooling (grades 8-10). The school owner (municipality) is responsible for the distribution of teaching hours at each level. Each school has a head teacher as well as a school board and committees.

SECTION C: Autonomy, accountability, incentives

1) For each of the responsibilities outlined in Section A, explain whether duties have been accompanied by new systems of accountability

School assessment based on pupil academic outcome scores

A big debate in Norway has been on the evaluation of school results using nation wide tests of students. These national tests were first introduced by the Christian Democratic Bondevik II government, and the Minister of Education and Research, Kristin Clemet, and stirred up a debate on the use of these tests. At the end of the period, late spring 2005, the Minister announced a pause in the use of national tests, and this pause lasted until the re-introduction fall 2007 by the new Minister of Education and Research in the Labour led coalition government, Øystein Djupedal. On re-introducing national tests, a major change was made: results will not be made publicly available. Results can therefore not be used to rank schools according to achievement. The results of the national tests now serve to evaluate whether schools succeed in developing certain competence aims, and the tests are intended to be used as a foundation for quality development in schools, by the school leaders and at a regional and national level.

Pupils' responses to a national questionnaire survey (Pupil Inspectors)

All pupils are given the opportunity to report on learning conditions at their school and social well being at school. National data is accessible from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. Each school can also access data for their school and compare their results with that of the national sample.

Assessment of teachers' work

There are no required formal assessments of teachers' work in Norway. The national tests on pupils' achievement can form a basis on which to discuss teacher qualifications on a general level, but these results are not related to individual teachers.

There is no monitoring of teachers' compliance with prescribed duties other than the employer-employee talks that headmasters must carry out on a yearly basis and which can provide an arena to discuss teachers' work as well as other work-related matters such as teachers' CPD.

Duties tied to interpreting the national curricula in every subject and to developing local syllabi for each subject on every level, have not been accompanied by new systems of accountability.

2) For each of the responsibilities outlined in Section A, have the duties been accompanied by incentive measures?

Development of local syllabi

No incentive measures.

Continuing professional development

No incentive measures unless the courses give extra study credits that a teacher needs to reach a higher educational level which can lead to a higher salary.

Tasks specified in employment contracts

Special tasks such as coordinator, team leader, student teacher supervisor etc. will incur reduced workload and/ or additional remuneration.

Being a Demonstration School

Demonstration schools are awarded NOK 500 000 per year for two years.

Participation in research projects

Participation in research projects brings in external funding that schools can use for CPD, study trips, and other measures outlined in the project proposal. This can be of interest for individual teachers.

SECTION D: Implementation of policies which widen teachers' responsibilities and teachers' reactions

The previous school reform for primary and lower secondary education (Reform 1997) was followed by a research programme financed by the Ministry of Education and Research and directed by the Norwegian Research Council. A main goal of this programme was to evaluate implementation and results. The programme period was 1998 to 2003 and NOK 46.7 million financed 26 research projects (Haug, 2004).

Reform 1997 lowered the entry age of pupils to six years (entry age had previously been 7), introduced new, extensive and explicit subject matter curricula for each grade level and made instructional methods compulsory (e.g. the project method). In addition, the teacher role was emphasized as the most central factor for pupils' learning and development at the same time as the metaphor of "teacher as guide" was introduced due to the emphasis put on the project method. At the same time, processes to decentralize decision making were going on, placing more decisions at the municipal and the school level.

A majority of the teachers appeared to be favourable to the new curriculum and to its emphasis on adaptive teaching, on pupils' active learning, and on its ideals of inclusive education. Furthermore, the teachers liked having explicit subject matter progression described in the curriculum, and the idea of a common knowledge foundation for all pupils. Teachers reported that they knew the contents well and used the curriculum plan in their own planning. Two of the research projects find that the curriculum plan is more important for teachers' planning than text books. On one issue, a majority of teachers were less favourably inclined: the curriculum plans were too ambitious and too extensive. Also, teachers experienced a "Catch 22": The new curriculum was very explicit and detailed in what pupils must do or should do, experience and learn, and these goals had to be adhered to since the national curriculum is a legally binding document. Yet at the same time the national curriculum stressed the importance of adapting teaching and learning to the individual child and various local situations and contexts. This dilemma was a challenge for schools and teachers. Some schools tended to place more emphasis on the need for contextualization, whereas others adhered more strictly to the explicit "pupils must" and "pupils should", creating great variation in the choice of subject matter topics and learning situations that pupils were a part of across the country and also within schools.

When the 1997 curriculum was first introduced, teachers were expected to organize instruction in thematic ways and use the project method throughout all the school years. At least 60% of the time children in grades 1-4 spent in school had to be organized thematically with an emphasis on projects. For grades 5-7, this was reduced to 30%, and for grades 8-10 the curriculum plan stipulated 20%. After fairly massive debate and complaints from the Teachers' Union, the Minister of Education at the time, Jon Lilletun, modified his predecessor's decision and stated that the percentages should be regarded as "guidelines".

Based on the summary of project results from the Evaluation of R97, it appears that the implementation of theme-based learning and the project method in particular was one of the most challenging aspects of the previous reform. Researchers (e.g. Imsen, 2003, Klette, 2003) reported traditional whole class instruction with an emphasis on the textbook and the teacher. Groupwork was an organizational matter rather than a learning strategy and project method learning was not observed (Imsen, 2003). High activity levels were found in the classrooms, but researchers questioned the degree of learning (Klette, 2003). The teachers tended to behave in a withdrawn manner rather than being active guides who led pupils' learning.

A national survey was carried out in spring 1998 among a representative sample of about 1500 teachers in grades one through ten (the *School Environment Survey*, Center for Behavioural Research, University of Stavanger). This was the first year of implementation of the new curriculum, but only 7% of the teachers reported being moderately or strongly involved in "school development work" (SDA) which was a five item variable defined as: "systematic development and improvement work implemented to improve either the pupils' psychosocial environment in school or subject and methodological matters. This work involves all or parts of the teaching staff" (Midthassel, 2002, p. 10). Differences between primary and lower secondary school teachers' reports were not statistically significant for this variable, but lower secondary school teachers (grades 8-10) reported statistically significant higher values for workload, lower perceived innovation culture at school, lower involvement of headmaster in innovation work, and lower professional ambitions than their colleagues in elementary schools. Professional ambitions was measured using three items covering whether teachers are busy with their own professional development, whether they wish to influence the pedagogical work at their school, and whether it is important for them to be assessed as a competent teacher by their colleagues and superiors.

Differences between elementary and lower secondary school teachers in 1998 were also reported by Munthe (2003, p. 808). Teachers reported being fairly satisfied with their jobs ($M=3.82$ for elementary school teachers and 3.55 for lower secondary on a scale from 0-5). Elementary school teachers reported more collaboration ($M=2.63$) than lower secondary school teachers ($M=2.39$) and less role ambiguity ($M=1.66$) than lower secondary teachers ($M=1.77$).

In the *School Environment Survey* conducted in 2004, teachers' job satisfaction was again an issue (Munthe, 2008). Fewer teachers were asked to respond to this questionnaire and a smaller percentage returned the questionnaires. Only 412 responses were returned (a response rate of less than 50%). At this time point, more teachers responded favourably about their job satisfaction (Mean value = 4.12) and there was no statistically significant difference between teachers in elementary school and those in lower secondary schools. Due to the response rate, it is difficult to know whether the more satisfied teachers responded this time, or whether teachers were more satisfied with their work in 2004. The mean value for reports of emotional burnout (a 5-item variable) was 1.71 on a scale from 0 to 5 where 0=Disagree completely.

Other work-related variables were included in the *School Environment Study* from 2001 and nearly 900 teachers responded to this survey (Munthe, 2008). The following table presents some findings from this study:

Table 2: Frequencies in percentage, Mean values and standard deviations for items within three domains: Instruction, Teacher Autonomy, and Innovation and learning. All response scales are from 0 to 5 where 0= Disagree completely and 5= Agree completely. N= 876. (Translated from Munthe, 2008).

Instruction	0	1	2	3	4	5	M	sd
I adapt instruction to the individual child	-	1.4	5.4	38.1	44.7	10.4	3.57	0.81
I give students influence over their school situation	0.6	1.6	11.4	40.7	40.3	5.4	3.35	0.86

Teachers' Autonomy	0	1	2	3	4	5	M	s.d.
My work is often assessed to ensure that I follow guidelines correctly.	26.3	28.7	23.5	17.4	3.3	0.8	1.45	1.19
I am not expected to use certain teaching methods	5.6	9.5	11.0	20.5	33.1	20.3	3.27	1.44
It is regarded as important that I follow the curriculum and our instruction plans.	1.7	8.2	16.6	36.1	28.9	8.5	3.08	1.13
I must refer to a superior concerning even minor decisions	45.9	27.5	11.7	10.8	3.1	1.0	1.00	1.20
I can usually act without securing permission from a superior.	11.5	13.0	9.8	26.4	27.4	11.9	2.81	1.54
I can do almost whatever I want in the classroom.	6.1	10.9	14.8	32.2	27.9	8.1	2.89	1.31

Innovation and learning	0	1	2	3	4	5	M	s.d.
There's a lot of experimenting with different teaching methods here.	6.7	14.0	22.1	36.5	16.7	3.9	2.54	1.23
Teachers show an interest for colleagues' professional work.	3.0	7.1	17.7	44.6	24.0	3.7	2.91	1.05
I have been involved in the development of local plans as a part of the school's development work.	27.2	11.8	10.0	12.0	19.7	19.2	2.43	1.91
The teachers are interested in learning from their colleagues.	2.1	3.2	8.7	30.3	42.3	13.4	3.48	1.07

The current national reform and curriculum was introduced in 2006, and an evaluation study of this has of course not been completed. We do, however, have some data that may provide indications of teachers' acceptance and implementation.

A study conducted for the Union of Education Norway among 400 of their members teaching in elementary and lower secondary schools, reported that 59% of the members asked were favourable towards the new curriculum reform and only 2% were negative (Norsk

Respons, 2006a). 52% reported that they believed instruction would be improved due to this reform, whereas 39% believed the reform would not affect instructional quality. About 60% reported that their schools were well on the way towards implementing the new curriculum, and 30% reported they had hardly started. Four percent of the teachers reported that they were well prepared to implement the reform themselves, whereas 29% chose “fairly well prepared” and 42% reported being less than fairly well prepared but more than “slightly prepared”.

The new reform has increased knowledge as one of its main goals. A report compiled by Lagerstrøm (2007) based on data collected by Statistics Norway in autumn 2005 finds that $\frac{3}{4}$ of all teachers who teach Norwegian do have some additional education in that subject, and $\frac{2}{3}$ of teachers in math, science, social studies, and religion do as well. Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the English teachers have any additional education in that subject. Teachers who have studied English for a year tend to be older teachers (above 40), whereas teachers with additional Math studies tend to be younger (below 30).

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research has allocated substantial resources for professional development among teachers and school leaders. NOK 300 million was allocated for this purpose in 2005 and a further NOK 375 million in 2006 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006). According to *The Education Mirror* for 2006, more than 90% of all public schools have been involved in competence enhancement measures in 2005 and 2006. More than 66 000 teachers participated in professional development courses on curriculum understanding and analysis and more than 60 000 took part in courses to enhance subject matter knowledge in 2006.

In March 2006, members of the Union of Education Norway were also asked about in-service training for the new reform (Norsk Respons 2006b). A total of 901 teachers in elementary and lower secondary schools responded. 26% reported having attended one course only and 57% reported that they had not been offered professional training courses. Of the 40% who responded that they had been given the opportunity to attend professional development courses in relation to the reform, about 30% had attended a one-day course or less, 39% had attended 2-3 days, and 15% had attended training that lasted more than one week. 54% of the teachers who had attended development courses rated these as good or very good. 29% reported that the courses were “neither bad nor good”, and 14% said that the courses were either poor or very poor.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training directs an evaluation of the competence strategy. One of the studies (Hagen, Nyen & Hertzberg, 2007) finds that teachers were not very involved in developing the local plans, and that some of this disengagement can be explained by how the headteachers involved the teachers at their school. Most municipalities have chosen extensive courses for teachers rather than intensive courses that can involve increasing teachers' formal education.

Teachers as a workforce were previously state employees, whereas schools were managed by the municipal level. On 01 May, 2004, the Norwegian association of local and regional authorities – an organization representing the municipal level and abbreviated KS - took over as employers. This led to the need for a new employment contract and negotiations between the KS and the Union of Education Norway commenced. Both parties agreed that teachers should spend more hours on site at the schools to be able to enhance school development, but there was disagreement about the number of hours that should be defined as “on site work” and the number to be defined as flexible planning time to be carried out wherever and whenever the teacher found most suitable. An important precondition was that conditions were made favourable for teachers' increased work on-site, for example office space and PCs.

An evaluation of the new labour agreement was carried out during 2004 - 2006 (Nicolaysen, Nyen & Olberg, 2005). Differences in perceptions of the intentions behind the new agreement are apparent for teachers and headmasters. Whereas both headmasters and teachers agree that a main intention was to increase teacher collaboration and contact time with pupils, the number of respondents who answer affirmative to this varies. Teachers also believed that a main intention was to control teachers' working time and legitimize their work hours. 43% of the teachers see control as a main intention whereas only 10% of the headmasters report this as a reason. For more than 50% of the headmasters, a major intention is the possibility to implement professional development strategies for the whole staff, but this is only mentioned by 20% of the teachers.

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