


VET STUDY VISIT IN HAMAR, NORWAY

VISIT DETAILS

Study visit participants :

Rémy LEBLANC (expert from France)
Aile NOUPUU (expert from Estonia)
Amparo MARZAL (expert from Spain)
Liv FRILSETH (expert from Norway and host)
Bjørn BAUGSTØ (expert from Norway and host)
Anabel CORRAL(European Agency staff member)
Victoria SORIANO (European Agency staff member)

Programme:

1st day

Visit to Hamar Cathedral School

Arrival at Hamar Cathedral School to a greeting from the Chief County Education Officer and the Head Teacher. The Office of the Chief County Education Officer presented its work on secondary education and vocational training for pupils with disabilities (e.g. various study programmes and programme areas, in-service training establishments, the Training Office) and provided information on the Follow-Up Service. (See [Presentation NO-1.pdf](#)) .

Hamar Cathedral School presented its activities, including how it has implemented national and county policy in practice. It emphasised the measures that have been put in place to ensure that education is adapted for pupils (e.g. teaching qualifications, organisation, the school counselling service, special education teaching aids, adapting the classrooms, exams, etc.). (See [Presentation NO-2.pdf](#)).

HIPPT (Office for Educational and Psychological Counselling) presented its work with pupils in secondary education in Hamar. (See [Presentation NO-3.pdf](#)).

Guided tour of the school, which included information about the classrooms visited, brief details about the study paths and subjects available and general information about the pupils. Observation took place in several classrooms but the principal focus was the mechanic unit, where 1 teacher works with 15 students. The teachers are all highly qualified professionals and are supported by assistants with health or social backgrounds. Students with SEN have reading, writing and, in the large majority of cases, serious concentration problems.

An apprentice, his father and a trainee reported on their experiences and engaged in a discussion with the study group. The apprentice was a 24 year old man who has worked in a telecommunications company since 2009. Due to his muscular dystrophy he attends a rehabilitation centre and is also supported by the Psycho Pedagogical service. He and his father both reported that there had been some miscommunication between the school and the training place concerning his needs. His father stated that his son's diagnosis had been very late (at 11



years old) and that he had initially struggled against and had to compensate for the school's lack of knowledge and awareness. Now however, they are both very satisfied with the training period and the result.

The second boy was 20 years old and works three days a week as a training candidate at Toyota. He has recently been offered a contract as an apprentice for two years in the car mechanics unit.

The process for securing these apprenticeships is as follows. The county makes an agreement with companies and provides them with a fixed amount of funding for apprentices. The county makes an agreement with companies, giving them some fixed amount for apprentices and follows the student progress together with the company. Both young people mentioned above have had an Individual Educational Plan.

Both young people expressed that the good dialogue between the vocational school and themselves had been a very important and positive aspect of their experience. They also insisted on the need to provide companies with accurate information about the needs and working conditions required for the students.

Round-table discussions on *'What creates successful outcomes, when do challenges arise, and how can they be solved?'* Joining the study group in the discussions were representatives for students and parents, the owner of the school, the school administration, the school counsellor, the School Psychology Service, the Follow-up Service, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the Coordination Unit for the Municipality of Hamar and the Training Office.

2nd day

Visit to a training establishment

The County Governor of Hedmark reports on the supervision of vocational training.

Hedmark County Administration's Section For Vocational Education and Training reports on procedures for processing applications for apprenticeships and traineeships and approving apprenticeships. (See [Presentation NO-4.pdf](#))

NAV and the Coordination Unit report on how they facilitate the transition from secondary education. (See [Presentation NO-5.pdf](#))

Toyota reports on the training establishment's experiences. One of the young people the group met the day before was a training candidate in the company. The company has 37 apprentice candidates this year, but the young man has been the first trainee candidate. He is being trained in the car wash service and it has been a positive and successful experience thus far. It is expected that the young person will be offered an apprentice contract later on. The company has been in contact with the Coordination Unit. The training period is two years; during the first year a support person is allocated to the trainee. The company stated that a significant amount of time is spent on this type of training, they would like to receive more information from the concerned services. The training period is of two years, during the first one a support person is designated for the trainee. It is important for the company to find the skills level of the young person, but it is more important his/her commitment.

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Discussion between the study group and Hamar Cathedral School, the Section For Vocational Education and Training, NAV, the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise, and the Coordination Unit for the Municipality of Hamar.



Departure and visit to Toyota (the training establishment).

- Information about the workplace
- The experiences of the apprentices/trainees.
- Experiences with a specially adapted work environment
- Discussion between the study group and the training establishment

Final summary of the study trip.

Complementary information:

The Ministry of Education and the Directorate for Education and Training are responsible for the national curriculum, the VET structure and Educational Acts. The authorities at county level are responsible for the schools and VET centres, the distribution of the VET financing provided by the state, providing apprenticeship and supervision.

Vocational education and training is carried out both in schools and in public and private enterprises. It is often called a 2+2 (years) model which means that the standard 4 years programme is divided into 2 years school-based training followed by 2 years enterprise-based training.

Training in companies can be done as apprentice or training candidate. Apprentices learn all subjects of the curriculum. They receive an apprenticeship contract from the company. Training candidates learn selected parts of the curriculum and receive a training contract. The goal being that the candidate gets as high competence as possible. The county determines the training course together with the company. In the case that during the training period the candidate can achieve a full vocational qualification, the training contract can be changed into an ordinary apprenticeship contract. The candidate will actively participate in planning and be responsible for his/hers own learning.

Training time is the same for both: two years in school, two years in companies, but some changes can be individually considered. Apprentices end up with a craft or journeyman certificate; training candidates receive a certificate of competences. All students have equal rights and obligations in the company that gets financial support for both type of students. County must certify which companies are recognised as training ones, showing expertise and competence.

Training candidates get help from the school, through counsellors, to apply, fill in the application and add the necessary documentation.

Pupils who need specially adapted teaching have the right to be admitted to the foundation course of their choice and are entitled to up five years upper secondary education. They also have the legal right to guidance.

The two pathways (VET and general studies) are not mutually exclusive. Students can transfer from VET to a General Study programme after completing a year of supplementary studies qualifying them for Higher Education.

The example, Hamar Katedralskole, is an ordinary upper secondary school with education programmes for specialisation in General Studies, Arts, Crafts and Design Studies, Electricity and Electronics, Media and Communication, Service and Transport and a Programme for Technical and Industrial Production.

The institution has 220 employees and 1350 students (2010/11), approximately 500 new students each year including 132 students with SEN (around 10% with learning problems) All students following vocational education have the opportunity and the right to pursue training in enterprises.



Students do not decide which companies they wish to go to for training; it is up to companies to make their own choices.

The VET Department (county) has around 50 training candidate contracts. This year 26 applications were received. Individual guidance should be provided by the department in order to find out what type of subjects have been requested the students and find out what exactly they might need. All statistics can be found at: <http://www.hedmark.org/article.aspx?&m=4524&amid=76249>. 638 people have requested an individual assessment of competences, which includes learners at the end of (lower) secondary education. It does not follow that all those assessed will be considered as training candidates.

The Counselling service at Hamar Katedralskole includes 20 teachers with knowledge of special education. One is a specialised teacher and one has a master degree on special education. The rest have qualifications ranging from 6 months of studies to two years study of special education.

The amount of work provided by the counselling service corresponds to the equivalent of two teachers working 120% time. It includes: team leader work for special education; counseling on SNE; assessment; guidance to other teachers, students and parents; supporting the process when students with SEN are applying to county support; co-operation with external offices; providing a support in the process of applying for external services; making decisions concerning students with SEN in the school; supporting decisions concerning required adaptations. All the listed tasks correspond to 50-30% of their working time. Other teachers like for example those with special pedagogical skills are used in various support measures: they work sometimes as special education teacher, as ordinary teachers or as a part of a teachers' team. The school has few teachers only working on special education.

The school has 161 teachers, 141,6 (FTEs). There are some other professionals with different backgrounds: two professionals with an upper secondary certificate to work with children and youngsters; 4 professionals as social workers or child welfare specialists with at least 3 years of higher education

50 learners have had an individual decision. From those, 44 have been accepted after the individual evaluation. 50 learners have an Individual Educational programme.

Type of disabilities at Hamar Katedralskole: physical, sensorial, learning problems on specific subjects, diverse neuropsychological conditions, mental problems, etc.

Type of adaptations provided: audio antennas, audio books, elevators in all departments, Braille in elevators, two teachers system working in the classroom, assistants from outside, facilitators focussing upon the environment, automatic doors, audiovisual adaptations, learning environment adaptations, small groups, collaboration work with: stakeholders/support services; rehabilitation services; resource centres; educational and psychological services; psychiatric services for children and youth and; protection services for children, youth and families.