

Report of bilateral cooperation agreement within the framework of the project entitled titled: Local Development Plan 2021-2030 financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

Cooperation with the donor country in terms of mutual exchange of experience and practical solutions includes study visits, a number of online meetings, exchange of materials and documents.

Cooperation with partners from Norway is aimed at creating modern development solutions at the local level. Its main objective is to provide proven experience in the creation of spatial, environmental and social policies from Norwegian cities and to reduce economic and social disparities, as well as to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and recipient countries.

Donor Partner Characteristics

Møre and Romsdal County is located along the western coast of Norway and is one of eleven Norwegian counties. As of 2022, approximately 265 000 people live in the region. We have 26 municipalities in the county, and our largest towns are Ålesund, Molde, and Kristiansund. We cover approximately 15 000 square kilometers of land and around 9500 kilometers of coastline!



The area has a mixed landscape with fjords, mountains, valleys, agricultural lands, and islands. We also take care of the world heritage site that is our fjord landscape, where the Geiranger and Nærøy fjords are our jewels. The two fjords, among the world's longest and deepest, are among the most scenically outstanding anywhere on earth.

Geography is a challenge to the infrastructure, and the region has many small rural population centers divided by land and water barriers. Møre and Romsdal County have had a small population growth in recent years, but mainly in our largest towns. Depopulation is the tendency in rural areas.

The County Council is the political body of the county and is popularly elected every fourth year. The County Council appoints a County Mayor as its political head. Møre and Romsdal county has a long history and tradition and first became an administrative unit 300 years ago. A hundred years later it became a formalized regional government, and it has kept most of its functions and borders since then.

The County Council and its administration are responsible for developing the county in several ways. We provide upper secondary education and vocational training and public transport, also maintain and develop most of the public roads in the region, provide for cultural activities, and help make economic growth and development happen. The UN's sustainability goals are to be key in all our actions, and over all four dimensions.

Møre and Romsdal economy is primarily tied to maritime and marine industries like fishery and aquaculture, petroleum, furniture, and tourism.





Key facts

- Approximately 265 000 inhabitants (2022)
- Approximately 15 000 square kilometers of land area
- Approximately 9500 kilometers of coastline
- Three regions: *Nordmøre* (northern), *Romsdal* (central), and *Sunnmøre* (southern)
- 26 municipalities (2022)
- Three main towns: *Ålesund* (67 000), *Molde* (32 000), *Kristiansund* (24 000)

– *Puttegga* is the tallest mountain (1999 meters)



A Popularly Elected Regional Government

The popularly elected County Council lays down the framework for the county's activities. This happens through formal decisions on the contents of our regional plans, financial plans, annual budgets, and other matters of importance and principle. Current Council Plan (2021-2024) is based on the UN's sustainability goals and across all its dimensions. All other plans need to be aligned with its four long-term development goals and their belonging objectives:

1. Take lead on cooperation (UN goal nr. 17).
2. Become the most sustainable county in the country (UN goal nr. 6, 13, 14, and 15).
3. An attractive and diverse county where people choose to live (UN goal nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, and 16).
4. Take an international lead across our industries and have an innovative public sector (UN goal nr. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Responsibilities

The most important responsibilities include upper secondary education and training, public transport and road infrastructure, strategic leadership, business development and entrepreneurship, promotion of culture and public health, dental health, and county planning.



Transportation

Responsibility for maintaining much of the region's public transportation infrastructure. County roads, county ferry routes and public transportation are our maintenance and development responsibilities. The municipality spends most of its annual budgets on these responsibilities, and our land and water barriers pose a major infrastructure challenge.



Upper Secondary Education and Training

In the education sector, responsibility for upper secondary education. Currently we have 20 schools, where most of them offers a combination of general studies and vocational programmes. We are also responsible for upper secondary education and training for adults.

We coordinate several international education activities on behalf of our schools through the Erasmus+ programme. We are currently running an accredited Erasmus+ mobility consortium in the field of School Education and have just recently applied for accreditation in VET.





Regional Development

More and Romsdal work tirelessly to develop the region through continual contributions tied to community planning, business development, entrepreneurship, value creation, innovation and research. Among our development tools, we have different grants and funds for a wide variety of target groups and initiatives, but we also provide resources for coordinating and cooperating in regional development projects.



International cooperation and projects play a key role in developing the region as well. We have experience from participation in several European projects across several programs (Erasmus +, Interreg Europe, Interreg Baltic Sea, Interreg North Sea, JPI Urban Europe and the EEA-programme). We are always on the lookout for new projects to engage with, especially those related to different facets of sustainability, the maritime and marine sector, and entrepreneurship.

[Dental Health](#)

We provide free dental care for all residents between 3 and 18 years old, as well as for vulnerable groups. Our dental health clinics are also open to paid users, alongside private providers. We promote preventive dental care.



[County Planning](#)

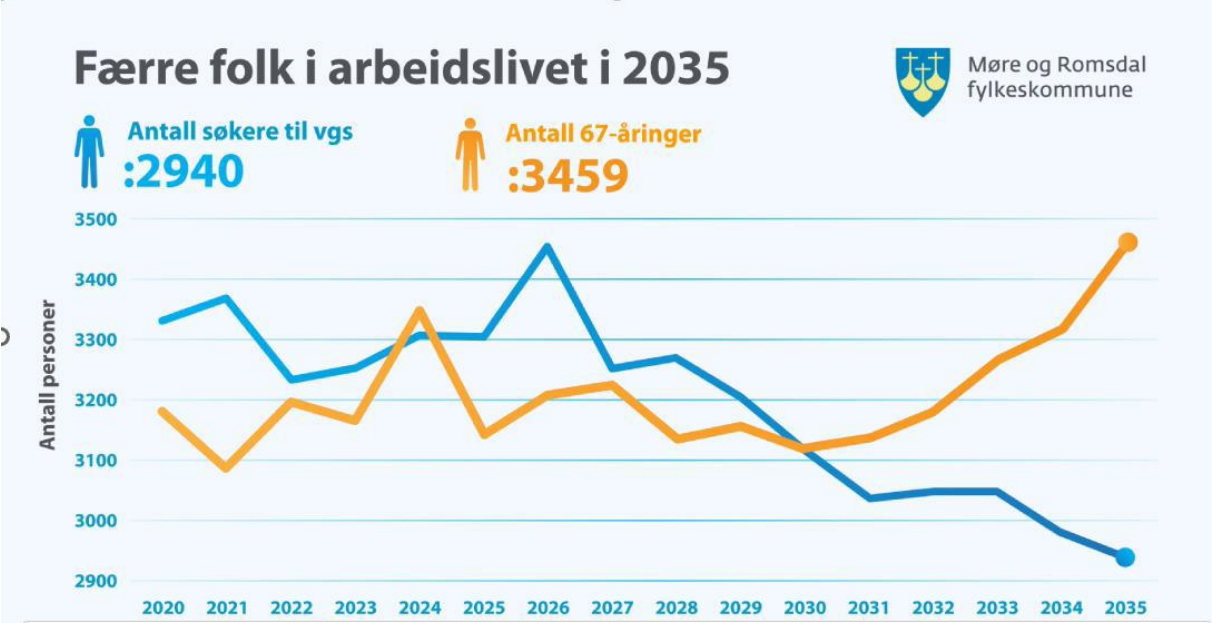
We are responsible for providing regional plans as a regional authority. The plans span a wide variety of areas and sectors and are used as roadmaps for our services and responsibilities as well as by municipalities, and other target groups.

[Culture and Public Health](#)

We are responsible for promoting culture and public health and for protecting cultural heritage. We also administer the public libraries and regional cultural institutions as well as distributing National lottery money funds and supporting voluntary work and ideal organizations

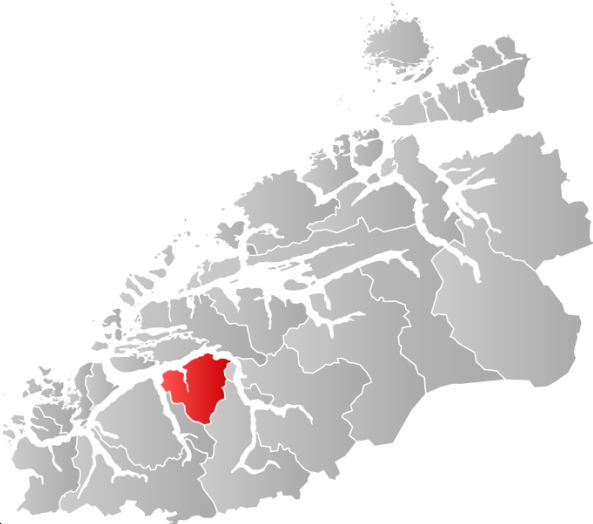


The project strongly involves three municipalities (Kommune) that are experiencing population decline in which there are secondary schools offering a VET program. The mentioned schools are of great importance to the local community as well as local businesses.



Skkylven High School

Sykkylven is a Norwegian town and municipality located in the Møre og Romsdal region. Sykkylven is



the 261st Norwegian municipality by area.

Stranda High School

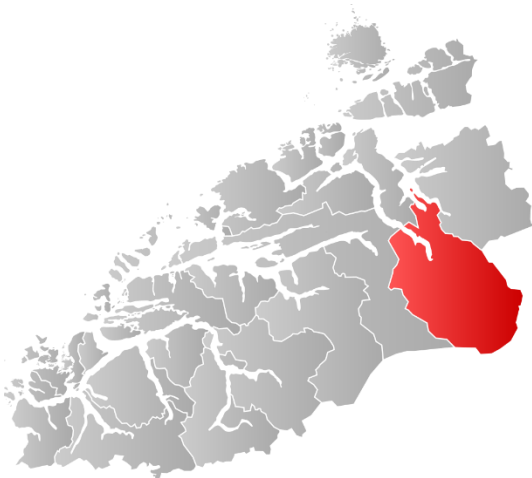
Stranda - a Norwegian city and municipality located in the Møre og Romsdal region. Stranda is the



128th Norwegian municipality by area.

Sunndal High School

Sunndal municipality (Sunndal kommune) is a Norwegian municipality located in the Møre og Romsdal region. Its seat is the town of Sunndalsøra. Sunndal is the 40th Norwegian municipality by area.



The VET Program is being implemented in the mentioned high schools.

Norwegian schools are different from Polish schools. Much more emphasis is placed there on acquiring practical rather than theoretical knowledge. For this reason, the program includes classes in, among other things, sewing, cooking or carpentry work, which are held without gender division. Grades in Norway are not given until the 8th grade. Low grades do not mean that a student will not be promoted to the next grade or will have to repeat the entire year due to failure in one subject. In a situation

where a student has failed a subject in a given semester, he or she has a chance to catch up by attending a lower grade. Similarly, a particularly gifted student can pursue a particular subject in a higher class.

Education in Norway also focuses on developing social skills - children prepare presentations, papers, participate in discussions, learn the art of rhetoric, negotiation and argumentation, and perform in public.

The relationship between teachers and students is also completely different. First of all, at school in Norway, everyone addresses each other as "you." However, shortening the distance does not make the teacher's authority undermined. On the contrary, Norwegian students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere, and they feel much more at ease during lessons than their Polish counterparts.

Education system in Norway - stages

The education system in Norway is divided into several stages:

- barnehage (kindergarten);
- barneskole (elementary school);
- ungdomsskole (junior/senior high school);
- videregående skole (high school/secondary school);
- higher education.

Secondary school in Norway is voluntary and free, but students must provide the necessary equipment. Those who opt for it have a choice of two main educational paths: general and vocational. Like elementary school, textbooks are loaned to them for a year. In some institutions it is also a popular practice to pay a small fee for a backpack and a laptop computer. Upon graduation, it becomes the property of the school graduate. There are three secondary schools to choose from:

- those preparing for higher education;
- secondary with a lower level of education;

- vocational.

- In the first year of high school, the curriculum includes mathematics (with a chosen level of difficulty), science subjects (chemistry, physics), biology, geography, Norwegian, English, an additional language of choice, social studies and physical education.
- In the second grade, students will choose one of two blocks of subjects: science or humanities. This decision will affect the number of directional subjects. Among them are music, acting, socio-political sciences, economics, science, and subjects related to: medicine, economics, sports, electricity, catering, construction, technology, design, social welfare, media, communication services or agriculture.
- In the third grade, students can continue their previously chosen subjects or change them.

- Secondary school in Norway at the general level

- Secondary school in Norway at the general level lasts for 3 years and is the equivalent of a Polish high school. It enables preparation for further education at university. Students can choose from three educational programs:

- general;

- physical education and sports education;

- theater, music and dance education.

Secondary school in Norway at the vocational level

- Vocational secondary school lasts 4 years, with the goal of obtaining vocational qualifications. Students can choose from 9 directional programs:

- construction;

- design, arts, crafts;

- electricity and electronics;

- health and welfare;

- media and communications;

- agriculture, fishing and forestry;

- nutrition;

- transportation and services;

- technical and industrial production.

The education system in Norway allows students to earn a vocational degree in more than 180 professions. Vocational education follows a 2+2 model, which involves two years of theoretical training at a vocational school, followed by a two-year apprenticeship. The apprenticeship is mandatory and takes place in a public or private enterprise of the student's choice. The local government assists in finding an apprenticeship site.

ABOUT VET Program at three vocational schools in the More and Romsdal area

Summary of main elements

The Ministry of Education and Research has overall responsibility for education and training at all levels. In upper secondary vocational education and training (VET), both curricula and the VET system structure are laid down in national regulations, and providers are required to comply with them. There is cooperation on upper secondary and tertiary VET, between education and training authorities and the social partners.

The regional county authorities are responsible for general education and VET provision, distributing VET financing provided by the State budget and ensuring apprenticeship placement and supervision.

All young people completing compulsory schooling have a statutory right to 3 years of upper secondary education. Half of them choose between 10 VET programmes.

Upper secondary VET is conducted both in schools and in public and private enterprises. The county authorities must approve training establishments. The main model includes 2 years in school, where students also participate in practical training in workshops and enterprises, followed by 2 years of formalised apprenticeship (training and productive work) in enterprises. The first year of training consists of an introduction to the vocational programme. During the second year, VET students choose specialisations and courses are more trade-specific but core general education subjects are also included. Some trades and crafts follow other models, with 3 years in school or 1 year in school followed by 3 years of formalised apprenticeship.

In the main model, upper secondary VET (2+2 years) is completed with a practical-theoretical trade or journeyman examination (*Fagprøve* or *svenneprøve*) leading to an EQF level 4 qualification: a trade certificate (*Fagbrev*) for industrial and service trades or a journeyman certificate (*Svennebrev*) for

traditional crafts. The 10 programme areas offer 197 different certificates. Some crafts are for 3 years of school-based learning, completed by a final exam and EQF level 4 qualification.

There are many possible routes to higher academic education via upper secondary VET. With a trade or journeyman certificate, the options to higher academic education are:

- via a 1-year bridging course in core subjects (*påbyggingsår*);
- direct admission to certain specially designed bachelor programmes (*Y-veien*).

Options without a trade or journeyman certificate are:

- 5 years' experience gained in work and/or education and passing courses in core subjects (for those aged 23 or older);
- recognition of relevant formal, informal, and non-formal learning for people aged 25 or older, who do not meet general entrance requirements;
- completing the bridge course in core subjects after completing the first 2 years of a VET programme;
- successfully completed 2-year full-time higher vocational education, 120 credits (EQF5).

Legal rights shape VET and contribute to making vocational skills visible. Those over 25 are entitled to upper secondary education or training, adapted to their needs and life situation. Adults also have a right to have prior learning assessed towards national curricula, which may result in exemption from parts of training. The experience-based trade certification scheme enables adults to sit a trade or journeyman examination on proof of sufficient relevant practice. The candidate must demonstrate comprehensive experience in the trade or craft, normally over a minimum of 5 years.

VET colleges offer a wide range of vocational programmes at EQF level 5 for students with a trade or journeyman certificate. Some programmes at this level are also accessible for students with upper secondary general education.

Master craftsperson programmes are for holders of a relevant trade or journeyman certificate with several years' work experience. The programmes are provided by vocational colleges (*Fagskoler*), both private and public, and combine general business management, marketing, and vocational theory.

Distinctive features

Norway has a long-standing tradition of close national and regional cooperation between education authorities and the social partners. National cooperation is organised in the National Council for VET (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring, SRY*), 10 vocational training councils (*Faglige råd*), one for each programme area, and national appeal boards (*Klagenemnder*). Regional cooperation involves county vocational training boards (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnder*) and examination boards (*Prøvene mnder*).

Tripartite cooperation aims to ensure that training provided to Norwegian VET learners meets labour market and skill needs. It informs changes in the VET structure, curriculum development, regional structure and volume of VET provision, the framework of examinations leading to trade or journeyman certificates, and quality control at all levels. At EQF level 5, the social partners participate in the National Council for higher VET (*Nasjonalt fagskoleråd*). In higher education, institutions are requested to set up a consultative council for cooperation with social partners.

Norway has a unified education and training system including both VET and general education as equal. Most education at upper-secondary level is provided by public schools. Young people have a right to attend upper secondary education, and most choose to do so. They also have the right to enrol in one of their top three choices.

More than half of trade and journeyman certificates are awarded to people over 25.

Skilled workers with VET qualifications will play an important role in the reorganisation of the Norwegian economy. Figures from the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) show that many enterprises lack such employees and consequently lose business. Statistics Norway (SSB) estimates a shortage of almost 100 000 skilled workers in 2035.

The VET system is becoming more digital, labour market relevant and attractive. Initiatives aimed at increasing the number of students who complete their education, as well as teacher competences including digital, are in process. About 50 measures from the white paper *Skilled workers for the future (Fagfolk for fremtiden)* have been implemented, increasing VET attractiveness and labour market relevance. A new programme structure in upper secondary VET, including new curricula, was implemented from 2020/21.

Important changes took place in 2020/21:

- several suggestions on changes for a better upper-secondary education, both general and VET;

- a proposal for a new Education Act for primary and upper secondary education was presented;
- the Government has suggested several measures to ensure education and work during COVID-19;
- it is a priority to increase the digital teaching competence and establish more study places in higher vocational education;
- a regulation for higher vocational education (EQF 5) was adopted ;
- a new strategy for higher vocational education (EQF 5);
- measures for increased completion rates in upper secondary were approved by the Government .

Demographics

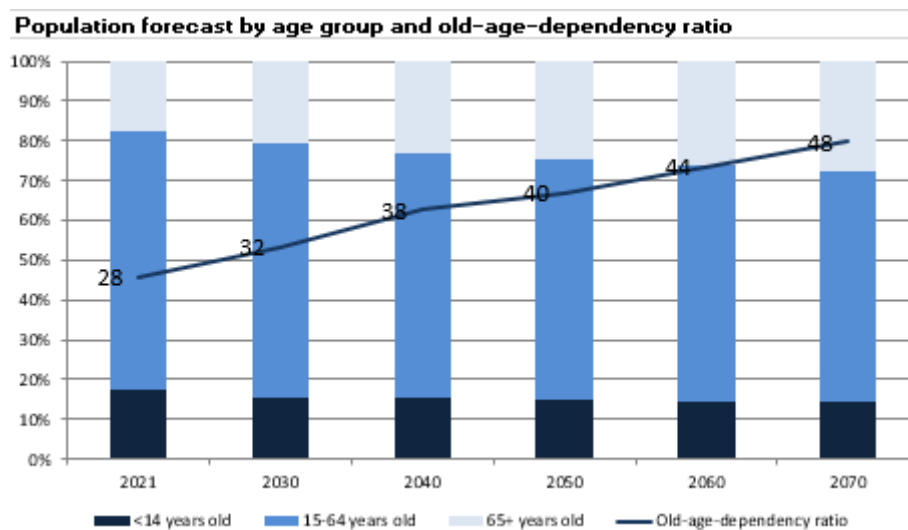
Population in 2021: 5 398 804 (1st Quarter).

It increased since 2013 by 6.8% due to positive growth and migration.

In 2021, the age group 67+ is 15.8%, an increase of 1.0 percentage points (pp) from 2017, and is expected to increase to 23.2% by 2040, 26.2% by 2060, and 27.7% by 2060 .

The old-age-dependency ratio in Norway is expected to increase:

Population forecast by age group and old-age-dependency ratio



Image

Source: Eurostat, proj_19ndbi [extracted 6.5.2021]

The demographic has an impact on VET. More people move into the cities, where it is more common to choose general education. In rural areas VET is often preferred.

In Oslo 30.5% of the learners participate in VET. In Nordland 59% of the learners in upper secondary school participate in VET.

At the beginning of 2020, the share of immigrants and those born in Norway to immigrant parents increased by 3.7% from 2019, representing 18.24% of the total population. 37.7% (376 656) of this segment of the population originates in other European countries (EU-27/EEA countries) (**12**). The immigrant population is spread all over the country: 76.95% live in Oslo and the four surrounding counties (*Viken, Innladet, Vestfol og, Telemark og, Agder*), constituting 21.6% of the population in the area.

Information about external factor impact on VET is not available.

Economics

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), defined as enterprises with less than 250 employees, are more than 99% of all enterprises. 83.5% of SMEs have fewer than five employees, mainly because 66.8% of enterprises have no registered employees. Only 0.4% of the total number of enterprises has 100 or more employees. These numbers indicate that apprenticeship training in Norwegian upper secondary VET often takes place in SMEs.

Most people in the production sector are employed in non-marketed services, business and transport and domestic trade.

Employment by production sector 2020

Image

Sector	Per cent
Primary and utilities sector	4.4
Manufacturing	8.7
Construction	8.3
transport and domestic trade	17.6
Business and other service	27.1
Non-marketed services	33.9
Total	100,0

Source: [Statistics Norway, c \[28.9.2021\]](#)

Exports are an important part of the economy thanks to a large oil and gas sector, fishing and fish farming, shipping, and power-intensive manufacturing sectors such as metals production, industrial chemicals and paper.

Labour market

Some trades are regulated and certificates or recognition of qualifications are compulsory to get a job.

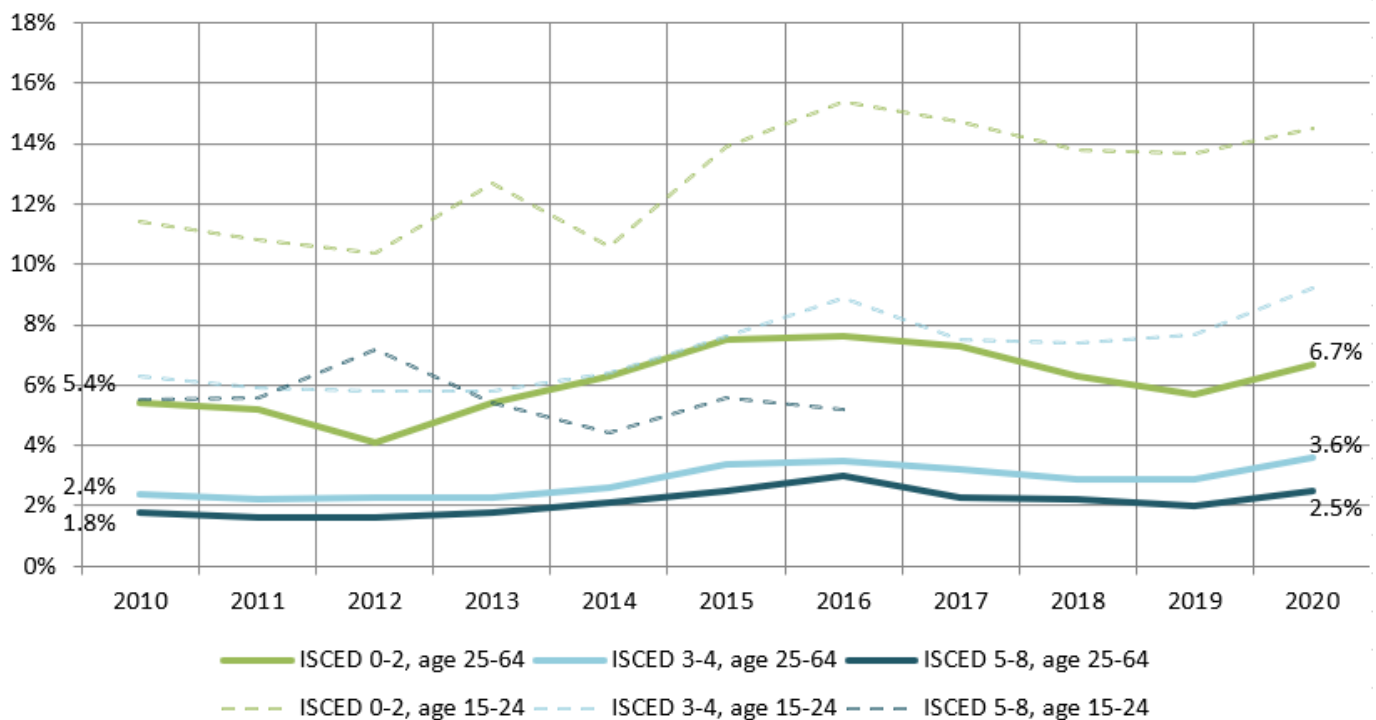
There is an increasing number of job vacancies advertisements which require formal education, often a minimum of a bachelor degree. However, in trades where there is lack of employees and the trade is not regulated, job seekers will find employment without formal education certification.

Total unemployment (2020): 5% (7.9% in EU-27, May 2021); it increased by 2 percentage points (pp) since 2018.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic employment has fallen.

Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education 2010-2020

Image



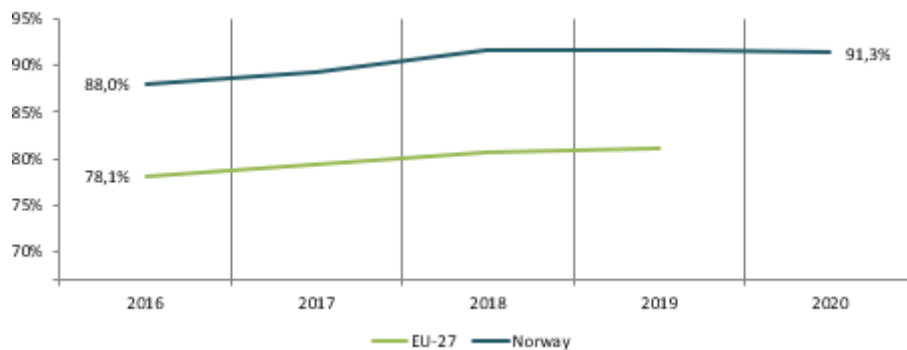
NB: data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series; low reliability for ISCED 5-8, age 15-24. ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education. ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education. *Source:* Eurostat, lfsa_urgaed [extracted 6.5.2021].

Unemployment rates of people aged 15-24 are generally higher than among people aged 25-64 for each education level, with low-qualified (ISCED levels 0-2) people scoring the highest unemployment rates. The total unemployment rate for the EU27 (percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old) was 6.2% in 2020. This was down 1.9 pp since 2016 .

In general, the crisis has hit more low-qualified than people with high-level (ISCED levels 5-8) and medium-level qualifications, including most VET graduates (ISCED levels 3 and 4).

The employment rate of 20 to 34-year-old VET graduates increased from 74.3% in 2016 to 76.2% in 2020 (+1.9 pp).

Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series. ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. *Source:* Eurostat, edat_lfse_24 [extracted 6.5.2021].

For more information about the external drivers influencing VET developments in Norway please see the case study from Cedefop's changing nature and role of VET in Europe project.

The education and training system comprises:

- first education level, divided into two levels:
 - primary education (from 6 years to 13 years);
 - lower secondary education (EQF 2, ISCED 2);
- upper secondary education (EQF 3 and 4 and ISCED 3. VET is available from upper secondary level;
- post- secondary, non- tertiary VET education (EQF 5, ISCED 453 and 554);
- higher education (EQF 6, 7 and 8, ISCED 6, 7 and 8).

Education is compulsory for 6- to 16-year-olds. It comprises primary education (years 1-7), where learners get no grades, and lower secondary education (years 8-10) where learners are given grades that are also counted for entering upper secondary level. It is under municipality responsibility and free of charge.

Upper secondary education is offered as general education and VET. The regional county authorities are responsible for general education and VET provision. All young people completing compulsory

education have a statutory right to 3 years of upper secondary education and most of them use it. Public upper secondary schools are free of charge.

Post-secondary non-tertiary education builds on upper secondary education: an upper secondary certificate or an equivalent qualification is a requirement to enrol. The education can often be combined with work. There are public and private providers.

Norway has 10 universities, six university colleges and five specialised, State-owned university institutions. There are also private institutions for higher education.

Students must pay a small fee each semester, paid to the student welfare organisation at the education institution. The purpose of the fee is to cover expenses relating to the students' welfare needs at their place of learning. The amount varies, but it rarely exceeds EUR 61.

It is possible to attend formal, non-formal, initial and continuing VET. Depending on the programme, learners may attend school-based or work-based learning or a combination of both. It is also possible to take an exam as an external candidate.

To complete a VET programme at upper secondary level, learners need to pass a final craft- or journeyman exam, which is both theoretical and practical. There is one exception; a 3-year option leads to a qualification at EQF level 4.

Initial and continuing VET are part of the formal education system. Initial VET has to be completed to progress to CVET. Initial VET starts at upper secondary school and most pathways leads to an EQF level 4 qualification. CVET is at EQF level 5.

Apprenticeship is at upper secondary level and leads to EQF level 4 qualification.

At upper secondary level, VET is conducted both in school and in public and private enterprises. The main two-plus-two model normally includes 2 years in school, where students also participate in practical training in workshops and enterprises, followed by 2 years of formalised apprenticeship (training and productive work) in enterprises. The first year of training consists of an introduction to the vocational area. During the second year, VET students choose specialisations and courses that are more trade- specific but core subjects are also included. Some crafts follow varying models with 3 years in school or 1 year in school followed by 3 years of formalised apprenticeship.

Upper secondary VET is completed with a practical-theoretical trade or journeyman's examination (*Fag- eller svenneprøve*) leading to an EQF level 4 qualification: a trade certificate (*Fagbrev*) for industrial and service trades or a journeyman's certificate (*Svennebrev*) for traditional crafts. The ten programme areas offer 197 different certificates.

There are many possible routes to higher education via upper secondary VET.

From Spotlight on VET – 2020

Central to the Norwegian education and training system is the Education Act of 17 July 1998 No 61 (*Opplæringsloven*), most recently amended on 1.7.2021. It covers primary, lower and upper secondary general education and VET, including apprenticeship training, for young people and adults, delivered by both public and private institutions. It states that the Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) has overall responsibility for national policy development and administration of all levels of education and training. The counties (*fylkeskommuner*) and municipalities (*kommuner*) are responsible for developing comprehensive plans and for organising and financing within their jurisdiction.

The Education Act gives the social partners representation (most often majority) in all important advisory bodies for upper secondary VET at national and county levels:

- the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring* (SRY)) gives advice on an overarching level;
- ten vocational training councils (*Faglige råd*) give advice on training in specific groups of trades, one for each VET programme;
- the county vocational training board (*Yrkesopplæringsnemnda*) for each county gives advice on quality, career guidance, regional development and the provision in the county to meet local labour market needs;
- the trade-specific examination boards (*Prøvenemnder*) are situated in each county;
- national appeals boards (*Klagenemnder*) cater for candidates who fail the trade or journeyman's final test at county level.

For post-secondary vocational education (nationally referred as tertiary; *høyere yrkesfaglig utdanning*), the social partners are consulted through the National Council for Tertiary Vocational Education (*Nasjonalt fagskoleråd*) established by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2010. This council has less of a formal function than the vocational training councils have at upper secondary

level, as the education and training providers at this level design their own programmes. The Directorate for Higher Education and Skills hosts the secretariat. In addition, advisory bodies with social partner representatives consult on tertiary vocational education. There are six advisory bodies established and two are planning.

Tertiary vocational colleges (*fagskoler*) represent a significant alternative to higher education. The colleges are important for developing competence and specialisation in VET. The objective of the National Council for Vocational Education and Training is to improve cooperation between the colleges, the rest of the education structure, working life, and society in general. The council acts as a coordinating body for the sector and is the advisory body to the Ministry of Education and Research. It comprises representatives from the education sector, employee and employer organisations and learners.

Shaping VET qualifications

Anticipating skill needs

Demands for new skills and changes in the labour market call for continuous adjustment and revision of upper secondary VET programmes, their content and their modes of delivery. The Ministry, parents, learners, employers, trade unions and others may initiate a need for adjustments or changes.

At upper secondary VET level

All eight upper secondary VET programmes are closely monitored. Changes are made continuously, based on input and applications from social partners, counties or the vocational training councils (*Faglige råd*) that give advice on training in specific groups of trades (**33**).

The Directorate for Education and Training (Directorate) hosts the secretariats of both the National Council for Vocational Education (*Samarbeidsrådet for yrkesopplæring* (SRY)) that gives advice on an overarching level, and the vocational training councils. These councils must report on the situation to the national authorities once in the 4-year nomination period. The report also covers the potential need for changes in their respective VET programmes. The Directorate, in cooperation with vocational training councils, vocational committees (*faglig utvalg*), county municipalities and social partners, reviewed VET programmes available in 2016. The result is a new structure for vocational subjects in upper secondary schools from 2020, which will be the biggest change in vocational education since 2006. The new structure will strengthen the quality and relevance of education.

One element that may limit the social partners' impact on upper secondary VET provision is the emphasis placed on the individual choices of learners. According to legislation, learners are entitled to admission to one out of three preferred upper secondary programmes. In the school year 2021/22, 86% of first-year learners were admitted to their first choice of upper secondary education. County authorities must provide programmes and subjects that correspond to these preferences. In order to balance VET provision with labour market needs, social partners give advice concerning a wide range of topics related to upper secondary VET: training programme structure, curriculum development, regional structure, volume of VET provision, examinations framework for trade and journeyman certificates, and quality control at national, county and local level.

At post-secondary VET level

In post-secondary vocational education, and in higher education, study programmes are designed by the provider. Each post-secondary vocational education programme must be recognised by Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) and is placed at EQF level 5. The vocational colleges offering post-secondary vocational education are not free to establish programmes at above EQF level 5. In other higher education, all accredited institutions can establish programmes at bachelor level (EQF 6), within the scope of their accreditation. Universities are free to establish programmes at all levels, including master and PhD programmes. All tertiary education institutions have external board members, and consultation with relevant labour market players on the design of programmes is common. In some fields there are national framework curricula to ensure some degree of similarity in training for all graduates (including teacher education, nursing, engineering, auditing). For other fields of training, the respective industries have national boards which offer advice to higher education providers. All higher education institutions are required to have a strategy and a consultative council for cooperation with working life (*Råd for samarbeid med arbeidslivet*).

Designing qualifications

In April 2016, the Government adopted a new white paper that will lead to renewal of the curriculum reform (*Kunnskapsløftet*) from 2006. The renewal of the school subjects in primary, lower and upper secondary education, including VET, will give learners more in-depth training and a better subject understanding, and more relevant content and links between subjects; the learning process progression will be made clearer. The new curriculum was ready in the autumn of 2020.

The national curriculum

The National curriculum for knowledge promotion (*Kunnskapsløftet 2006*) covers compulsory primary and lower secondary education and upper secondary education and training as a whole.

The curriculum consists of:

- the core curriculum: values and principles in education;
- subject curriculum;
- a framework regulating the distribution of teaching hours per subject.

The core curriculum deepens appreciation of basic values such as moral outlook, creative abilities, preparation for working life and society, general education, cooperation, and ecological understanding. This part of the curriculum underlies all education in Norway, from primary to adult, and provides the binding foundation and values for primary and upper secondary education and training.

The quality framework consists of the principles that clarify the school owners' (municipalities and county authorities) responsibilities. Key competences are integrated into the quality framework, such as learning strategies, social competences, cultural competences, motivation to learn, and learner participation.

The subject curricula consist of outcome-based learning targets, the main subject areas and basic skills. The main subject areas describe what the learner and apprentice should be able to do. The basic skills are: the ability to express oneself orally and in writing, the ability to read, fluency in numeracy, and the ability to use digital tools. The subject curricula also describe which final assessment will be given on completion.

The distribution of teaching hours per subject is set at national level. This is an overview of how the total teaching hours should be distributed per subject per year for the 10-year compulsory education as well as for the upper secondary level, VET included.

The national curriculum encompasses 10-year compulsory education and upper secondary education and training as a whole. The competence objectives state what the learner/apprentice should be able to master at each level after grades 2, 4, 7 and 10, as well as after every stage of upper secondary education and training. Basic skills are decisive for acquiring subject-related knowledge and for communicating and cooperating with others in a wide range of situations. Their aims are integrated with, and adapted to, each subject according to level. The subject curricula also describe the principles for assessment. However, decisions regarding teaching methods are left to the education and training

institutions. Curricular activities at local levels are essential in order to implement the national curriculum, particularly the outcome-based competence aims in the subject curricula. School owners must have a system in place for following up the quality of local curricular activities. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training develops web-based guidelines to support local curricular activities as well as other measures to raise competence among school owners and school managements.

Developing VET curricula (EQF level 4)

The Directorate has responsibility for continuous curriculum development. It makes extensive use of expert groups from both schools and enterprises providing upper secondary education. When the need for a new qualification is identified, a tripartite group is set up to design vocational profiles; these form the basis for developing the subject curricula. The Directorate appoints teams for curricula development consisting of professionals (most often proposed by the employer and employee organisations) and VET teachers.

Within 3 months, the team submits a draft version of the curriculum to the Directorate. The draft is distributed to the sector for a 3-month consultation process and relevant feedback is incorporated. With support from external representatives from the sector, curriculum quality is assured by the Directorate. Depending on the subject, curricula are finally set by the Ministry or the Directorate.

The identified labour market needs will have no direct influence on teachers' training or assessment, but the training of teachers and the assessment of learners and apprentices will be dependent on the subject curricula.

The Directorate also has a follow-up system for curricula (*System for oppfølging av læreplan (SOL)*). The purpose of the system is to obtain a more holistic and systematic overview of the situation for the curricula. SOL entails reviewing, compiling and analysing different sources that inform the situation for the curricula and how they function. These sources include studies, enquiries, evaluation reports and statistics. The intention is that SOL should contribute to making administration of the curricula more systematic, knowledge-based and predictable. The knowledge gained gives the Directorate a basis for initiating necessary and adequate measures for strengthening implementation of the curricula. These measures can support and inform VET providers when adjusting the curricula.

Norway is in the process of renewing all subjects at all levels of education. The renewed subjects and a new core curriculum were implemented in 2020.

Quality assurance

Tripartite cooperation is a crucial quality assurance mechanism for upper secondary VET. The Education Act requires the county authority (*fylkeskommunen*) to consult the county vocational training board (*Yrkesopplæringsnemda*) on quality issues related to school-based and work-based VET. A main task for the board is thus to give advice, especially related to accreditation of apprenticeship training enterprises. The board should also present proposals for quality development, including improving partnerships between schools and enterprises, and skills and competence development for teachers and trainers.

As quality assurance is embedded in the legal framework, the State is responsible for inspecting all activities stipulated in the Education Act. The State also has the authority to issue legally binding orders to rectify unsatisfactory conditions. The Ministry of Education and Research (*Kunnskapsdepartementet*) has delegated this responsibility as the inspectorate at national level to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (*Utdanningsdirektoratet*). The Directorate is responsible for developing and supporting inspections, to facilitate a unified inspection throughout the country, and to provide guidance on legislation. The county governors (*Statsforvalter*) serve as the operational inspection authority for basic training, and have responsibility for activities at county level. They also serve as the appeal body for individual decisions regarding learners in primary and lower secondary school. However, the Ministry still has the authority to exercise supervision, and can instruct the Directorate for Education and Training and the county governors on how inspections should be performed.

Quality standards for VET providers are set out in the Education Act and relevant regulations. The legislation sets standards for examinations, trade and journeyman's certification, approval of apprenticeship training enterprises, and teacher competence. The Education Act also regulates the county governors' responsibility to provide guidance to school owners. This applies to guidance not only on academic matters but also on other matters related to the Education Act. It includes guidance on administrative rules, and is intended to provide the best possible cooperation between the State and school owners.

In addition to the county governors' more general inspections, joint national inspections may also be implemented. These inspections are incident-based, and derive from regional risk assessments made in cooperation with the county governors. Situations may arise that invoke immediate attention by the authorities, and give county governors the authority to perform inspections at their own initiative.

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen* (NOKUT)) is responsible for recognition, accreditation and quality assurance in post-secondary vocational education and higher education. The frameworks for these activities are laid down in the respective laws and regulations on quality assurance in higher education and post-secondary vocational education, as well as in supplementary regulations, rules and procedures laid down by NOKUT.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is possible at all levels of education and training in Norway and can be used to acquire modules and/or full qualifications. There are laws and regulations in place relating to each level of education and training, providing a general framework for validation of prior learning. The Norwegian system of validation is based on shared principles across all sectors. One of these principles is that the validation process should be voluntary and of benefit to the individual.

Differences in funding and governance mechanisms found in primary, upper secondary, post-secondary vocational and higher education affect the preconditions for setting up validation procedures. The sectors of education have developed schemes for validation of non-formal and informal learning according to their specific needs and preconditions. Higher education institutions exercise the greatest freedom in the design and delivery of validation, because responsibilities are devolved to each institution. This also concerns post-secondary VET. The national government and its underlying administrations provide guidelines for all educational sectors.

During the autumn 2013, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, in cooperation with stakeholders from the sectors, developed national guidelines (last amended on 16 March 2021) relating to adults who claim the right to have their formal, non-formal and informal learning validated compared to lower or upper secondary level. The guidelines focus mainly on how to interpret the regulations relating to validation and how to implement the different points described in the regulations. The purpose of the national guidelines for validation is to ensure that sound validation procedures are carried out, leading to similar practices in all Norwegian counties and municipalities. By providing a national basis for local practice, the guidelines could spur confidence and legitimacy of the validation practices.

- It is possible to acquire a full qualification on the basis of validation in the Programme for general studies in upper secondary education (university-preparatory).
- In upper secondary VET, it is necessary to take the relevant final (trade) examination to achieve a trade or journeyman's certificate as a skilled worker.

- In higher education, individuals can gain exemptions for parts of study programmes. On the diploma as well as on the diploma supplement, the relevant courses and credits will be identified as having been obtained through validation. In post-secondary VET, the possibility to give exemption from courses and modules on the basis of validation was introduced through regulations of 1 August 2013.

In terms of awarding credits or partial qualifications after validation in primary and upper secondary education and training, the Education Act permits candidates to achieve a partial certificate qualification, called 'certificate of competence' (*kompetansebevis*) at any level through validation. Candidates then have the right to access further education and training, in order to achieve a full trade or journeyman certificate. The certificate of competence is awarded to recognise that an individual has achieved certain objectives (learning outcomes) within an upper secondary curriculum. The certificates can serve as stand-alone evidence of competences and can be used, for example, to support a job application or participation in further education courses.

These partial certificates of competence are recognised in the labour market, as a documentation of parts of the demands in the trade. It is also possible to access education through validation: the individual must be able to show (through documentation or other means) the required skills and competences to enter a certain level of education and training.

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database

Project Promoter Characteristics.

Location

The city of **Zawiercie** is located in the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland in the northeastern part of the Silesian Voivodeship, and was administratively part of the Katowice Voivodeship from 1975 to 1998.



Zawiercie is located on the Warta River, and its main sources are located in the oldest district - Kromolów in the chapel of St. John Nepomucen. It is to this river that the city owes its name.

Since 1998, the city has been the capital of Zawiercie County, which includes the municipalities of: Poręba, Zawiercie, Łazy, Ogrodzieniec, Pilica, Szczekociny, Irządze, Kroczyce, Włodowice, Żarnowiec. It covers an area of 85.24 square kilometers and has 48,081 residents (as of 2020). It is divided administratively into 18 residential settlements: Argentine, Blanowice, Borowe Pole, Bzow, Centrum, Dabrowica, Kromolow, Marciszow, Miodowa, Pilsudskiego, Stary Rynek, Stawki, Szymanski, Warty, Wydra Zielona, Zuzanka, Zuzanka I, Zerkowice, and 4 socio-districts: Karlin, Lońnice, Pomrożyce, Skarżyce.



Industry

The city's development was greatly influenced by its location near the trade routes from Silesia to Cracow and the presence of mineral resources in the form of lignite, iron ore, limestone and fire clay. An important role in the development of Zawiercie was played by various metal works and enterprises: "Ferrum", "Ulan", "Sambor and Krawczyk", "Poręba" near Zawiercie, "Liniarnia", "Jan Mecner", Tin Packaging Factory, "Dry Electric Element" and Zawiercie Steelworks.

In 1863, the Iron Foundry and Machine Building Factory, founded by Sambor and Krawczyk, enters the market, while in 1886 Edward Erbe's Iron Foundry and Berndt's cotton yarn waste factory are established. At this point, mention should also be made of Jan Mecner and his son, who founded the first Electromechanical Steam Factory in the Congress Kingdom, which made electrical equipment. It is peculiar that some plants and factories were located near the Warsaw-Vienna Railway, and railroad sidings were installed for factories distant from the railroad. Lignite and iron ore mines were opened in the Zawiercie area.

On June 24, 1878, the Zawiercie Joint Stock Society was constituted, the first in the Kingdom of Poland. An official tsarist decree had already appeared more than six months earlier on January 6. A year later, the Society launched a fabric printing plant. At that time, the Ginsberg brothers began construction of another factory in Zawiercie Duże.

Soon the Mamelok family established a cotton spinning mill powered by the power of the Warta River, its subsequent owners being the aforementioned Ginsbergs. The Zawiercie Joint Stock Society then took it over and expanded it to the point where it employed hundreds of people.

Zawiercie in the 19th century was a place with a great national and religious mix, thanks to the rapid development of industry. People flocked to it from neighboring villages seeking a better tomorrow. Together they brought with them their experiences, customs, language and faith. Until the end of the "long century", the development of the city did not face any obstacles, this situation was changed only by World War I

Nature

The area around Zawiercie boasts a unique relief and the presence of plant communities of extreme floristic and ecological diversity. The area around the city is covered with coniferous forests dominated by pine and deciduous forests dominated by beech. It is in them that you can find many species of plants and animals that are under protection. In the Zawiercie municipality there are the following forms of nature protection: Natura 2000 area Ostoja Kroczycka, Park The Eagles' Nests

Landscape Park, the Protected Landscape Area of the Protected Landscape Area of the Eagles' Nests Landscape Park and the Stawki Landscape Park, two trees (common maples) designated as monuments of nature. The flora of the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland includes about 1,500 species of vascular plants, which places the region in question alongside the Tatra Mountains and the Pieniny Mountains among the most floristically valuable areas in Poland.

A city with rich traditions

Zawiercie is a city with rich traditions. Over the past 100 years it has changed a lot. Today we focus on development, but we do not forget the glorious past. We have managed to restore the splendor of such buildings as the Szymanski Palace, for example. The restoration of the villa was part of a comprehensive revitalization of the TAZ estate. An atmospheric building with very interesting architecture, not far from the Zawiercie basilica today delights again. It now houses the headquarters of the City and District Public Library. It has been collecting press clippings about Zawiercie since 1982. A Bibliography of Zawiercie has been compiled; it includes 109 book items published between 1907 and 1997. The bibliography includes monographs and other independent publications about Zawiercie, as well as information found in other publications such as encyclopedias and dictionaries. Valuable collections of the reading room include constitutions, statutes and privileges passed at the General Sejm of the Crown from 1550 until 1637.

The oldest book is the one from 1637, these are "Privileges of King Sigismund Augustus at the Crown General Sejm".

The villa was designed by Warsaw architect Hugo Kuder. Time has taken its toll on the former property of Stanislaw Szymanski, director of the "Zawiercie" Joint-Stock Company. The building, which is part of the urban layout of the TAZ workers' housing estate, is listed in the register of monuments of the Silesian province. The Palace also houses a Museum Chamber, where one can learn about the rich history of the city and its inhabitants. Many artifacts, photos and documents related to the city's rich history have been collected there. There is, among others, a painting of the Virgin Mary from the late 19th century, an accordion produced in W. Budniewski's factory in Zawiercie, kerosene lamps and many unique banners. A special emphasis has been placed on showing the profiles of people who, with their professional and social work, contributed to the development of economic, cultural and social life in the city.

We want the historic TAZ estate and Marszalkowska Street to become our pride again. That's why the Old Bathhouse Gallery will be launched as early as this year, following renovations carried out

as part of the revitalization. It will exhibit works of art by, among others, Leszek Dutka and local artists. The historic TAZ estate is undoubtedly one of the most valuable monuments of Zawiercie. The high architectural and urban planning values of this place make it remarkable.

The landmark of the city is the historic railway station. In 1871 Edmund Zacherta sold the land for its construction, and in 1872 a wooden station was built. The brick railroad station in Zawiercie was built in 1890, and it was much smaller than today's station. Construction of the station in use today began around 1910-12. Its designer was Eng. Czeslaw Domaniewski, who was the chief designer of the Warsaw-Vienna Railway.



The development of Zawiercie was inextricably linked precisely to the Warsaw-Vienna Railway, which ran through the city. On December 1, 1847, a train passed through Zawiercie for the first time. This opened the planned traffic from Częstochowa to Ząbkowice on a single-track line.

There are many other interesting sights in the city itself, including the Minor Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul. The cornerstone for the new church was consecrated in 1896. The founders of the church were factory owners Adolf and Izydor Ginsberg. Construction of the church began in 1897, according to a design by Hugo Kuder. In 1903 the church was consecrated and opened to the faithful. It is built of red brick, with three naves, in the Polish Gothic style. Inside there is a beautiful marble main altar, a side altar of Our Lady Immaculate and many unique stained glass windows. In front of the church rises a neo-Gothic statue of the Mother of God with bas-reliefs made in 1904 by J. Proszowski.



Another valuable monument is the church of St. Nicholas the Confessor Bishop in Zawiercie - Kromotów. The parish probably existed since around 1250. During the period when Kromolow belonged to the Boners, who were of the Calvinist faith, the parish church was converted into a Calvinist church, and Catholics built a church in Skarżyce at that time. However, in 1574 the church in Kromolow was returned to the Catholics through its owner, Mikolaj Firlej. Dlugosz reported that the church was with a brick chancel and a wooden nave. In the 16th century, the entire church was already made of brick, turned into a Calvinist church in the middle of that century. Today the church is a brick, oriental, single-nave structure. The church has historic altars: the main neo-Renaissance and side Baroque altars, as well as an early Baroque stone baptismal font.

Also noteworthy is the temple of St. Holy Trinity in Zawiercie - Skarżyce. The church from the beginning was a brick, three-nave, oriental, early Baroque church, consecrated twice in 1598 and 1678. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century the building was badly damaged, then thoroughly renovated. The church has historic altars: the main altar in Baroque-Classical style, the side altars (in the chapels) are late Renaissance, and the side altars (in the nave) are Classical. A beautiful late Baroque tabernacle, a Baroque baptismal font and a Baroque pulpit complete the unique atmosphere in the temple.

An important place that emphasizes the Jurassic character of the municipality is the ruins of the castle "Bąkowiec" in Zawiercie-Skarżyce. Erected from limestone, the castle consisted of several buildings grouped in a polygonal plan with an area of about 500 m² and was surrounded by a perimeter wall. On the eastern side there was a bailey covering an area of 800 m². At the foot of the rock in the western part there is a rectangular well. The utility courtyard is surrounded by a moat and a conical earth mound, on which an oval tower stood. From the south, the castle was protected by a wall built on a natural rock bulge.



A magnificent manor house is located in Bzow, which was built in the first half of the 19th century, although the date 1738 can be found on one of the beams, suggesting that it dates back to the 18th century. It is made of brick, and was rebuilt to its present shape in 1914. It has an entrance, typical of Polish noble manor houses, flanked by semi-columns on pedestals.

Now and today of the city

Formerly the heart of the city was the commercial Marszałkowska Street. Many years ago it was considered the most representative in the city. Following a decision by the Silesian Governor, the Zawiercie Municipality has already officially become the owner of the former synagogue building on this street and the plot of land on which the building is located. Eventually, a cultural space conducive to intergenerational integration and a memorial site will be created there, among other things. It is interesting to note that in Zawiercie, as in Warsaw, there is an intersection of Marszałkowska Street and Hoża Street.

Today, the meeting point for residents is John Paul II Square near the railway station. Thanks to the revitalization of this part of the downtown, it has been possible to create a family-friendly space.

There is a fountain here whose shape resembles an ammonite, which emphasizes the importance of our city in the Krakow-Czestochowa Jura.

A city of different cultures

The city is created primarily by people. We remember those who were here before us. We are reminded of their heritage by the cemetery located on the outskirts of Kromolow between Harvest and Sand Streets. It was established in the first half of the 18th century. There are about 920 matzevot in the cemetery. They have different shapes and sizes, and the inscriptions on them are bilingual: from the top in Yiddish, below in Polish. Their upper part is decorated with ornaments. Two graves of the Dutch family stand out in the cemetery. These are the gravestones of the parents of Stanislaw Holenderski (1871-1940), a philanthropist, industrialist and social activist. From the left is Cecilia (née Mendelsohn) Dutch and from the right Markus Dutch. From the inscriptions on the monuments one can read not only the names of the deceased but also learn about their education and occupations. Another interesting object is the Jewish cemetery in Zawiercie on today's Daszyńskiego Street. Its history dates back to 1911, despite the fact that there was a synagogue in Zawiercie on Marszałkowska Street as early as 1880.

During World War II, the Germans established a ghetto in Zawiercie, which included Nowy Rynek, Apteczna, Marszałkowska, Ciemna, Ciasna and Stary Rynek streets.

Artist-friendly city

We support artists. They are the true value of Zawiercie. Our pride is the Representative Song and Dance Ensemble "Zawiercie", which operates at the Municipal Cultural Center "Centrum". It effectively combines tradition with incredible energy. This is a group of people with passion, which infects the love of folklore. Members of the group are united not only by dancing and having fun, but also by friendship. They tour the world and promote our city. Folk culture is still alive, we have it in our blood. Folklore is a wonderful way to discover our roots.



The group has performed on many domestic and foreign stages (Italy, Hungary, Turkey, Greece, Mexico, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Thailand, Croatia, Montenegro, Bulgaria). It has participated in numerous festivals, folklore, occasional, charity and sports events.

ZPiT "Zawiercie" has twice been recognized by the International Council of Artistic Associations, Festivals and Folk Art, which in 2005 and 2010 awarded the group the prestigious CIOFF certificate, which allows it to represent Poland at folklore festivals around the world.

The beauty of Zawiercie was also appreciated by Polish opera singer and honorary citizen of the city Master Wieslaw Ochman. For 25 years he performed charitably in Zawiercie at concerts, all proceeds of which were donated to the "Auxilium" Foundation, which supports a hospital in Zawiercie. Last year the first festival named after him was organized in Zawiercie, and due to the huge interest, further editions are planned.

Leszek Dutka, a Polish painter, sculptor and ceramist, lived in Zawiercie for more than twenty years from 1924. The works of this artist, who was also an honorary citizen of the city, are in the collections of, among others, the National Museum in Krakow, Wroclaw, Gdansk, the Polish Museum in Chicago and in many private collections. His precious works will be housed in the revitalized building of the former bathhouse.

The Zawiercie Development Agency, in connection with the implementation of the bilateral agreement, is cooperating with the Norwegian Partner under the project entitled Zawiercie Local Development Plan for 2021-2030, financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.

Cooperation with the Partner country in the field of exchange of experience and practical solutions is min. study visits, a number of online meetings, exchange of materials and documents.

Cooperation with partners from Norway is aimed at creating modern development solutions at the local level. Its main objective is to provide proven experience in the creation of spatial, environmental and social policies from Norwegian cities and to reduce economic and social disparities, as well as to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries. Important aspects of cooperation are also the exchange of good practices, information and experience in the area of organizing cooperation between institutions, schools and employers, primarily in the field of dual vocational education, as well as the creation of individual career paths for young people on the example of the Partner.



It is worth mentioning that the project partner has the best program in Europe in the area of establishing new companies and businesses. Norway, according to international surveys and rankings,

is among the top countries with the highest quality of life, so in this cooperation we see an opportunity to draw good solutions for our city to improve the quality of life and strengthen the market

In June 2022, there was a visit of the Norwegian partner to Zawiercie. The main purpose of the visit of the guests from the Donor State was to sign a Partnership Agreement between Zawiercie Municipality and More and Romsdal Country Council during the inaugural conference of the project, as well as to establish the scope of cooperation and prepare the schedule of study visits. Before signing the agreement, meetings were held with various groups involved in the project in the educational, entrepreneurial and social spheres. The purpose of the visit was also to determine expectations from both sides and to get to know each other better, as well as the people who will be involved in the project. The result was the ceremonial signing of the partnership agreement by the Mayor of the City Lukasz Konarski and a representative of the Norwegian side - Kristian Severeide - international advisor of More and Romsdal Country. Our guests got to know the charms of our city and its surroundings, during which we touched on tourism cooperation. They also viewed the Economic Activity Zone, new production facilities and investment areas .



In November 2022, the first of three visits of the Partner's representatives to Zawiercie was organized. The main purpose of the visit of guests from the Donor State was to participate in the planned conference "I learn to work-vocational education in Zawiercie district". Guests of the Norwegian partner in the persons of: Kristian Severeide, Jon Hjortdal, Egil Ruud, John Atle Henriksen, Stig Gunnar Støylen, Damian Cruz began their stay in our country on November 20, 2022. According to the Agenda of the stay, on 21.11.2022 in the morning hours the delegation of the Norwegian partner together with

representatives of Zawiercie Municipality was scheduled to leave for Cracow. The delegation from Norway, together with the Mayor of Zawiercie Łukasz Konarski, participated in a study visit to the Faculty of Mining Geodesy and Environmental Engineering at the Stanisław Staszic Academy of Mining and Metallurgy in Cracow. Representatives of the UM in Zawiercie and the foreign guests attended a meeting with the Vice-Dean for Education and Student Affairs Dr. Elżbieta Jasińska and Dean Prof. Ryszard Hejmanowski. The study visit provided an opportunity to exchange experiences at the international level, as well as to learn about the activities of the AGH University of Science and Technology in terms of vocational education. The delegation was shown around the AGH building by Assistant Professor Dr. Eng. Paulina Lewinska, who talked about the history of the university and familiarized them with the activities of the various departments. On November 22, 2022, at ten o'clock, a conference was held at MOK Zawiercie, scheduled to carry out the scope of the topic: " I learn to work - vocational education in the Zawiercie district". During the conference, the concept of vocational education from the perspective of the employer, implemented by CMC Poland Sp. z o.o., and the concept of vocational education from the perspective of the educational institution, implemented at Z.S. H. Kołłątaja in Zawiercie, were presented. The presented concepts defined the way of implementing vocational education along with practical vocational training implementing dual education. Subsequently, the discussion during the expert panel allowed defining the needs and scope of activities to be implemented during cooperation with the Norwegian partner.

On November 23, 2022, the delegation participants were invited to more vocational schools of the city of Zawiercie. The visitation took place at the schools: School Complex. H. Kołłątaj School Complex, Vocational and Continuing Education Center, S. Staszic School Complex, and Economic School Complex. The Norwegian delegation also had the opportunity to visit the employer CMC Poland Sp. z o.o. - which provides "care" from professional preparation for future graduates and its future employees. The Norwegian partner pointed out the high level of education of young people in the field of programming of numerical machines and preparation for the profession of mechatronics technician. The Norwegian delegation expressed its appreciation for the dual training implemented at CMC Poland Sp. z o.o. Interest in Polish didactic solutions stems from the desire to cooperate and improve Polish solutions, which is the essence of the implemented project. The visit of the delegation of the Norwegian partner was one of the very fruitful and building far-reaching conceptual cooperation on the level of development of vocational education in Zawiercie district.





PROJECT PROMOTER'S FIRST STUDY VISIT TO MØRE OG ROMSDAL

Møre og Romsdal is one of Norway's 11 counties, with an area of 15,12 thousand km². The administrative center of the county is Molde. The largest city in Møre og Romsdal County is Ålesund. The weather varies throughout the county. The mild coastal climate prevalent in most areas of the county is the result of proximity to the ocean, the Gulf Stream and the prevailing westerly wind. Topography with high mountains, long fjords and deep valleys leads to wide temperature fluctuations and frequent rainfall. The terrain also provides ample opportunities for summer and winter sports, including in Stranda, which the Polish delegation had the opportunity to visit.

Monday, February 27

The Polish delegation landed at Oslo - Gardermoen airport at around 3 p.m. Then before 6 p.m. there was a flight to Ålesund. At around 7 pm, representatives of the Zawiercie units landed at the airport and were accommodated at the Quality Waterfront Hotel.

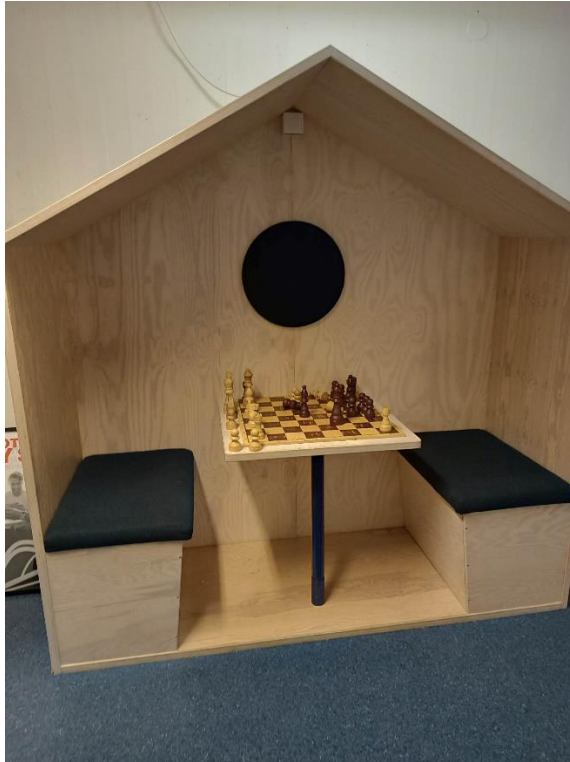
Tuesday, February 28

Visit to the Secondary School in Sykkylven

On Tuesday, a Polish delegation visited Sykkylven, a Norwegian town and municipality located in the Møre og Romsdal region.

There, a visit was made to the Secondary School. The Polish delegation was impressed by the dual vocational education at the secondary school level. Students at the Norwegian school can study such subjects as robotics, automation, mechanics, nursing assistance, among others. Already at this stage of education, young people are given paid internships at local companies. The school has spaces conducive to students' relaxation and study between classes.





The Polish delegation got acquainted with the Norwegian education system, which consists of: elementary school and junior high school (from age 6 to 15 - grades 1-10). Schooling is free and compulsory. The next level is high school (from age 16 to 19 - grades 11-13). High school education is also free and funded by county councils. The task of dual vocational education is primarily to strengthen innovative capacity and competitiveness in local industry. It is part of the municipality's business strategy and serves to keep young people in smaller towns. Through the paid apprenticeship program, young people have more opportunities to work in local businesses.

The Polish delegation, during a tour of the Sykkylven school, was accompanied by a young student, Oliwia, who is from Poland, who talked about how Polish students are received in Scandinavia, mentioning, among other things, that the school provides Norwegian language training.









Near the school in Sykkylven is the building of the Municipal Cultural Center and Library. The delegation had the opportunity to see the interesting systems for the development of the auditorium/cinema space and the folding seating structure.

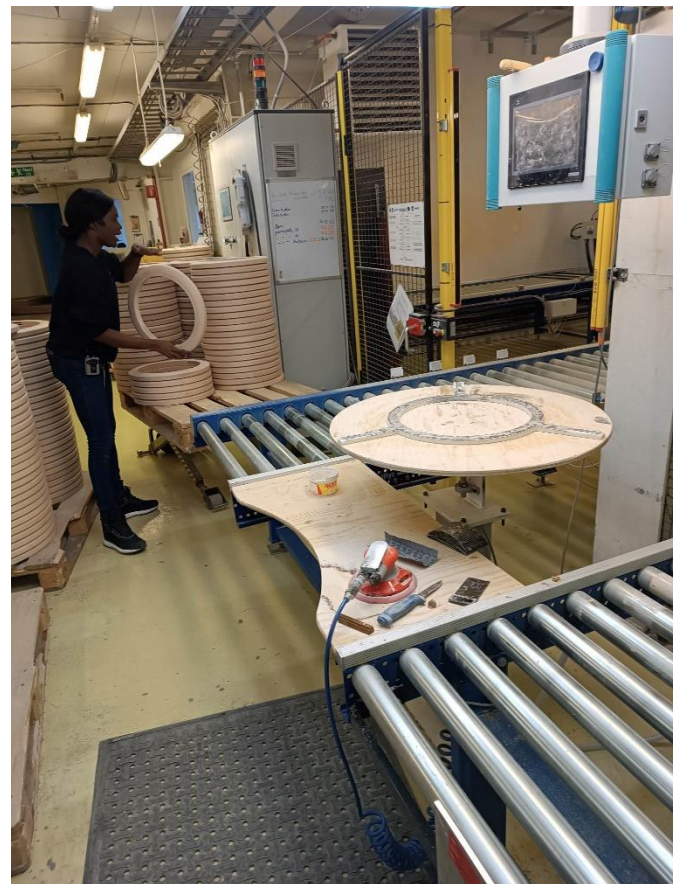


Visit to Ekornes furniture factory

During the visit to Sykkylven, the Polish delegation had the opportunity to learn about the entire furniture production system at the Ekornes factory. Ekornes is Scandinavia's largest furniture manufacturer and thus one of the largest employers in Norway. It uses the same techniques taught by its great-grandparents. The company combines processes that have been perfected for generations with modern improvements and technical solutions, constantly creating products characterized by elegance, quality and class.

Ekornes is a company with a long tradition, paying special attention to the quality and durability of its products and maintaining the best standards. It also produces its own upholstery sponges (upholstery foams) for armchair seats. The company exports its products to global markets, including Europe and the United States.

The company's domain is "zero waste," which means that no material is wasted. In the production process, the company takes great care of the quality of its products. Representatives of the Zawiercie institutions had the opportunity to get acquainted with various production mechanization processes.







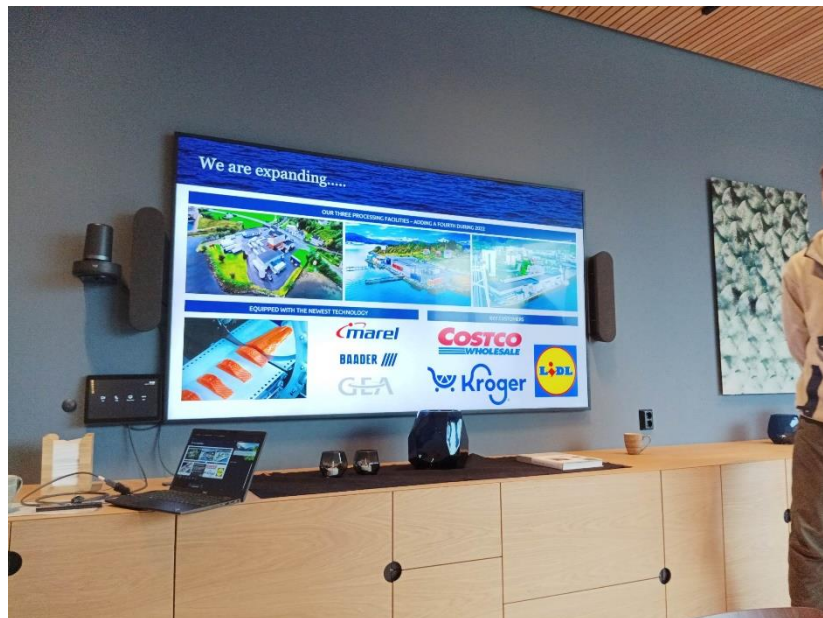
Wednesday, March 1

Aquaculture

The Polish delegation went to the Hofseth Exhibition Center in Valldal "Aquaculture" on the next day of its visit to Norway. The company is one of the largest salmon producers in Norway and has the largest fish farms.

Representatives of the Zawiercie institutions went by boat from Valldal to the "Aquaculture" fish farming demonstration facility. The boat had an electric drive powered by hydroelectric power.

The company is committed to environmental sustainability, operating its business in a sustainable manner that protects the fjord's wildlife, and offers its customers high-quality products as the basis for a healthy and balanced diet.



The company adheres to a zero waste policy, which means that in addition to the typical use of salmon, other products are made from it, including fish oil, dietary supplements and pet food. While salmon leftovers used to be considered waste, this waste is now being processed into high-value health nutritional products for humans and animals. In the future, the products produced may also form the basis of new medicine.



"Aquaculture ensures that fish farms are cared for at the highest level, including recreating the salmon's path from river to sea and back again. As a result, it has greater control over the population and encounters fewer disease threats. The company conducts regular checks and daily inspections of the fish, which ensures that they are in good physical condition. Dual cameras monitor both the food and behavior of the fish.

The company is constantly expanding its operations, the salmon population is growing, and as a result, "Aquaculture" needs new employees of various technical specialties, from fields such as biology or chemistry, as well as manual workers. One of the biggest threats is the departure of young people to larger places (Bergen and Oslo). It is worth mentioning that a class of 2022 has been launched in the nearby town of Stranda, which will feed the factory in the future. Currently, a dozen people from the school are on apprenticeships.

The company's core strategies are local value creation, use of the "whole" fish (using fish waste and turning it into high-quality nutritional products), and low environmental impact (from farming to transportation focusing attention on reducing human impact on the environment). It is an enterprise with long-term agricultural potential, with three processing plants. One of the major concerns buying their products is Lidl, among others.

The company is expanding and investing in advanced technology - upgraded marine facilities and feeding stations, new processing lines, and is also investing in "closed pen" technology for salmon. The company holds stakes in Norwegian Hydrogen and Ava Ocean, among others.



Stranda kommune

In the afternoon, the Polish delegation was invited to the Stranda kommune building, where the topic of Norwegian residents starting their own businesses was discussed. Support is mainly given to innovative companies, start-ups, but any resident can apply for business funding. The meeting was conducted by Inge Bjordal, who is employed by the Stranda municipality administration.

The county of More og Rommsdal is very supportive of local business initiatives, through funding, courses, business consulting and advertising services. The main goal of the partnership is to attract more start-ups with quality and ability to grow and survive in the market. The general principles of hoppid.no's entrepreneurship development program are presented, which offers entrepreneurs free advice and guidance, courses and training, advice on grants and financing, and assistance with search and networking processes.

Hoppid.no's goal is to attract and retain talented people, and it is one of the tools used to create new companies and workplaces. The system was created in 2007 and is operated by county government M&R Start-up offices in each municipality. The system has 29 offices and 50 advisors. Certified and trained advisors provide courses on business development.



The tool was implemented to make more efficient use of potential resources and to strengthen the quality of start-ups. Approximately NOK 100,000 is allocated annually for hoppid.no, which is used for grants (start-up assistance) for candidates. Advice from hoppid.no is a free service. A very important role at the municipal level is to cooperate with other regional authorities in important business development programs.

During the meeting, the Polish delegation was also presented with the tasks and responsibilities of the Møre and Romsdal County Council. The main tasks and responsibilities are post-secondary education of citizens, development of the region by stimulating the growth of new ideas, regional development and industry, culture and public health, planning and analysis, value creation, research and development.



Near the Stranda kommune building is the Stranda cultural center, which the Polish delegation had the opportunity to see. This facility, too, has modern technological solutions to ensure the best possible use of the auditorium space.

The cultural centers in Sykkylven and Stranda are among the most important meeting places for the residents of the local municipalities. It is the cultural offer of these centers that constitutes the main alternative for leisure activities in Sykkylven and Stranda. The most significant difference from the cultural center in Zawiercie was that the cinema there operates

only two days a week - usually on Fridays and Sundays. On the other hand, events are sometimes held there on Saturdays, including concerts by local art groups. The two also differ in terms of technology - the auditorium there is expandable and collapsible, so the number of seats can be adjusted depending on the type of event being held.

Near the Stranda community building is the Stranda Cultural Center, which the Polish delegation had the opportunity to see. This facility, too, has modern technological solutions to ensure the best use of the auditorium space.

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Thursday, March 2

Grilstad sausage factory

On Thursday, March 2, a Polish delegation went to the local Grilstad sausage factory in Stranda. The representatives of the Zawiercie institutions were shown around the facility by Grete Mogstad Nass, accompanied by Karolina, an employee from Poland. The brand sells under three names: Grilstad (traditional Norwegian products designed for the whole family for every day), Stranda (traditional Norwegian products for weekends, produced only in Stranda) and TIND (local, flavorful, innovative products for special occasions).

Grilstad AS is engaged in food sales and is one of the largest Norwegian producers of meat products in Norway. Grilstad is also a market leader in frozen hamburgers. The group currently has about 400 employees spread across three processing plants in Norway (Trondheim, Strand and Brumunddal) and one in Sweden (Østersund). Turnover in 2019 was NOK 1.8 billion. Grilstad supplies meat products to the grocery market throughout Norway. Interestingly, the company's products are distributed exclusively in Norway







Visit to Stranda High School

Representatives of the Zawiercie units on March 2 also held a meeting with the hosts of the local school in Stranda, where the teaching system and business development in the city were presented.

The Norwegian education system allows one to gain professional qualifications already at the high school level. Such a model includes two years at school (with in-service training) and a two-year apprenticeship. Among the courses taught are health care, culinary and food production, agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing.

Qualification for university studies is provided by three years at a general education school, including natural sciences and mathematics, languages, social sciences and economics, and physical education.

The Polish delegation had the opportunity to learn about modern technologies for training in health care professions - including donning virtual reality glasses and administering medication to a virtual patient, as well as pioneering systems for improving the functioning of people with disabilities in society (including automated lowering of kitchen countertops).

The Polish delegation also learned about the functioning of "sosialhjelp" - social assistance in Norway, which is granted by NAV, the Norwegian Labour and Social Policy Administration. Persons in a particularly difficult life situation can apply for support, provided they are in Norway legally and permanently. Interestingly, it is not a bad financial situation that is the main reason for support - as the percentage of unemployed people in Norway is very low. The main reasons for providing support are ill health and age. Norway has an extensive infrastructure of nursing homes, and the education system trains students as early as high school to become "socialhelp," so that young people can acquire the necessary skills to become nurses/caregivers for the elderly and sick. The Norwegians also have a wide catalog of benefits granted for children, due to the fact that the birth rate is extremely low and the population is aging very rapidly.

At Stranda High School, representatives from Poland were also able to see "from behind the scenes" the work of students studying catering, which culminated in the serving of a delicious meal in the school cafeteria.



Visit to Orkla Stranda in Svemorka - pizza factory

The Polish delegation went to the Grandiosa Pizza Factory - unofficially Norway's national dish. Pizza Grandiosa is the most popular brand of frozen pizza in Norway.

Production of the original Grandiosa began on February 11, 1980 and was produced by Nora (now Stabburet). Grandiosa was one of the first frozen pizzas produced in Norway. Grandiosa became very popular and is still the best-selling pizza brand in Norway, despite increasing competition from other local and international brands. In 2002, Stabburet responded to growing competition in the frozen food segment by revitalizing the brand with creative marketing and several new versions of Grandiosa. In smaller quantities, the pizza is also exported to neighboring countries: Sweden, Finland and Iceland. Surprisingly, the pizza is not exported to many European countries, despite its good quality and long shelf life.

Grandiosa consists of flour, meat, cheese and vegetables, hence the company's view that their products are healthy and part of a balanced diet.

The delegation from Poland was able to see every stage of pizza making and was impressed by the mechanized production system



A visit to the Strandafjellet ski center,

Snøsikere Strandafjellet is located in the eastern part of the Sunnmør Alps and is a popular destination for skiers and snowboarders. It has a total of seven lifts - including a gondola lift, which the Polish delegation had the opportunity to ride. The views from the top were breathtaking, and the temperature did not deter at all.

An extensive snowmaking system ensures a very early start to the season, and parts of the facility are illuminated, so you can enjoy winter madness even in the evening. Cross-country skiers can enjoy a total of 23.5 kilometers of groomed trails.





Friday, March 3

Visit to Norwegian Maritime Competence Center

The Norwegian Maritime Competence Center (NMCC) is one of Norway's most innovative and technologically advanced centers. It conducts collaborations with the public sector, private sector and academia.

NMCC is a meeting place for innovation, competence and development. One of the goals of the establishment of the Center is to connect the investment community with innovative, growing companies seeking capital. In addition, the NMCC has collaborations between various organizations, and NMCC partners include a company developing new technologies from the seabed to space. Also worth mentioning is the OSC (Offshore Simulator Center), a world leader in the development of simulation and visualization of maritime operations working with shipping companies, equipment suppliers and research institutions.

The Offshore Competence Center is based on interdisciplinary cooperation and thus contributes to national as well as international social sustainability



Best practices gained during the study visit:

- Supporting local businesses and new start-ups by the public sector,
- Innovative, mechanized technologies in factories and enterprises,
- Business-to-business cooperation involving, among other things, the purchase of equipment for new facilities from local manufacturers,
- Prosperous vocational preparation, enabling people to find jobs right after high school,
- Professional equipping of dual vocational education facilities with modern, innovative equipment (primarily in the field of robotics and automation),
- Application of the zero waste principle at "Aquaculture" and the Ekornes furniture factory, among others,
- Maximizing the potential of Norwegian renewable energy sources, including hydropower,
- Caring for the environment and ecology,
- Pioneering solutions for the use of floor space at the cultural centers in Sykkylven and Stranda,
- Targeting the development of innovation and advanced technologies.



PROJECT PROMOTER'S SECOND STUDY VISIT TO MØRE OG ROMSDAL

Monday, June 19

The Polish delegation landed at Oslo airport at around 4 p.m. Then before 8 p.m. there was a flight to Molde. At around 9 pm, representatives of the Zawiercie units landed at the airport and were accommodated at the Scandic Seilet Hotel.

Tuesday, June 20

During the visit to the Hydro Factory, the Polish delegation had the opportunity to get acquainted with the entire production system and the education system at the NEWTON science-practical learning center for children and young people operating at the Factory.

The Hydro Factory has the largest and most modern primary aluminum plant in Europe in Sunndal, employs 700 people, produces 400,000 tons of primary aluminum, 500,000 tons of casting products

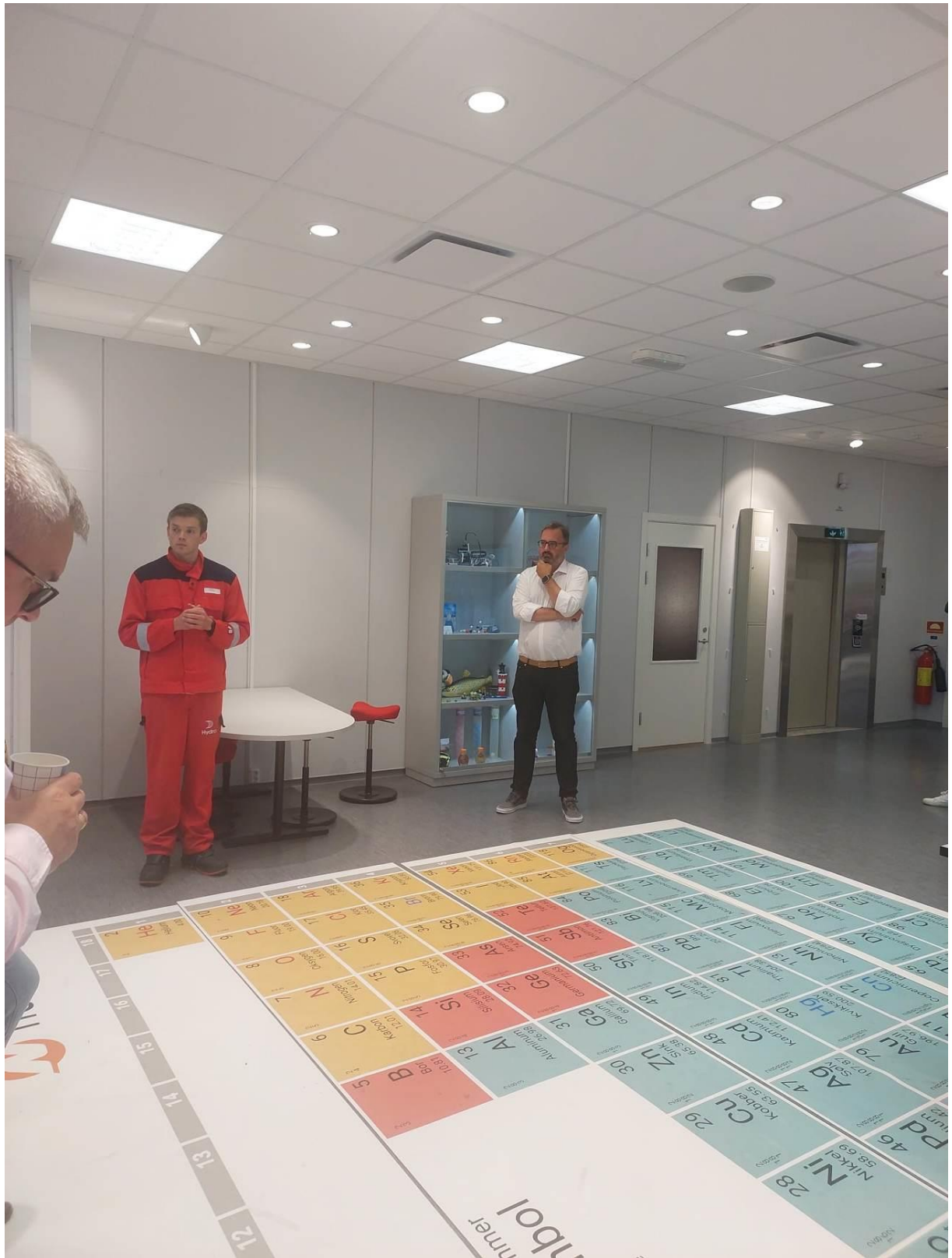
In order to acquire specialized, technically trained personnel to work at the factory, the plant has organized and made available to children and schoolchildren age- and knowledge-appropriate laboratories, as well as laboratories presenting in an attractive, modern way practical applications of chemical, physical processes used at the factory. The studios are also equipped with simulators of equipment operating in the factory. The ateliers encourage students to learn technical professions and future employment in the factory. The Newton Studio offers education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The educational programs used in the Newton Workshop are called Newton modules. Curriculum-based teaching is varied and focuses on education through hands-on activities. There is a network of analogous Newton facilities in Norway and other European countries. In Poland, the only Newton laboratory operates in Lodz. Educational opportunities for pupils, students, graduates and professionals were presented. Opportunities for learning challenges, responsibility and diversity were presented. Friendly work environment of experienced professionals, focuses on different perspectives to build industries that matter - for a more sustainable future. In addition, develops products, solutions that meet global needs and demands.

In the first part, the training offer was presented, consisting of theoretical classes for two years, followed by another two years of practice. In the next part of the visit, the delegation was given a tour of the Hydro factory. It is worth mentioning that a class has now been launched, whose students will power the factory in the future. Currently, a dozen people from the school are on apprenticeship.









Wednesday, June 21

The delegation made a study visit to Sunndal. It is a municipality in the Nordmøre region located in the northeastern part of Møre og Romsdal County the administrative center of the municipality is the village of Sunndalsøra, with a land area of 713 square kilometers, is the largest municipality in Møre og Romsdal County. Important branches of economic development in Sunndal are tourism, industry (with Hydro Aluminium Sunndal as the largest employer), public services, retail trade and agriculture. With an area of 1,713 square kilometers (661 sq. km), the municipality is the 47th largest of Norway's 356 municipalities and is the largest in Møre og Romsdal County. Sunndal is the most populous municipality in Norway, with a population of 7036. The municipality's population density is 4.3 residents per square kilometer (11 square miles), and its population has decreased by 3.5% over the last 10-year period.

The first meeting was held at the town hall of Sunndal Municipality, where the municipality's administrator is Per Ove Dahl, while the mayor is Ståle Refstie. During the meeting, the mayor of the municipality gave a historical overview of the region and general information about the municipality. Experiences were exchanged in primary education, vocational education as well as in the areas of culture, economy and social matters.

The framework for the Municipality was also presented:

- SUNS - Sunndal Næringssselskap AS - dealing with business development in Sunndal. Sunndal Municipality is financing the operation and owns one hundred percent of the company. A business plan, adopted by the Sunndal municipal council, governs the work at SUNS. The company's structure, organization and operations are otherwise handled by the company's own bodies. SUNS provides first-line services in the area of start-up guidance in Sunndal in cooperation with the Møre and Romsdal County Council and Innovation Norway through free consulting and start-up grants.

- Ungt Entreprenørskap, a non-profit organization that, in cooperation with the local labor and business community, develops programs that integrate education at all levels with work life. Activities range from elementary to higher education in entrepreneurial learning, vocational training and personal finance.





The delegation then visited the Aura Hydroelectric Power Plant.

It is a hydroelectric power plant also located in Sunndal in Møre og Romsdal County. The facility, using the power of water flowing from the mountains, produces environmentally friendly, emission-free electricity to power the aluminum smelter and the Municipality.

The Aura power plant is fed by a 16-kilometer-long pipeline that connects the reservoir to Holbuvatnet. The power plant is equipped with seven Pelton turbines with an installed capacity of 290 MW . The average annual output of the plant, commissioned in 1953, is 1776 GWh . The second power plant, Osbu, was commissioned in 1958. It adds 20 MW of power and produces 80 GWh per year .

The Saurdal power plant is a hydroelectric and pumped storage plant located in the municipality of Suldal. The facility operates with an installed capacity of 674 megawatts (904,000 hp). The average energy absorbed by the pumps annually is 1189 GWh. The average annual production is 1335 GWh (4810 TJ).

A delegation of the operation of the facility in historical times since 1913 is presented, as well as changes that have taken place in energy production processes as technology and automation have advanced.

The hydroelectric project is owned by a national company. Most of the production is supplied to Norsk Hydro's aluminum smelter in Sunndalsøra.





Visit to Sunndal High School

Representatives of the Zawiercie units also held a meeting with the hosts of the local school in Sunndal, where the teaching system, rich facilities for practical learning of technical professions and business development in the town were presented.



The main element of the visit to the School Complex was to learn about educational opportunities. Students are educated in such fields as robotics, automation, mechanics, nursing assistance, wood machining, as well as metal machining. Already at this stage of education, young people are given paid internships at local companies. The school has high-end equipment with which the studios are equipped. The delegation was able to observe the differences in education in Poland consisting of a different specificity of teaching i.e. theoretical classes for two years, followed by practical classes for another two years.

The Norwegian education system allows one to gain professional qualifications as early as high school. Such a model includes two years at school (with in-service training) and a two-year apprenticeship.

Norwegian schools have a cordial atmosphere, teachers are friendly to students, and the priority is the acquisition of knowledge and skills - not chasing the best grades.

The Polish delegation got acquainted with the Norwegian education system, which consists of: elementary school and junior high school (from age 6 to 15 - grades 1-10). Schooling is free and compulsory. The next level is high school (from age 16 to 19 - grades 11-13). High school education is also free and funded by county councils. The task of dual vocational education is primarily to strengthen innovative capacity and competitiveness in local industry. It is part of the municipality's business strategy and serves to keep young people in smaller towns. Through the paid apprenticeship program, young people have more opportunities to work in local businesses.





Thursday, June 22

Molde is a Norwegian city and municipality located in Møre og Romsdal municipality, Romsdal county. It is located on the Romsdalshalvøya peninsula, on the waters of the Romsdalsfjord. It is the administrative center of Møre og Romsdal County, the municipality of Molde,

The delegation was invited to the Provincial Office, where the topic of Norwegian residents concerning, broadly, education at all ages was discussed. The meeting was conducted by an office employee employed by the Modle administration.

In a subsequent presentation, an employee of the Office of Development of the Authority presented the main assumptions of the regional strategy for the development of competencies coordinating cooperation in this regard between businesses and the public sector. The activities are intended to remedy the growing aging of the working-age population, the restoration of a skilled workforce, reducing the phenomenon of dropping out of education and not taking up employment among young

people. The presentation presented statistical data of the region's individual municipalities in terms of education level, employment of the population.

The next presentation outlines the local government unit's efforts to provide career counseling to young people. The forms of activities are free of charge for young people, and to increase accessibility they are organized in parallel in many locations of the country. Often the public organizer provides students with free transportation to the venue. Often the public organizer provides students with free transportation to the venues of the Education Fair. Approximately 3,500 students from 10 classes participate in career days. School offers, educational directions, and employment opportunities at local businesses are presented free of charge. During the event, one can get detailed assistance in choosing a career path.

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Nearby the building is the Molde Cultural and Social Integration Center, which the Polish delegation had the opportunity to see. Also this facility has modern technological, multimedia solutions to ensure the best possible use of the space of the auditorium organizing and offering an attractive space for many forms of local residents' activities, meetings, integration, cultural and educational events.









Best practices gained during the study visit:

- Innovative, mechanized technologies in factories and enterprises,
- Inter-enterprise cooperation involving, among other things, the purchase of equipment for new facilities from local manufacturers,
- Prosperous vocational preparation, enabling people to find jobs right after high school,
- Professional equipping of dual vocational education facilities with modern, innovative equipment (primarily in the field of robotics and automation),
- Maximizing the potential of Norwegian renewable hydropower sources,
- Caring for the environment and ecology,
- Targeting the development of innovation and advanced technologies,
- Strategically responding to the needs of the labor market by extending labor force participation.

At this stage of our cooperation, we would like to thank our Partner for the fruitful cooperation, thanks to which we have the opportunity to learn a lot. Cooperation with Norway will bring a lot of positive changes for our city as well as its residents.