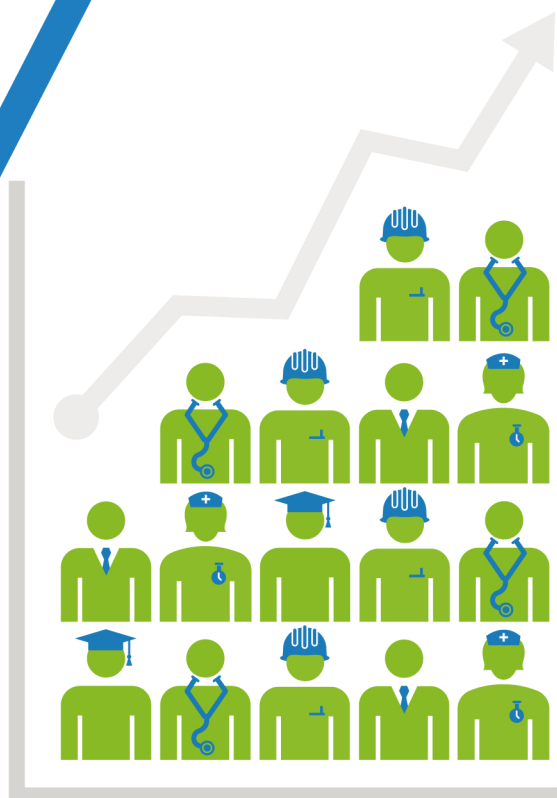


# OECD Skills Strategy

## Action Report

# Norway

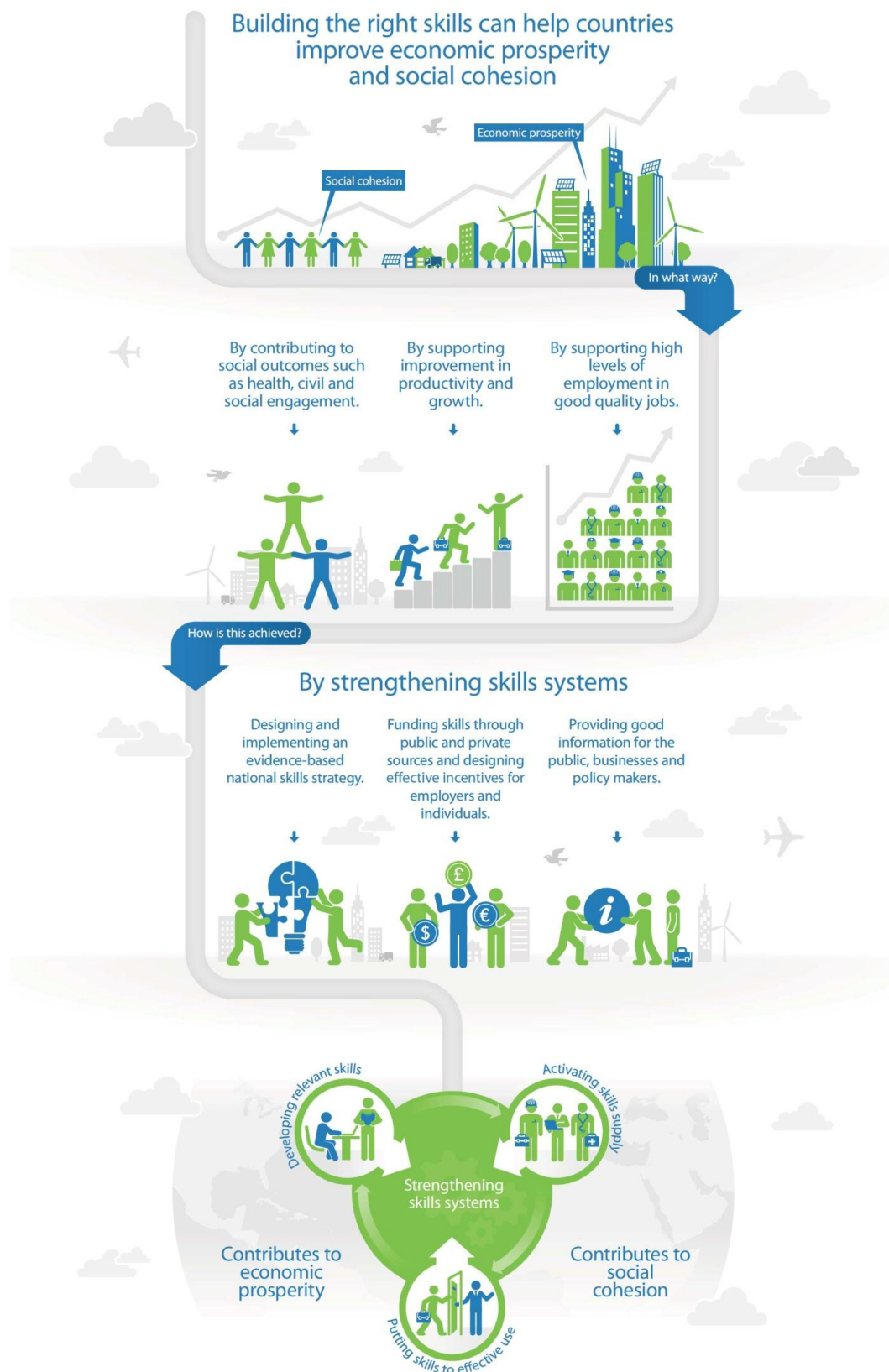
2014





**OECD SKILLS STRATEGY  
ACTION REPORT  
NORWAY**

# OECD SKILLS STRATEGY





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## FOREWORD

Skills are essential to ensuring Norway's future competitiveness as well as the health, wealth and well-being of its people. The OECD Skills Strategy provides countries with a framework to achieve this shared vision of: "Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives".

Working in close collaboration with an inter-ministerial project team in Oslo, the OECD has engaged with ministries, regional governments and stakeholders to develop a strategic assessment of Norway's skills system. The "diagnostic phase", carried out over the course of 2013, served to build a shared understanding of the issues at stake and identified 12 skills challenges for Norway.

The *OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report: Norway* published in February 2014, established a strong foundation for the subsequent "action phase". This entailed working with a wide range of ministries, agencies and stakeholders to define concrete steps forward on three priorities: first, improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system; second, tackling skills imbalances and third, strengthening education and training for low-skilled adults.

This *OECD Skills Strategy Action Report: Norway* draws upon the valuable insights provided by both governmental and non-governmental actors in Norway's skills system to identify five key actions. Concerted efforts are now needed to connect skills with jobs, with productivity, with prosperity and with social cohesion.

This report will have served its purpose as a catalyst, if it is followed by concrete actions in the schools, universities and workplaces where people's skills are developed, activated and put to use. Maximising Norway's skills potential is everyone's business, and will require a shared commitment across ministries, county and local governments as well as social partners to deliver better skills outcomes today and in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andreas Schleicher". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Andreas Schleicher  
OECD Director of Education and Skills

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This *OECD Skills Strategy Action Report: Norway* builds upon the analysis of Norway's skills challenges set out in the *OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report: Norway* published in February 2014. It is part of a series of country projects undertaken within the OECD's programme of work on "Building effective national and local skills strategies".

The OECD is grateful to the Norwegian national project team which was coordinated by Lene Guthu and Annette Skalde at the Ministry of Education and Research and included representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries. This inter-ministerial project team funded the project work, worked closely with the OECD team and was responsible for organising workshops with stakeholders. Members of the inter-ministerial project team included: Ann Kristin Nilsen, Inger Marie Skinderhaug, Joakim Bakke, Kjetil Ulvik, Lars Nerdrum, Lene Guthu and Annette Skalde from the Ministry of Education and Research; Lene Rathe, Agnes Marie Simensen and Thomas Sâheim from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Yngve Schrøder Tufteland from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, Birgitte Wohl Sem, Kari Mette Lullau and Petter Knutzen from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and Tonje Lauritzen from the Ministry of Finance. A Steering Group of senior officials was responsible for setting the strategic direction for the project and included: Eivind Heder (Director General, Ministry of Education and Research), Ola Ribe (Deputy Director General, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), Carl Gjersem (Specialist Director, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries), Bjørn Kristen Barvik (Deputy Director General, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation) and Morten Petter Johansen (Assistant Director General, Ministry of Finance).

The OECD team also wishes to thank all stakeholders who took part in the Skills Action Workshop, held on 1 – 2 April 2014 in Oslo, as well as in a series of prior workshops and consultations held in Oslo, Buskerud County and Nordland County in the course of 2013 and 2014. Stakeholders' insights, written submissions and discussions have both driven the process and shaped this Action Report. Part II of the report reflects the wide range of concrete actions proposed by stakeholders to tackle Norway's skills challenges.

While this report builds upon data and analysis drawn from the OECD, the Norwegian authorities and stakeholder input, any errors or misinterpretations remain the responsibility of the OECD team.

The OECD team was co-ordinated by Joanne Caddy (Directorate for Education and Skills) while Deborah Roseveare (Directorate for Education and Skills) provided thought leadership and strategic oversight for the project. The lead author for this report was Simone Stelten (Directorate for Education and Skills). The project drew on the multidisciplinary expertise of many experts working across the OECD, including Jonathan Barr (LEED Programme), Bert Brys and Pierce O'Reilly (Centre for Tax Policy), Kristine Langenbucher (Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs) and Paul O'Brien (Economics Department). Florence Wojtasinski (Directorate for Education and Skills) provided support for project management and was responsible for the layout of this report.

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# INTRODUCTION

## THE OECD SKILLS STRATEGY

Skills are one of the main drivers of individual well-being and economic success in a global knowledge-based economy. The OECD Skills Strategy provides countries with a framework to analyse their skills challenges and develop appropriate actions along three pillars:

1. **Developing relevant skills**
2. **Activating skills supply**
3. **Using skills effectively**



Countries need to ensure policy coherence across these interconnected three pillars, building a whole-of-government approach which also engages key stakeholders. This is underlined by the principle of **strengthening skills system effectiveness**, which lies at the heart of the OECD Skills Strategy.

### Towards an effective Skills Strategy for Norway

Norway has achieved impressive levels of socio-economic development with stable and inclusive economic growth that builds on a highly qualified population, high employment participation, skilled labour immigration, high productivity, prudent management of its petroleum profits, and an inclusive welfare state, among others.

Yet this is not the time for complacency. Norway faces slowing productivity growth in the mainland economy, high real labour costs, and underuse of skills for entrepreneurship and innovation, which are key to leverage the economic and social benefits of skills. In the context of declining oil production, Norway should adjust for a boost in its non-oil economy, which would require concerted action to maximise Norway's skills potential.

Since January 2013, the OECD has been working closely with Norway to successfully conduct an inclusive and innovative process to strengthen Norway's skills system. The ultimate goal is to ensure that Norway is prepared for a future that is more innovative, knowledge-based, productive, and leaves no-one behind.

Norway embarked on this project to achieve three objectives:

- I. A shared **vision** for the future of Norway's skills system,
- II. A common **understanding** of Norway's challenges and priorities for action,
- III. Broad **stakeholder engagement** and concrete stakeholder proposals for action.

### Embarking on an inclusive process

This project draws on broad engagement of the Norwegian Government and stakeholders. The project was developed and delivered in close collaboration between the OECD and a Norwegian cross-ministerial project team, coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research.



Over **60 organisations working at the national and county levels** were involved, including various government agencies, county administrations, civil society organisations, education institutions, and social partners, among others (see Annex 1). Stakeholders were invited to share their perspectives during six interactive workshops held in the course of 2013 and 2014 as well as through an online consultation on Norway's priorities for action, held in October 2013.

The process was conducted in two phases. The *diagnostic phase*, completed over the course of 2013, served to build a shared understanding of the issues at stake and to identify 12 skills challenges for Norway set out in the *OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report: Norway* published in February 2014 (hereafter referred to as *Diagnostic Report - DR*). The *action phase* involved stakeholders in generating innovative approaches and solutions to specific skills challenges to contribute to the development and implementation of government skills policies.

Stakeholders developed proposals for action during the *Skills Action Workshop*, held on 1 and 2 April 2014 in Oslo, and submitted additional written proposals in the ensuing weeks. Run as a *design workshop*, stakeholders worked in small groups to identify concrete actions to improve Norway's outcomes in the following three Priority Areas.

### Three Priority Areas

At the outset of the *action phase*, stakeholders in Norway chose to focus on **3 interlinked Priority Areas for action**, which incorporate the 12 skills challenges identified in the Diagnostic Report (see DR, p. 10):

- **Priority Area 1: Improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system**  
This priority builds the basis for effective skills policies in Norway. Failure to achieve effective governance while building on strong partnerships across fields like education, employment and industry, will constitute a bottleneck to addressing complex skills policy challenges. Recognising the importance of this priority area will require long-term commitment across political parties and levels of government.
- **Priority Area 2: Tackling skills imbalances**  
Achieving the right skills mix and making sure that these skills are used effectively will underpin Norway's capacity to innovate and to achieve more economic diversification. Emerging skills shortages and skills mismatch on the job risk becoming a barrier to economic growth in Norway. In the context of diminishing labour supply due to population ageing on the one hand and growing demand for highly skilled people on the other, it is vital for Norway to establish a stronger link between the development of skills and its economic and social demand for skills.
- **Priority Area 3: Strengthening education and training for low-skilled adults.**  
In knowledge-based economies, skills are not only the key requirement for innovation and growth but social inclusion equally depends on countries being able to equip all of their people with relevant skills. Norway, along with other advanced OECD Member countries, needs to improve skills development of low-skilled adults to boost people's employability so that they remain active participants in society.

These Priority Areas are closely **interlinked**. Successful action on Priority Area 1 will improve policy effectiveness across all other skills policy areas. Education and training for low-skilled adults (Priority Area 3) represents one approach to tackle skills imbalances (Priority Area 2). The particular challenges of low-skilled adults require specific and tailored policies suggesting the creation of a separate priority to focus on the needs of low-skilled adults in a more targeted way. While progress in each Priority Area will require specific and tailored actions, their effectiveness will be enhanced through an integrated and strategic approach to policy design and implementation.

## Realising a common vision for Norway's skills system

In spring 2013 Norway's stakeholders developed a set of goals for the medium and long-term to guide the development of a coherent and effective skills system for Norway. This shared vision is expressed in terms of concrete improvements in skills outcomes for the future. The set of actions presented in this report can become a contribution towards achieving this vision.

5 years from today:	20 years from today:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced dropout rates</li> <li>• Improved lifelong learning</li> <li>• More second chances</li> <li>• Tax system that encourages employers to invest in skills</li> <li>• Improved information for informed career choices</li> <li>• Demand for skills that is met</li> <li>• Validation frameworks for formal and informal skills</li> <li>• Reduced disability claimants</li> <li>• Enhanced status of teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more innovative workforce</li> <li>• Greater flexibility between educational and career pathways</li> <li>• A seamless system in which individuals can flexibly 'top-up' skills</li> <li>• Flexible transitions irrespective of previous choices</li> <li>• Motivated youth</li> <li>• Concrete and measurable targets that are supported with information</li> <li>• A more inclusive labour market</li> <li>• Better co-operation between labour markets and education institutions</li> <li>• Better co-operation across government</li> </ul>

## What this report offers

This *OECD Skills Action Report* builds on the [OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report: Norway](#), which provides a wealth of data, analysis and information gained from stakeholders during the *diagnostic phase* of the project.

This Report distils the main findings of the *action phase* of the project and offers:

### KEY ACTIONS:

- Five Key Actions

### PART 1: Moving from diagnosis to action:

- OECD recommendations for actions to be taken by Government and by stakeholders
- Relevant actions proposed by Norway's stakeholders
- Examples of experience in other countries

### PART 2: Stakeholder proposals for action

- Concise summaries of stakeholder proposals for action and OECD comments



## How can the results of this project be used?

The OECD's priorities for action and the stakeholder proposals for action together provide innovative input to the concrete design of Norway's skills policies and their successful implementation. Of equal importance are the 'intangible' assets generated during the project through inter-ministerial cooperation and the process of stakeholder engagement. Now the ultimate aim is to use these results to set up concrete plans for action and ensure their full implementation. Ideally, this process would continue to include all relevant skills actors in future steps.

This Action Report will have served its purpose if it contributes to fostering a common understanding of the actions Norway needs to take. It will have accomplished an even greater goal if it stimulates policy makers and stakeholders to work together to ensure successful implementation.

For only by investing in strengthening Norway's skills system today, will we be able to deliver better skills outcomes for Norway's people in the future. The OECD stands ready to provide Norway with support in this endeavour.

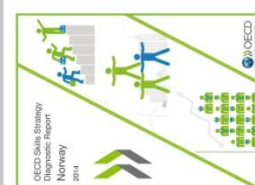
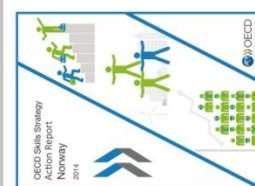
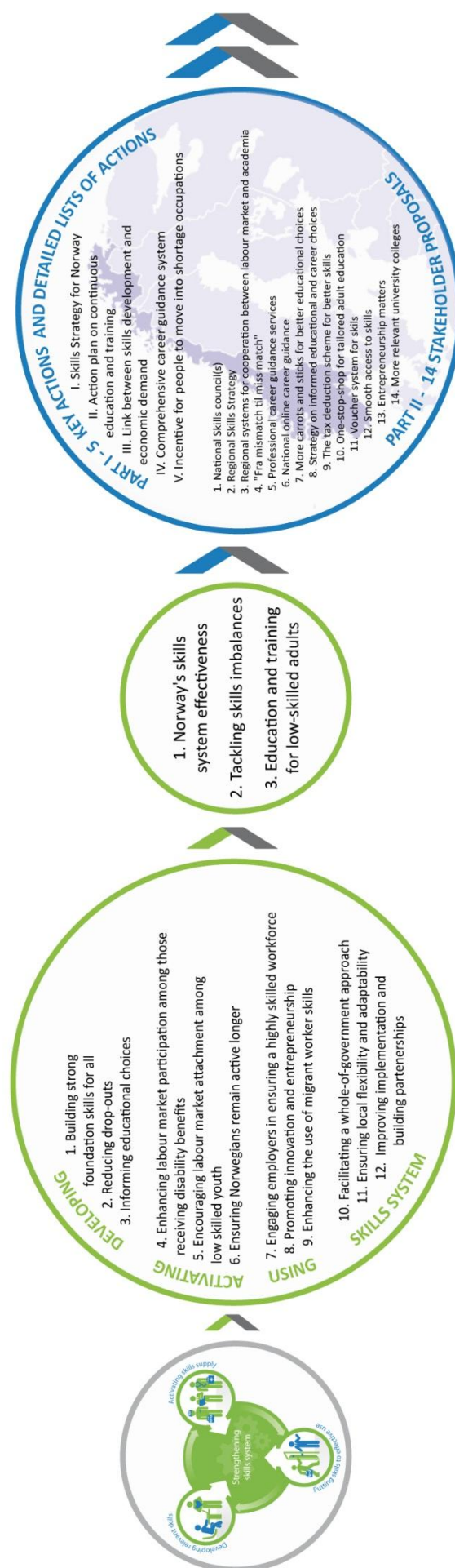
# MAXIMISING NORWAY'S SKILLS POTENTIAL

How can Norway maximise its potential?

What are the main challenges ahead?

Which challenges are top priority?

What actions need to be taken, and by whom?





# KEY MESSAGES

## FIVE KEY ACTIONS

The following **five key actions** together constitute a strong and coherent platform for new policy development and better implementation of existing skills policies. Achieving them will require integrated and concerted action of all ministries and stakeholders.

These key actions draw upon and provide cross-references to, the more detailed sets of suggested actions for government and for stakeholders set out in Part 1 of this report.

*I. Set up a “Skills Strategy for Norway” incorporating a whole-of-government approach*

*II. Establish an action plan for continuous education and training*

*III. Strengthen the link between skills development and economic growth*

*IV. Build a comprehensive career guidance system*

*V. Strengthen incentives for people to move into shortage occupation*

### *I. Set up a “Skills Strategy for Norway” incorporating a whole-of-government approach:*

Set up a “Skills Strategy for Norway” to address the 12 Challenges identified in the Diagnostic Report and the 3 Priorities for Action. Start with an action plan to tackle the 3 Priorities, setting out **clear goals, targets, milestones and indicators** as well as a coherent approach to **financing** implementation (see *Actions 1.1-1.3*).

Make sure that Norway’s Skills Strategy builds on an effective **whole-of-government** approach as this is the key enabling condition for all other skills policies to be effective in such highly cross-sectoral multi-level policy areas (*Actions 1.4-1.8*). Ensure coordinated national goals as well as flexibility for local strategies and implementation (*Actions 1.3, 1.9-1.11*).

As part of this strategy develop effective mechanisms to **involve stakeholders** to use their input and expertise when designing and implementing skills policies. Leverage stakeholder engagement so that they themselves engage beyond current tripartite structures (*Action 1.8*).

### *II. Establish an action plan for continuous education and training:*

**Provide** for effective and flexible education and training opportunities for all people, irrespective of their labour market status, to address mismatches in the labour market. **Review** the existing policies and programmes on continuous education and training, such as the Basic Competence in Working Life (BKA) programme, to identify gaps in access and skills development (see *Action 2.6 and 3.4*).

Ensure that the continuous education and training system is more **responsive to economic and social demand** by encouraging skills development through flexible top-up education, particularly where there are skills needs and shortages. Make sure that the strategy ensures for **regional adjustment** (*Action 2.6*).

Build on stronger **cooperation** between education providers on the one hand, particularly higher education institutions and other adult education providers, and, on the other hand, employers, to establish a system that allows all people to participate in education and training that is highly relevant to employers (*Actions 2.6-2.8*). Ensure that the specific barriers faced by **disadvantaged and low-skilled adults** are addressed effectively (see *Actions 3.1; 3.5-3.7*).

### *III. Strengthen the link between skills development and economic growth:*

In order to diversify Norway's economy and help its businesses move further up global value chains, Norway needs to strengthen the links between skills development and economic demand. In particular, Norway needs to boost the supply of **skills of strategic importance for economic and social development** in Norway, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and entrepreneurship skills (*Action 2.11*). Ensure provision of a wide range of skills development opportunities that respond to these various social and economic needs, from high quality vocational education and training to building excellence in higher education and research while preparing all people for a fast-changing labour market (*Actions 2.9, 2.10*).

To facilitate the economic relevance of skills development, strengthen incentives to encourage employer investments in skills development, boost opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, while expanding and strengthening **partnerships** between education and training institutions, research institutes and working life. Improve **incentives** for partnerships and ensure **responsiveness** of the education system (see *Actions 2.5, 2.8*).

### *IV. Build a comprehensive career guidance system:*

Empowering individuals with relevant information to navigate a skills system can be effective in encouraging people to make decisions that respond more closely to economic demand. Apply a whole-of-government approach to establish a comprehensive career guidance system covering all stages of lifelong learning and providing high quality services (see *Actions 2.1-2.4; 3.9*).

Ensure all youth and adults have **access** to relevant information and career guidance. Expand services to people who currently need greater access, such as employees, higher education students, low-skilled adults, people with migrant background, and people who are in different transition phases between jobs, education and working life. Establish a central digital platform for online career guidance and information.

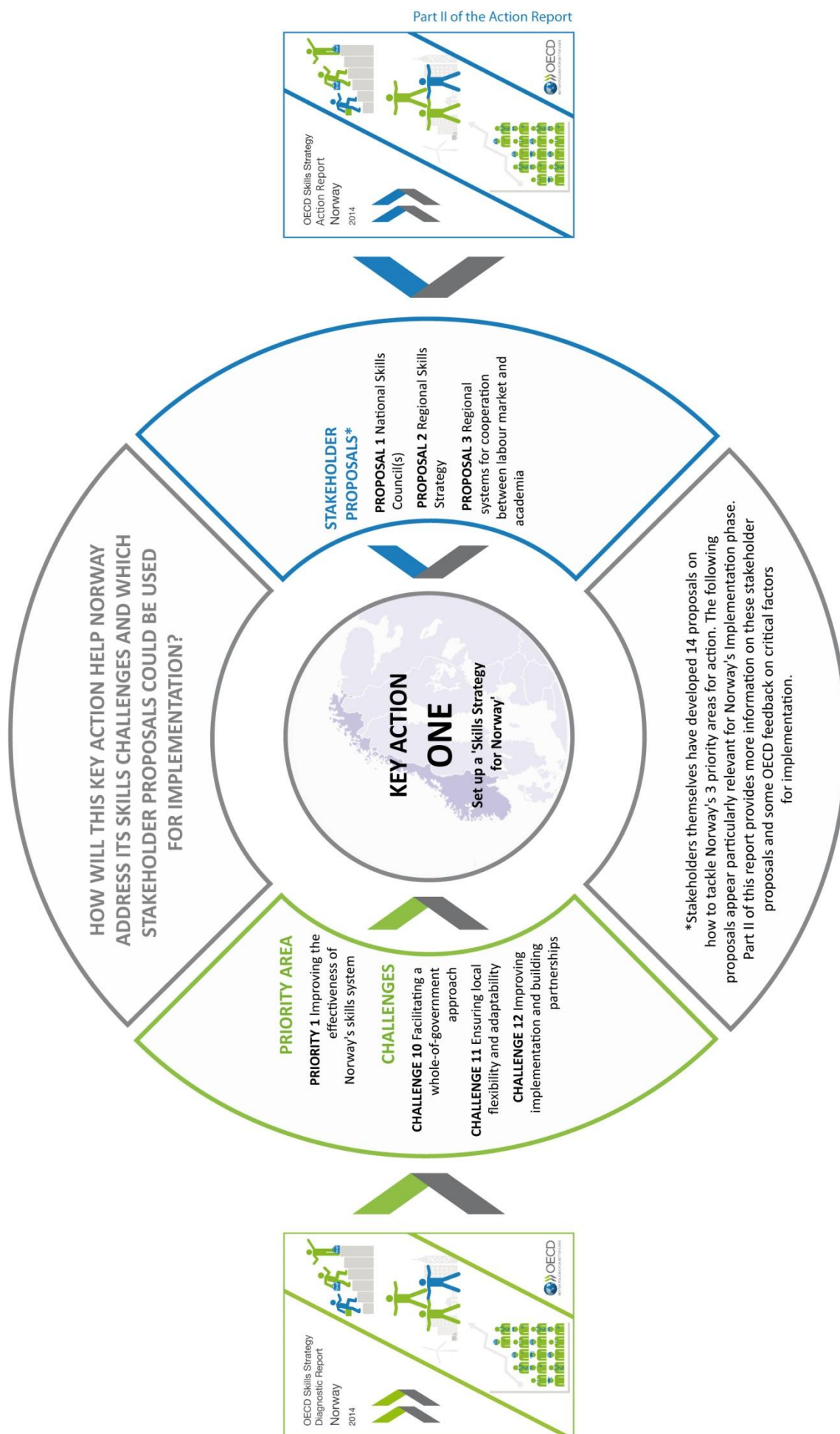
Develop high **quality** standards of career guidance. Make sure counsellors have relevant skills and tools to provide user-friendly up-to-date information on realistic job profiles, regional and national employment opportunities, including current and expected skills shortages, and skills development pathways. Pay stronger attention to the needs of the target groups described above to provide targeted services.

### *V. Strengthen incentives for people to move into shortage occupations:*

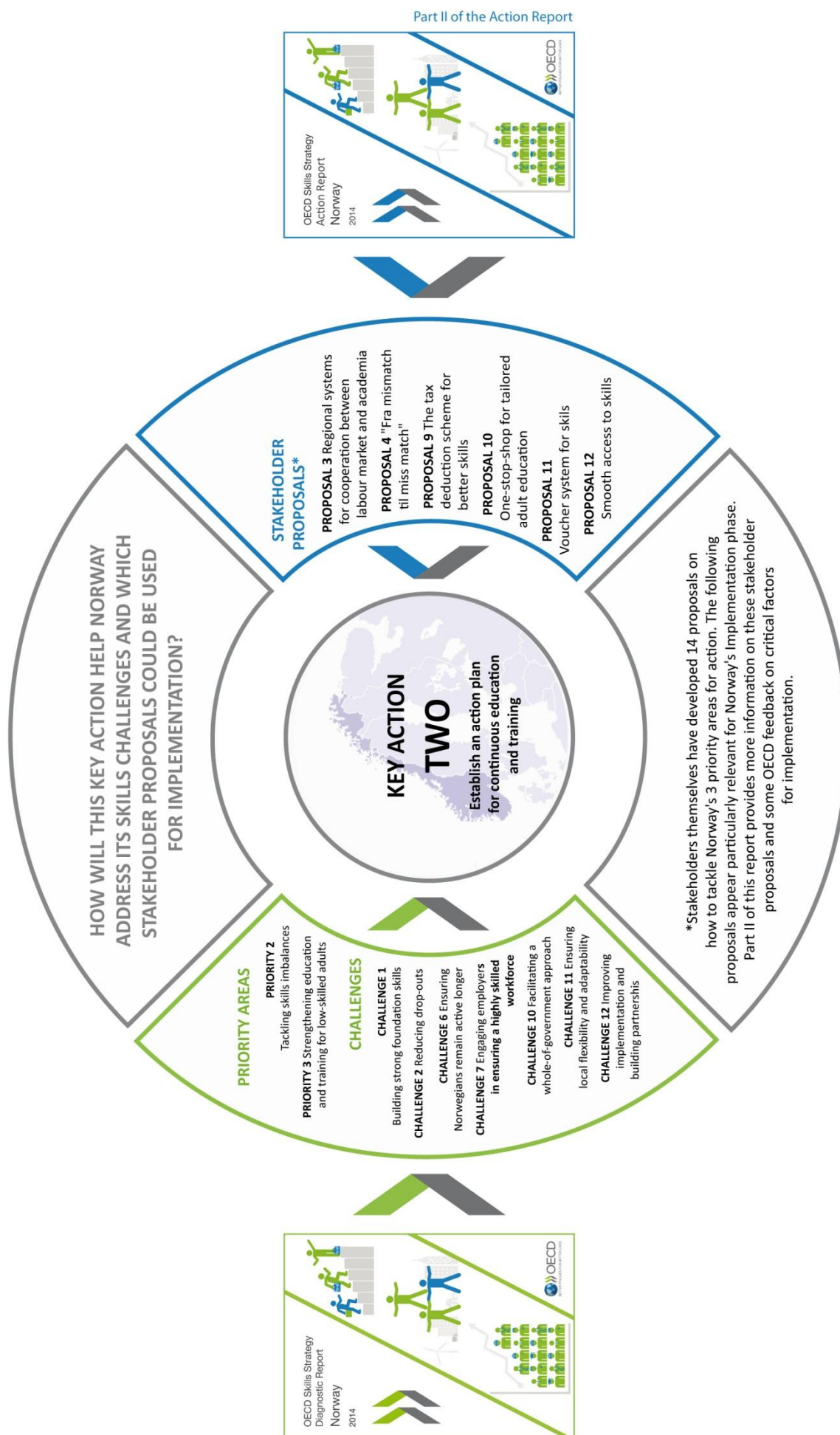
In the Norwegian labour market, characterised by high employment participation and a flat wage structure, the **financial and non-financial incentives** for choosing to enter shortage occupations can be low, especially if working conditions appear unattractive. This may be the case in areas such as health and elderly care that face increasing unmet demand.

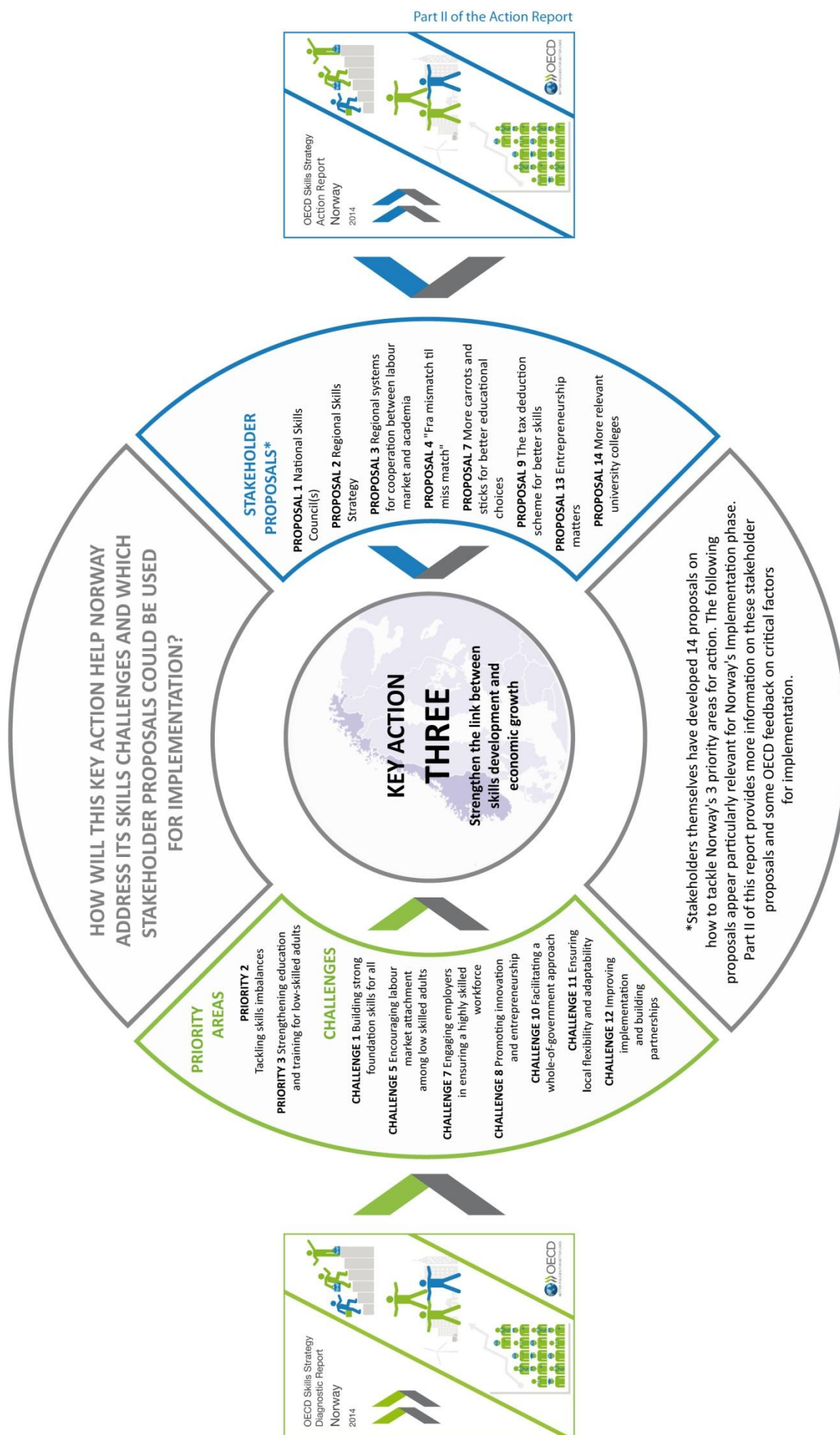
Career guidance alone cannot overcome these weak incentives. Therefore, the only way to tackle this problem, apart from intensified recruitment of migrants, is to raise the incentives to pursue relevant occupational pathways. Strengthen financial and non-financial incentives, such as more attractive working conditions in shortage occupations, differentiated loan, grant and fee systems to encourage people to choose certain occupational fields (see *Actions 2.13, 2.18*).



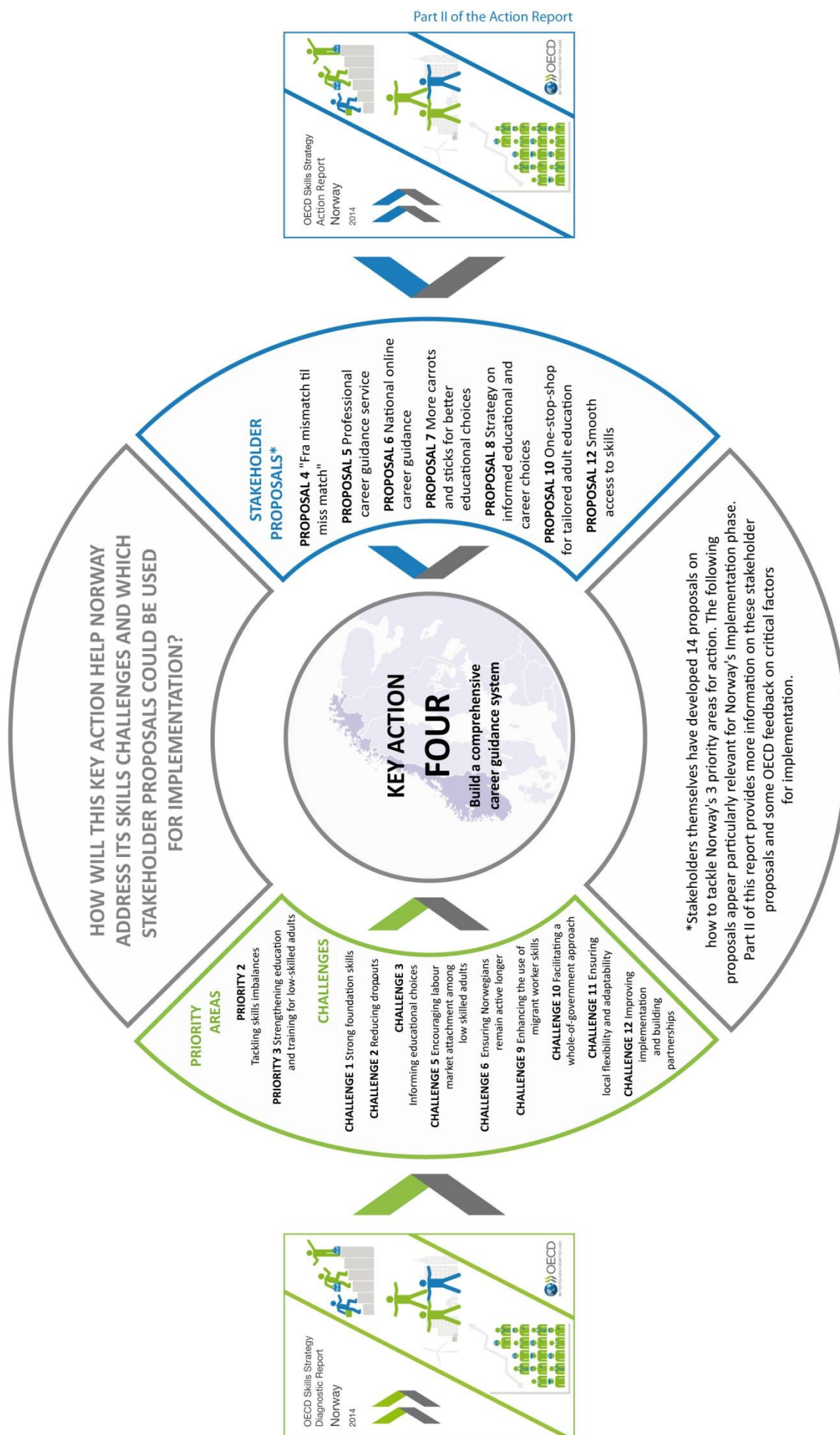




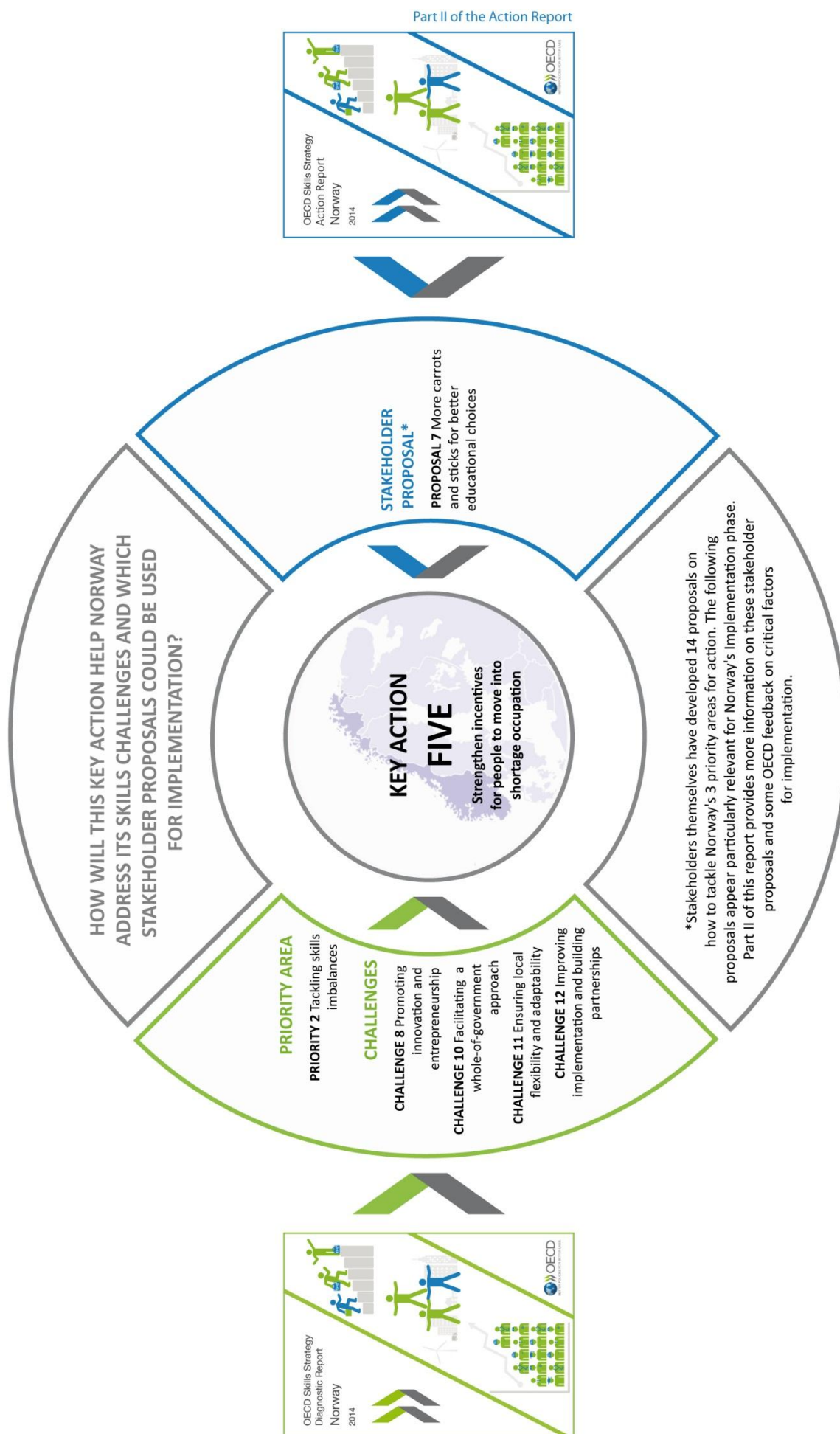




Part II of the Action Report







# PART I

## MOVING FROM DIAGNOSIS TO ACTION: ADDRESSING NORWAY'S PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

## PRIORITY I. IMPROVING SKILLS SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS

### Why is this important?

*“Success in tackling these skills challenges will boost performance within each of the pillars – as well as across the pillars” (DR, p. 14).*

Effective implementation of skills policies at national and regional levels depends on a governance structure that enhances policy coherence and provides strong co-ordination mechanisms for implementation across the three pillars of developing, activating and using skills.

### How can Norway effectively strengthen its skills system to deliver better skills outcomes?

An effective “skills governance” structure cannot be created overnight and requires strong commitment over time, sound mechanisms for implementation and regular political oversight while ensuring flexibility at the regional and local level.

### Norway should build on work underway

When improving its skills system, Norway should build on existing co-ordination platforms, such as tripartite partnerships, and partnership projects on local levels while reviewing and improving the effectiveness of these mechanisms. Several relevant initiatives are already underway in Norway, including

- The Productivity Commission
- Forthcoming White Paper on Lifelong Learning and Exclusion to develop coordinated and cross-sectoral policies (Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion)
- A new set of national expectations to regional and local planning, under the Planning and Building Act

**Existing initiatives** should be reviewed to ensure coherence and identify any gaps. The results should be incorporated into a coherent approach to a “Skills Strategy for Norway” (recommendation 1.1).

### What did the diagnostic phase reveal about the effectiveness of Norway’s skills system?

The following challenges were identified during the *diagnostic phase*:



#### Challenge 10. Facilitating a whole-of government approach to skills:

- Barriers to effective horizontal cooperation include a lack of mechanisms to incentivize and set up cross-sectoral projects, including a management culture that rewards specialists.
- Barriers to effective vertical cooperation include overlapping responsibilities of different agencies for services like education, employment and migrant integration that do not correspond with county constituencies.

#### Challenge 11. Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability for nationally designed policies:

- Norway’s geographic diversity is reflected in the unique skills profiles and needs of its 19 counties and 428 municipalities.
- Subnational authorities require adequate information, strong professional capacities and resources to balance the twin requirements of local autonomy and accountability for results.

#### Challenge 12. Building partnerships at the local and national level to improve implementation:

- Broad-based partnerships, which develop shared goals while mobilising the respective expertise and experience of each partner, are most likely to develop innovative approaches to addressing Norway’s emerging skills challenges.
- Norway could better use partnerships beyond current tripartite structures and improve incentives and frameworks for departments, education institutions and employers to cooperate on local and national levels.

**Need more information? Read the [Diagnostic Report \(DR\)](#), pp. 133-154!**

## What should the government do?

### ***Set up a Skills Strategy for Norway***

- 1.1 Set up a “Skills Strategy for Norway” building on the 12 challenges identified in the Diagnostic Report Norway. Start with an action plan to address the three Priority Areas addressed here and set up a timeline to tackle the remaining short-and long-term challenges. Set clear goals, targets and indicators as well as a coherent financing approach to implement the strategy (see 1.5).
- 1.2 Develop an appropriate public management approach to steer development and implementation of the “Skills Strategy for Norway”. Set up a “Skills Steering Group” to regularly share updates on progress under the Skills Strategy. Consider inviting stakeholders and agencies, as relevant.  
To further strengthen cooperation on the working level, consider maintaining the inter-ministerial project group, which was set up to manage this project. Consider establishing a “Skills Dashboard” with key indicators for policy makers to chart progress.
- 1.3 Identify clear responsibilities at national and local levels to avoid inefficiency due to unclear or overlapping responsibility structures. Consider developing a “Skills Delivery Map” charting sectoral and geographic responsibilities for policy design and implementation at national and subnational levels.

### ***Strengthen governance by building a ‘whole-of-government’ approach and effective cooperation at national and local levels***

- 1.4 Ensure coherence in designing skills policies and programmes at the national level to maximise impact. Require ministries to clearly identify how new skills initiatives will interact with existing policies and other government projects responsible for related aspects of Norway’s future economic and social development, such as the Productivity Commission. Consider embedding this as a requirement for parliamentary reporting on progress under the “Skills Strategy for Norway” (see 1.1 and 1.13).
- 1.5 Ensure effective use of public and private resources. As part of the “Skills Strategy for Norway”, develop a whole-of-government financing strategy to develop a coherent approach on how and where to invest public money and how to leverage private investments most effectively.

- 1.6 Develop appropriate budgeting procedures within the existing fiscal budgeting process to support projects that involve different ministries and other public entities and to account for the public resources used and the outcomes obtained.
- 1.7 Establish a whole-of-government approach to subnational levels and ensure local flexibility and adaptability in strategies and implementation of nationally designed policies. Consider using the “Skills Delivery Map” (1.3) to clarify and coordinate sectoral goals and measures.

### ***Improve the impact of policies by further leveraging stakeholder engagement***

- 1.8 Set up effective mechanisms to involve stakeholders at the national and local level to use their input and expertise when designing and implementing skills policies and to leverage their engagement beyond current tripartite structures. Consider setting up an advisory body that is regularly consulted on the progress under the “Skills Strategy for Norway”, involving social partners and other stakeholders as relevant.

### ***Ensure flexible policy implementation at regional and local levels***

- 1.9 Develop and use common clear and meaningful targets and indicators to monitor progress on outcomes at the regional and local levels while ensuring flexibility in programme adjustment and implementation approaches.
- 1.10 Encourage dissemination of good practice and peer-learning between regions and municipalities.
- 1.11 Build capacity for effective skills policy implementation at the county and municipal level through targeted support and training for public officials responsible for coordinating front-line service delivery in the fields of education, training, career guidance and employment.

### ***Strengthen evaluation and accountability***

- 1.12 Incorporate evaluation requirements into new programme design from the outset. Evaluate ongoing policies and pilots to decide which policies, programmes and pilots to expand, adjust or shut down.
- 1.13 Introduce regular reporting requirements for public resources invested in skills policies. Consider embedding regular parliamentary reporting requirements on the progress achieved under the “Skills Strategy for Norway”.

- 1.14 Provide public sector managers with targeted training and expert support in using assessment and evaluation techniques, such as randomized control trials.

### What should stakeholders do?

#### *All stakeholders can take steps to:*

- 1.15 Raise awareness of the importance of investing in skills development, activation and use for people's social and economic wellbeing, an inclusive society and Norway's future economic development.
- 1.16 Forge strong partnerships with other stakeholders as well as public authorities at the national, regional and local level to tackle Norway's skills challenges.
- 1.17 Participate actively and constructively in establishing effective arenas for public and private sector actors to agree upon shared goals and coordinate actions (e.g. by establishing strategies and platforms for national and regional skills partnerships, see 1.8).

### What actions have stakeholders proposed?

**Stakeholder proposals for action** focussed on how to improve existing partnerships (see proposals 3 and 4 below) and how to build a new strategic cooperation platform (proposal 1 below) for policy advice and stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholders did not address the key question of how to set up an effective whole-of-government approach at the national level. Yet this would appear to be an important precondition for establishing effective regional strategies or action plans (proposal 2).

- **National Skills Councils (Proposal 1)**  
To create a common understanding of the problems and actions at hand and to create a platform for employers to communicate their skills needs.
- **Regional skills strategies (Proposal 2)**  
To reduce skills mismatch at the regional level.
- **Strengthen regional systems for cooperation between labour market and academia (Proposal 3)**  
To identify skills mismatches at the local/regional levels and seek systematic work to close these gaps.

- **"Fra mismatch til Miss Match" – More education relevant to working life (Proposal 4)**

To establish a system that provides a closer and more systematic connection between all levels of education and working life.



### What design challenges did stakeholders address?

Stakeholders invited to the OECD Skills Action Workshop (1-2 April 2014) in Oslo were asked to design actions to make measurable progress in the following areas, among others:

1. Do national-level policies and programmes limit the ability of local actors to cooperate effectively? If so, how could these constraints be identified and mitigated?
2. How can we build more effective cooperation and partnerships between:
  - a. Social partners/individual employers and education and training providers?
  - b. NAV and education and training providers?
  - c. Innovation Norway, NAV and education providers at the national and regional level?
  - d. Any other combination of public and private actors that you think need to cooperate?



## What can Norway learn from other countries?



This selection illustrates concrete examples on how other countries have tackled similar challenges in their own contexts. They may provide some innovative ideas for Norway to consider when setting up its own action plans (see Annex 2 for more details).

## PRIORITY II. TACKLING SKILLS IMBALANCES

### Why is this important?

Achieving the right skills mix and making sure that these skills are used effectively will underpin Norway's capacity to innovate and to achieve more economic diversification. Emerging skills shortages and skills mismatch on the job risk becoming a barrier to economic growth in Norway.

### How can Norway generate an optimal skills mix through a better match in the education system and greater employer engagement in the skills system?

Tackling skills imbalances (skills shortages and skills mismatch) in Norway requires working towards more relevant skills supply and ensuring effective use of skills in the economy. Norway needs to strengthen the links between skills demand and skills development from childhood through to adult education, for example by setting up tailored career guidance and effective partnerships between education institutions and employers. In addition, Norway needs to strengthen entrepreneurship to expand the opportunities for economic diversification.

### Norway should build on work underway

Several relevant initiatives are already underway in Norway, including:

- A new cluster initiative administered by the Norwegian Research Council (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries)
- A new cluster scheme to establish knowledge linkages at local level (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation)
- Revisions of the supply structure in vocational education and training and higher education (Ministry of Education and Research)
- A project on Future Skills Needs to establish a system for analysis, dialogue and dissemination (Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with other ministries)
- A disability benefits reform (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs)
- Several projects to promote entrepreneurship under the responsibility of several ministries.

**Existing initiatives** should be reviewed to ascertain potential overlaps, overall coherence and to identify any gaps. The results should be incorporated into a coherent approach to a "Skills Strategy for Norway" (recommendation 1.1).

### What did the diagnostic phase reveal about skills imbalances in Norway?

The following challenges were identified during the *diagnostic phase*:



#### Challenge 3. Informing educational choices:

- Inadequate information about career opportunities and skills development pathways impairs people's capacity to adapt to labour market signals (DR, p. 53).
- There are concerns that students are not aspiring to develop the skills that are in strong demand. Just 34% of students aspire to a science related career at age 15 (compared to > 40% in the US and Canada).
- Wages in Norway do not strongly reflect relative scarcity (DR, p. 59).

#### Challenge 7. Engaging employers:

- Shortages are mainly a concern in specific sectors, such as health care and care giving, engineering and information technology (DR, p. 19).
- Many employers in Norway report struggling to meet their recruitments needs (DR, p. 101).
- To remain competitive employers must invest in the skills of their workforce (DR, p. 104).
- The qualifications of many workers are not matched to the requirements of their jobs (DR, p. 9).

#### Challenge 8. Innovation and entrepreneurship:

- Successful entrepreneurs require a range of skills, both generic and job-specific, yet many Norwegians feel they lack the skills to start a business (DR, p. 115).
- Unlocking entrepreneurial and innovative potential requires cooperation among a broad range of stakeholders (DR, p. 116).

#### Challenge 11. Local flexibility and adaptability:

- There is a strong need for regionally adjusted solutions as regions tend to be either in a high- or in a low skills equilibrium with completely different economic needs (DR, p. 145).

**Need more information? Read the [Diagnostic Report](#)!**

## What should the government do?

### ***Provide relevant information and guidance to individuals, stakeholders and policy makers***

- 2.1 Strengthen the evidence-base on current and projected skills imbalances across occupations and regions. Make sure that this information is used by policy makers, public officials and heads of agencies and institutes at different administrative levels.
- 2.2 Establish a high-quality lifelong career guidance system to provide youth and adults with personalised advice on labour market opportunities and education and training options. Apply a whole-of-government approach to setting up a lifelong career guidance system, involving all relevant institutions, including all levels of education, already existing career centres, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning (Vox), among others. Expand guidance services to people who currently lack good access, such as employees, higher education students, low-skilled adults, people with migrant background, and people who are in different transition phases between jobs, education and working life. Expand access to career guidance across all regions. Consider establishing a central national online platform for career guidance and information.
- 2.3 Ensure high quality standards within the lifelong career guidance system. Make sure counsellors have relevant skills and tools to provide user-friendly up-to-date information on realistic job profiles, regional and national employment opportunities, including current and expected skills shortages, and skills development pathways. Pay stronger attention to the needs of the target groups described in 2.2.
- 2.4 Consider encouraging education institutions to publish information on employment outcomes of graduates by field of study to improve market signalling on the performance of institutions.

### ***Make sure skills development is relevant and responsive to economic and social demand***

- 2.5 Redirect public investment towards skills development that meets labour market demand for strong foundation skills, technical skills and 'soft' skills across the lifecycle.
- 2.6 Set up a national strategy for continuous education and training to provide for effective and flexible options for all people, irrespective of their labour market status, to upgrade their skills throughout life, involving formal and non-formal

continuous education and training.

Review existing policies and programmes, such as the Basic Competence in Working Life (BKA) programme, to identify gaps in access and skills development.

Strengthen the responsiveness of the continuous education and training system to economic and social demand beyond basic skills and ensure flexible top-up education, particularly where there are skills shortages.

Ensure successful implementation at the regional level by providing clear policy signals to regions as well as effective regional flexibility for implementation.

- 2.7 In the context of a national strategy for continuous and further education (2.6) incentivize higher education institutions to expand targeted and flexible adult education and training options that are designed in close collaboration with employers.
- 2.8 Strengthen incentives to encourage employers' investments in skills development and incentives for education and training institutions and employers to build partnerships to improve the labour market relevance of skills development. Consider introducing financial incentives for higher education institutions to cooperate with employers and other external partner institutions in the area of education and skills development. Review existing incentives for collaboration in the area of research and consider strengthening these incentives as well. Encourage and consider requiring students to gain study-relevant work experience during their programmes.
- 2.9 Provide a wide range of education and training opportunities that respond to various social and economic needs, from building excellence in research to preparing students for a fast-changing labour market.
- 2.10 Ensure effective signalling about the skills needed for social and economic development and the responsiveness of the system and its institutions at all levels, in particular vocational education and training, higher education and adult education and training.
- 2.11 Boost and improve skills development in areas Norway considers to be of strategic importance for economic and social development, such as STEM and entrepreneurship (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Promote partnerships with employers to leverage the economic and social benefits when improving skills development in these areas. Ensure implementation of the National Strategy on Entrepreneurship in Higher Education and

consider developing similar strategies for other educational levels.

- 2.12 Make sure that teachers themselves have the right skills to foster high quality skills development among their students.

### **Strengthen steering mechanisms**

- 2.13 Strengthen incentives for people to choose shortage occupations. Consider strengthening incentives provided through differentiated loan, grant and fee systems to encourage students to choose particular fields of study. Consider ensuring better working environments in highly challenging and therefore often less attractive areas, such as health and elderly care.
- 2.14 Avoid unnecessary outflow of skills through early retirement and disability schemes by changing incentive structures, preventing sickness, and aligning the rules for early retirement in the public sector with those in the private sector (see *OECD Economic Survey of Norway, 2014*).
- 2.15 Foster the internationalisation of Norway's skills system to expand and improve Norway's potential skills pool. Attract and retain more international students and immigrants, especially in shortage areas that are most difficult to fill from the domestic skills pool. Streamline procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications and provide tailored language training and 'top-up' education and training to accelerate skilled migrants' labour market entry. Intensify strategic cooperation with partner countries to enhance mobility and exchange of people at all levels of lifelong learning.

## **What should stakeholders do?**

### **Make better use of information on skills imbalances**

*Individual employers, social partners and Statistics Norway can take steps to:*

- 2.16 Collaborate on effective ways to provide information on occupational and sectoral skills imbalances to government and social partners. Particular emphasis should be placed on collecting information on skills imbalances that are not easily measured using standard labour market indicators, such as skill shortages in specific regions or with regard to specific skills sets.

*Individual employers and social partners are advised to:*

- 2.17 Develop tools and practices for incorporating information on current and projected skills

imbalances into business strategies and HR management. Use information on current and projected skills imbalances to inform tripartite discussions.

### **Introduce measures to tackle skills mismatch**

*Individual employers and social partners are advised to:*

- 2.18 Consider stronger wage signals to encourage individuals to choose particular occupations and fields of study.
- 2.19 Engage in targeted up-skilling of workers, especially for those in need of additional skills to be productively employed and in sectors facing skill shortages or fast-changing skills requirements. Offer support for career development and assess the effectiveness of up-skilling programmes. Redirect funding towards approaches that have had the greatest measurable impact.
- 2.20 Promote good working conditions and innovative workplaces to make effective use of employees' skills. Create appropriate working environments for older employees that enable people to stay productive until retirement.

## **What actions have stakeholders proposed?**

**Stakeholder proposals for action** focussed on how to improve career guidance (see proposals 5, 6 and 8 below) and how to link skills development more closely with economic demand, mainly by engaging employers in lifelong learning (see proposals 1, 4, 9 and 14 below). Some stakeholders also stressed the importance of entrepreneurship skills (see proposal 13) and better incentives for people to choose shortage occupations (see proposal 7 below).

- **National skills council(s) (Proposal 1)**  
To build a common understanding of the skills problems to hand and provide a platform for employers to communicate their skills needs.
- **"Fra Mismatch til Misss Match" – Education with working life relevance (Proposal 4)**  
To establish a system that provides a closer and more systematic connection between all levels of education and working life.
- **Improved and extended professional career guidance services (Proposal 5)**  
To make career guidance services available for all groups, improve the quality, create skills scenarios/foresights and professionalise career guidance.

- **National online career guidance: “NETTVEILEDNING” (Proposal 6)**  
To set up an easily accessible and user-friendly net based counselling service that will contribute to reducing dropout and wrong decision making, from primary school to higher education, and also be of help for adults who want to take up education and/or choose a new career path.
- **More carrots and sticks for better educational choices (Proposal 7)**  
To implement stricter scaling, better guidance and more alignment of educational choices with the needs of employers and society.
- **Develop a strategy on informed educational and career choices (Proposal 8)**  
To reduce mismatches and encourage more qualified education and career choices. Fewer re-selections, higher completion rate in educational programmes, increased vocational participation.
- **The tax deduction scheme for better skills (Proposal 9)**  
To increase competitiveness by upgrading workforce skills in the private sector.
- **Entrepreneurship matters (Proposal 13)**  
To integrate entrepreneurship education in all higher education study programmes and to strengthen pedagogy in entrepreneurship teaching.
- **Getting Norwegian University Colleges in line with real life (Proposal 14)**  
To increase the relevance of University Colleges for regional labour markets, raise the availability of relevant skills in regions and reduce recruitment challenges in the private sector.



### What design challenges did stakeholders address?

Stakeholders were invited to the OECD Skills Action Workshop (1-2 April 2014) in Oslo and asked to design actions to make measurable progress in the following areas, among others:

1. How can we create a better match between skills demand and the educational and employment choices of individuals?
2. How can we ensure investment in employees' skills and create innovation-oriented workplaces that encourage lifelong learning – both formal and work-based?
3. How can different stakeholders make a greater contribution to skills policy design and implementation at the local, regional and national level?
4. How can we develop more effective and coordinated policies for entrepreneurship, innovation and skills that respond to national and regional skills mismatches?



## What can Norway learn from other countries?



This selection illustrates concrete examples on how other countries have tackled similar challenges in their own contexts. They may provide some innovative ideas for Norway to consider when setting up its own action plans (see Annex 2 for more details).

## PRIORITY III. STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR LOW-SKILLED ADULTS

### Why is this important?

*“Whilst we cannot predict exactly how skills needs will change, we know that they will. So it is important that a country’s skills system – and the people within it – maximise their capacity to be responsive (...).”*  
(Diagnostic Report, p. 20).

Sustained growth and social cohesion depend on equitable opportunities for people to participate in skills development and to use their skills effectively. Without a relevant mix of strong foundation skills, specific technical skills and non-cognitive skills people are unable to participate successfully in rapidly evolving workplaces and labour markets – nor contribute to building strong communities.

### How can Norway effectively include low-skilled, disadvantaged youth and adults in education and training as a way to better integrate them in working life?

To tackle this complex challenge, the state needs to set the right framework to steer action of individuals, social partners and education providers, among others. Individuals themselves need to be aware and motivated to learn. Public and private institutions must become “learning workplaces” engaging in skills development of their employees. For those who are not in employment or whose employers cannot provide the necessary education and training alone, other adult education providers need to step in, preferably in cooperation with employers. In addition, skills development for adults must build upon the recognition of formally or informally acquired skills.

### Norway should build on work underway

Norway already offers a wide range of adult education and training options, such as the basic skills programme BKA, second chance education and language training for migrants. Additional initiatives are underway, including work on a White Paper on Lifelong Learning (coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research) and a White Paper on Work (coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs).

**Existing initiatives** should be reviewed to ascertain potential overlaps, overall coherence and to identify any gaps.

### What did the diagnostic phase reveal about education and training for low-skilled adults

The following challenges were identified during the *diagnostic phase*:



#### Challenges 1 and 2. Strong foundation skills for all and reducing drop-out:

- In particular, young drop-outs, people on disability benefits and people with migrant backgrounds have not been reached and targeted effectively by current adult education and training policies. Low-skilled adults are, among others :
  - 400 000 adults with low foundation skills (8% of the population) (DR, p. 31)
  - 108 000 youth aged 16 – 24 years (2011), who had not completed upper secondary education. Over 40 000 of these were also not working (NEETS)
  - 550 000 adults with max. lower secondary education
  - 6 000 adults participate in primary education for adults p.a., 90% with migrant background
  - 20 000 adults participate in upper secondary education p.a., 25% with migrant background. 80% take vocational courses
  - 18 000 p.a. in vocational training organised by NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration)
  - 8 000 p.a. in basic skills training (BKA-programme)
  - 37 000 immigrants p.a. receive training in Norwegian language and social studies.

#### Challenge 3: Informing educational choices:

- All adults need better information (DR, p. 61).

#### Challenge 7: Engaging employers:

- Employers benefit from investments in skills development (DR, p. 104).

#### Challenge 10: Whole-of-government approach:

- Policies focus on improving foundation skills and providing second chances to primary and secondary education, often without a strong focus on improving employability
- Responsibilities are fragmented between ministries and sectors

#### Challenge 11: Local flexibility and adaptability:

- Regions have unequal demand for and access to skilled labour as well as different conditions to supply relevant adult education and training.

**Need more information? Read the [Diagnostic Report](#)!**

## What should the government do?

### ***Generate and use better information on low-skilled adults and the barriers they face***

- 3.1 Identify the diverse profiles of low-skilled adults as well as the financial and non-financial barriers facing specific target groups, such as drop-outs and young adults, migrants, people with disabilities and older people.
- 3.2 Set up a coherent quality assurance framework to monitor implementation of adult education and training policies. Continuously monitor progress, including on the implementation of a common action plan (see 3.5) and adjust policies to improve their impact.

### ***Target policy and delivery to respond to the specific needs of low-skilled adults***

- 3.3 Review responsibilities for adult education and training in Norway and establish a whole-of-government approach with shared policy goals and clear mechanisms for co-ordination.
- 3.4 Review the effectiveness and efficiency of existing adult education and training programmes and their impact on the employability of target groups. Identify gaps in terms of access and needs to improve quality. Also review the access points, outreach activities and eligibility requirements for education and training programmes to identify the gaps or barriers that may exist to effectively reach all target groups.
- 3.5 Establish an action plan to improve education and training for low-skilled adults to improve people's employability. Define clear target groups (based on 3.1) and ensure that action addresses their individual needs in a tailored way.  
Ensure target groups have access to education and training, whether they are in employment, unemployed or out of the labour force. Make sure this action plan is coordinated with Norway's approach to tackling skills imbalances and a national strategy on continuous and further education (see action 2.6).
- 3.6 To design strong mechanisms for implementation, make sure that the action plan (3.5) takes into account the costs and benefits of all actors involved in the provision of adult education and training for low-skilled people, including the individuals themselves, the state, county administrations, municipalities, employers and education providers.  
Put in place effective rules, financing mechanisms and incentives so that individuals successfully

complete education and training and institutions successfully engage in the provision of programmes.

- 3.7 Ensure strong foundation skills for all young people by improving second chance education for young drop-outs.
- 3.8 Strengthen partnerships between social partners, individual employers, and education and training providers to expand opportunities for labour market integration and work-based training for low-skilled adults. Consider expanding tripartite funding approaches beyond the current BKA programme to reach more low-skilled adults.
- 3.9 Provide tailored information to low-skilled adults on available education and training programmes as part of a comprehensive career guidance strategy (see actions 2.1-2.4).

### ***Strengthen steering mechanisms***

- 3.10 Strengthen financial and non-financial incentives to encourage employers' investments in the skills of low-skilled employees. Consider establishing audits to boost public recognition for employers who provide incentives and opportunities for low-skilled employees to engage in formal and non-formal skills development (e.g. through an annual award).
- 3.11 See action 2.13 and action 2.14 with a view to low-skilled adults.

## What should stakeholders do?

### ***Raise awareness of the benefits of investing in low-skilled adults***

- 3.12 ***Trade unions and employers can take steps to:***  
Ensure union representatives and HR professionals are aware of the benefits of education and training for low-skilled employees and ensure they are equipped to advise employees about the opportunities on offer.
- 3.13 ***Social partners can take steps to:***  
Collect and disseminate good practice examples of how employers have invested in the skills of both high and low-skilled employees and gained benefits for their business.

### ***Expand opportunities and take-up among low-skilled adults***

- 3.14 ***Social partners can take steps to:***  
Make skills development of low-skilled employees, and the skills investments of employers, a priority during tripartite discussions.



### 3.15 **Employers can take steps to:**

Actively engage in skills development targeting all employees, including low-skilled adults. Promote your approaches actively as a way of boosting the employer brand recognition and attractiveness of your organisation.

### 3.16 **Social partners or individual employers can take steps to:**

Consider establishing social partner- or employer financed skills funds to leverage employer investment in skills development of all employees. Ensure that a proportion of the fund is awarded to initiatives that address the specific education and training needs of low-skilled employees.

### 3.17 **Education and training providers and civil society organisations can take steps to:**

Boost outreach efforts towards disadvantaged and low-skilled adults outside the workforce by liaising with civil society organisations serving specific target groups to inform and encourage eligible candidates to take advantage of the education and training opportunities on offer.

## What actions have stakeholders proposed?

**Stakeholder proposals for action** focussed on how to reach low-skilled adults more effectively with tailored education and training programmes (see proposals 10 and 12 below) and effective financing arrangements (see proposal 11 below).

Stakeholders did not address key questions, such as how to improve the governance of the adult education and training system, how to strengthen the engagement of employers, and how to ensure that education and training offers are of high quality and improve the employability of participants.

- **One-stop-shop for tailored adult education (Proposal 10)**

To ensure access to adult education or training that is suited to the actual needs of low-skilled people and that should qualify for higher education or employment.

- **Voucher system for skills (Proposal 11)**

To create an alternative way to help low-skilled adults who have not been able to take full advantage of the initial education system to obtain good basic skills.

- **Smooth access to skills (Proposal 12)**

To reduce barriers to education for adults with low skills and limited previous training. This applies to barriers associated with financing, legislation and rights. Adapt adult education and training to individual needs and adapt educational provision to the target group.



### What design challenges did stakeholders address?

Stakeholders were invited to the OECD Skills Action Workshop (1-2 April 2014) in Oslo and asked to design actions to make measurable progress in the following areas, among others:

1. How can we reduce drop-outs from initial education and provide low-skilled youth with effective education, training and apprenticeships?
2. How can we design adult education and training programmes that offer tailored solutions for people with low skills and boost their employability?
3. How can we use and build immigrants' skills effectively while promoting their labour market participation?
4. How could we ensure that older workers, long-term unemployed, and people with health issues are better integrated into lifelong learning?

## What can Norway learn from other countries?



This selection illustrates concrete examples on how other countries have tackled similar challenges in their own contexts. They may provide some innovative ideas for Norway to consider when setting up its own action plans (see Annex 2 for more details).

\* These programmes do not exclusively target low-skilled people. However, they include relevant elements that Norway could adapt to its own context when targeting low-skilled adults.

# PART II

## WHAT ACTIONS HAVE STAKEHOLDERS PROPOSED?

### How have these proposals for action been generated?

This process was only possible thanks to the long term engagement of a cross-ministerial Norwegian project team and a broad group of Norwegian stakeholders. Over **60 organisations operating at the national and county levels** were involved in the course of the project, including government agencies, county administrations, civil society organisations, education institutions, and social partners, among others (see Annex 1 for a complete list).

The proposals set out below were generated as part of the *action phase* of the project which was conducted in the first half of 2014 and involved stakeholders in generating innovative approaches and solutions to specific skills challenges. Taken together, they represent a valuable contribution to the development and implementation of Norway's skills policies.

The *Skills Action Workshop*, held on 1 and 2 April 2014 in Oslo, was run as a *design workshop* where stakeholders worked in small groups to identify concrete actions to improve Norway's outcomes in its three Priority Areas:

1. Improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system
2. Tackling skills imbalances
3. Strengthening education and training for low-skilled adults.

### How could Norway use its stakeholder proposals for action?

The following stakeholder proposals, together with the priorities for action identified by the OECD and described in Part I, provide innovative input to the concrete design of Norway's skills policies and their actual implementation. Of equal importance are the 'intangible' assets generated during the project through inter-ministerial cooperation and the process of stakeholder engagement.

There are many ways to use these results in designing concrete plans for action and ensuring their effective implementation. Ideally, this process would continue to include all relevant skills actors in future steps.

### How to read the following overview?

The following section provides a one-page summary and commentary for each stakeholder proposal collected. The **blue part** of the overview summarises what stakeholders have proposed and the **grey part** provides a brief OECD commentary on each stakeholder proposal with a view to highlighting their potential contribution and outstanding issues for further refinement.

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	1. NATIONAL SKILLS COUNCIL(S)
	Why?	To create a common understanding of the problems and actions at hand and to create a platform for employers to communicate their skills needs.
	Who benefits?	Employers and individuals.
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Skills Council(s) should collect data on skills needs for knowledge based decision making, provide analysis, conduct studies and give recommendations to national authorities on a) the education system and b) the labour market</li> <li>Employers, authorities and education institutions are responsive to the recommendations of the National Skills Councils.</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	Establish a High-Level Joint Tripartite Committee to establish a Skills Council, including structure, mandate and financing; building on existing regional partnerships.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Areas 1 (Improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system) and 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 7 (Engaging employers in ensuring a highly skilled workforce), Challenge 10 (Facilitating a whole-of-government approach to skills), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships). In addition, depending on the thematic focus of the Skills Council, it could become a tool to address all of Norway's skills challenges.
	Quick wins?	This proposal addresses the need for a permanent co-ordination forum for public and private stakeholders, which allows all actors to understand the needs of the demand side. Experience with national skills councils in other countries, such as Australia and the United Kingdom, shows that they can be highly effective in leveraging employer engagement.
	Long-term results?	In the long-run, a national skills council has a high potential to contribute to developing a common understanding among the main public and private stakeholders, and to engage stakeholders in new collaborative initiatives.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What responsibilities and mandate should the council have?</li> <li>Who should participate in the council? How can you involve all relevant stakeholders apart from the social partners while still ensuring that the council can work efficiently? How can you involve SMEs effectively?</li> <li>How should the council/s be structured? If you set up several councils, how will you ensure coherence of their work? How will you allow for a focus on regional and sectoral issues?</li> <li>What capacity, including analytical support, tools and data will the council need?</li> <li>Who should finance the council? Will employers be engaged if they are not involved in the financing?</li> <li>How exactly would the council build on, or feed into, existing institutional partnership arrangements, including existing tripartite arrangements?</li> <li>How could employers transmit their education and skills needs, as well as coordinate skills development amongst themselves and with other stakeholders?</li> <li>How will you monitor/evaluate whether this new set-up is working effectively?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	2. REGIONAL SKILLS STRATEGIES
	Why?	To reduce skills mismatch at the regional level.
	Who benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students/pupils who get vocational education corresponding to demand</li> <li>Employers who get better access to qualified manpower</li> </ul>
	What should the action look like?	<p>a) Central government advocates development of regional skills strategies</p> <p>b) Collaborative action among actors responsible for regional planning, industrial development, social partners, upper secondary education, labour market and higher education</p>
	Who should implement this?	<p>Initiative by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation with a leading role for county councils. The Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs would also involve their regional counterparts.</p> <p>The Planning and Building Act already instructs county councils to develop strategic planning documents every fourth year before the election of new county political bodies. Quality of implementation varies and should be improved. Need to involve: Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), Innovation Norway, social partners, universities.</p>
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 1 (Improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system), Challenge 10 (Facilitating a whole-of-government approach to skills), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability), and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships). In addition, depending on the thematic focus of the regional strategies, they could become a tool towards tackling all 12 Skills Challenges.
	Quick wins?	This proposal responds to the need for a strategic focus on skills adapted to local contexts. Regional skills strategies could be an important means to address this need and catalyse broad engagement of all relevant skills actors operating at the regional level.
	Long-term results?	In the long run, effective regional skills strategies can contribute towards maximising Norway's skills potential. They could leverage the specific characteristics and assets of each of Norway's regions to foster innovation and growth.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should regions be obliged to develop and implement a skills strategy?</li> <li>How to ensure coherence with goals and programmes set up in other regions and on the national level?</li> <li>How to coordinate this initiative with existing planning and strategy processes on the regional level? When you refer to the partially ineffective implementation of the Planning and Building Act, how do you want to improve implementation of this Act and how will this be relevant to the implementation of regional skills strategies?</li> <li>Who should finance the implementation of regional skills strategies?</li> <li>How should implementation be evaluated and by whom?</li> <li>How to make sure that students gain access to more relevant vocational education and training (see "Who benefits" above)? Would you require all regions to focus on vocational education and training within their regional skills strategies?</li> <li>How could regions effectively learn from each other's experiences with the design and implementation of regional skills strategies? Consider starting with one or two pilot regions and evaluate the process in these regions, so that the other regions can learn from this.</li> <li>How can you ensure that regions can learn and benefit from the experience of the national level in setting up a national skills strategy and in conducting an effective and inclusive process with stakeholders?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	<b>3. STRENGTHEN REGIONAL SYSTEMS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN LABOUR MARKET AND ACADEMIA</b>
	Why?	To identify skills mismatches on the local/regional levels and seek systematic work to close these gaps.
	Who benefits?	Employees, youth and adults, enterprises, education and R&D institutions, regional and national economy.
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted cooperation between labour market (private and public), education and R&amp;D-system</li> <li>• More relevant and easier access to locally delivered courses and studies</li> <li>• Education institutions provide relevant courses in rural areas when cooperating with enterprises</li> <li>• Increased number of persons succeeding in training courses and degrees, both employees with low proficiency levels and those with high academic skills</li> <li>• Coordinated effort between employers and schools to inform students' educational choices</li> <li>• Concrete steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a national system and “best practice” for regional skill development</li> <li>- Start with a pilot in some regions</li> <li>- Regional facilitators coordinate with employers and the education system (these facilitators can be e.g. Knowledgeparks, Studycenters, Business gardens or other skill actors that are already established throughout the country)</li> <li>- Regional facilitators should: 1. Identify the local labour market needs by having regular meetings with employers from different sectors; 2. Cooperate and have regular meetings with Universities and skill-suppliers and negotiate on behalf of the companies to get relevant studies and courses delivered locally; 3. Proactively recruit sufficient numbers of participants for local courses.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	The Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation in cooperation with counties, municipalities, higher education institutions, representatives from the labour market, Innovation Norway, SIVA, the Research Council, and others.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 1 (Improving the effectiveness of Norway's skills system), Challenge 7 (Engaging employers in ensuring a highly skilled workforce), Challenge 8 (Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships).
	Quick wins?	Clarifying responsibilities for co-ordination, for example by calling on existing regional facilitators, can contribute towards better cooperation between actors, such as employers and (higher) education institutions if well designed and implemented. However, the proposal entails several outstanding issues and risks, requiring substantial revision (see outstanding issues below).
	Long-term results?	Strengthening regional systems for cooperation can contribute to better functioning skills systems on the regional level, characterised by a better match between skills development and economic demand while building on more effective partnerships between all relevant regional actors.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If existing institutions are chosen to work as regional facilitators, there is a risk that these facilitators would not remain neutral in working towards the broader benefit of the regional skills system as a whole. Thus, there is a high risk that these facilitators would only engage in initiatives that further the interests of their own institutions. A risk that would be further compounded were they responsible for funding decisions.</li> <li>• Given the above, how could you facilitate regional co-ordination while ensuring an environment where all stakeholders can, and are, encouraged to engage effectively?</li> <li>• What criteria will be used to select the regional facilitators?</li> <li>• What should the roles and responsibilities of regional facilitators be? What incentives and sanctions will be needed to ensure they perform them satisfactorily?</li> <li>• What skills and tools would regional facilitators need?</li> <li>• Who should finance the regional facilitators and what co-financing mechanisms would be needed?</li> </ul>



STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	4. “FRA MISMATCH TIL MISS MATCH” - MORE EDUCATION RELEVANT TO WORKING LIFE
	Why?	To establish a system that provides a closer and more systematic connection between all levels of education and working life.
	Who benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers will have better access to people with relevant skills, more entrepreneurship and innovation</li> <li>• Teachers will be kept up-to-date on changes in working life</li> <li>• Students will receive more relevant education and training</li> </ul>
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System for “hospitering” and mobility/exchange</li> <li>• Claim for cooperation agreements between schools and local employment / business</li> <li>• Career guidance</li> <li>• More use of practice schemes in higher education (HE)</li> <li>• Incentives for increased cooperation in HE, incl. changes in the financing systems</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative to be taken by the Ministry of Education and Research in close collaboration with the other ministries</li> <li>• Facilitated through tripartite cooperation at national level</li> <li>• Regional and local level must establish committed partnership for implementation</li> <li>• Local binding cooperation/partnership based on a unified plan covering all types of education, services of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and working life</li> <li>• Focus: project-based learning from kindergarten throughout adult life, which will require merging several actors and plans (such as on career counselling)</li> </ul>
COMMENTS	Which of Norway’s 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 1 (Improving the effectiveness of Norway’s skills system), Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 7 (Engaging employers in ensuring a highly skilled workforce), Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Challenge 10 (Facilitating a whole-of-government approach to skills), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships).
	Quick wins?	This proposal consists of a package encompassing a broad set of policies. Individually, these could help build strong career guidance (to improve people’s knowledge of employment and education opportunities) and strengthen work-based learning (which can contribute to improving career transitions, and raise productivity and innovation in enterprises). However, it is not clear how these different elements of the proposal fit together.
	Long-term results?	Several actions could indeed be very relevant to improve the match between the supply of skills and the demand for skills, such as an effective lifelong career guidance system.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A unified plan and binding partnerships might not be appropriate tools to guarantee sufficient flexibility across all sectors. Rather than enforcing partnerships, how could you build the conditions for a responsive and resilient “skills ecosystem” based on strong financial and non-financial incentives which encourage diverse actors to engage in effective networks and partnerships?</li> <li>• How can you ensure that you tackle all relevant dimensions of skills shortages and mismatches in Norway? In addition to developing responses for the medium and long-term, how would this proposal address those skills shortages that are already urgent today?</li> <li>• What specific actions do you need to undertake in order to merge actors, align plans and change the financing of higher education? How do they fit together and what is their sequencing?</li> <li>• How can teachers gain a better understanding of skills needs? Are there any changes needed in the education and training of all teachers to make sure they have the right skills to provide career guidance in schools? In the context of improving the skills of career counsellors in general, including teachers, you might want to consider special educational programmes for career counsellors (offered in institutions of higher education or of vocational education and training) and special modules on career counselling as part of teacher education and training.</li> <li>• How will you monitor/ evaluate the outcomes of this policy package?</li> </ul>



STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	5. IMPROVED AND EXTENDED PROFESSIONAL CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES
	Why?	To make career guidance services available for all groups, improve the quality, create skills scenarios/foresights and professionalise career guidance.
	Who benefits?	Individuals, education institutions (all levels), private and public employers at the national and regional level, national economy
	What should the action look like?	<p>By 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the quality in career guidance services by establishing an education for career guidance professionals (Bachelor, Master and lifelong learning)</li> <li>Setting up an implementation plan, fact finding</li> </ul> <p>By 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the resources for career guidance in the educational system</li> <li>Establishing career centres that are available to all groups in all parts of the country</li> <li>Develop common career guidance services online</li> </ul> <p>By 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing education requirements for career guidance counsellors</li> <li>Developing skills scenarios/foresights at the national and regional level</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	Collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out), Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices), Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Challenge 10 (Facilitating a whole-of-Government approach) and Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability).
	Quick wins?	This proposal highlights the importance of career guidance to provide people with relevant information in career decision processes. Some of the proposed initiatives, such as improving education and training for career guidance counsellors and setting up a common online service for career guidance can be important quick wins to improve the quality of career guidance. However, for this proposal to achieve its objectives, more efforts will be needed to establish a comprehensive nation-wide career guidance system and to guarantee high quality throughout the system (see outstanding issues below).
	Long-term results?	Effective career guidance can be a highly relevant tool to ensure that individuals' education and employment decisions respond more closely to labour market demand.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How could you close the gaps in access to career guidance?</li> <li>How can you ensure coherence of the national career guidance system given how many institutions are already involved in providing career guidance services?</li> <li>What tools are needed for career guidance to build on user-friendly, up-to-date information on education and training options, jobs available today and tomorrow and on skills and qualification requirements for specific jobs?</li> <li>When establishing a separate educational pathway to become a career counsellor, how can you make sure that other professions involved in career guidance, such as teachers at secondary schools, VET colleges and higher education institutions, people working in migrant integration services and NAV counsellors, also gain all relevant skills and access to the tools to provide effective career guidance services?</li> <li>How can you ensure that teachers who are required to teach career management skills and provide guidance in secondary schools have the right skills and tools to do so?</li> <li>How can you ensure that career guidance is provided based on validation of prior learning and that all institutions involved cooperate effectively?</li> <li>How will you get from good guidance to good decisions, given the other factors that affect individuals' education and employment decisions?</li> <li>How will you monitor whether these services are actually leading to better skills matching? What criteria will be used to evaluate the quality of career guidance services?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	<b>6. NATIONAL ONLINE CAREER GUIDANCE: NETTVEILEDNING (NORWEGIAN TITLE)</b>
	Why?	To set up an easily accessible and user-friendly net based counselling service that will contribute to reduce dropout and wrong decision making, from primary school to higher education, and also be of help for adults who want to take up education and/or choose a new career path.
	Who benefits?	Equal and easy access for all independently from where they live and which school they attend. Ability to reach many at low cost; improved and professionalised counselling service; mutual benefits due to improvements of net-based counselling service and utdanning.no.
	What should the action look like?	<p>Users in Norway (and abroad) can address their questions to counsellors via chat or e-mail. Questions sent via e-mail, which are relevant for a broader audience, will be edited and published anonymously. Opening hours will be from 10am – 22pm, Monday – Thursday, 10am – 18pm on Friday, and 15pm – 21pm on Sunday.</p> <p>The counselling service will be organised in close collaboration with utdanning.no. Both services will mutually gain from this. The counsellors use utdanning.no in their daily practice, and report on any weakness they experience with the website.</p>
	Who should implement this?	The Norwegian Centre for ICT in Education, in cooperation with Vox (National Agency for Lifelong Learning) and regional career centres. The project will ensure that each partner's role and responsibility will be clarified in the first phase. Regular meetings and predictable routines for communication will strengthen the partnership and collaboration between the parties. Actors who are most likely to be opposed to this action include some actors in the traditional counsellor service who might be sceptical about net-based guidance.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out), Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices), Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships).
	Quick wins?	This proposal highlights the importance of a comprehensive career guidance system and the availability of user-friendly and up-to-date information for good education and career decisions. Digital services are a highly relevant step in this direction, especially in a sparsely populated country like Norway.
	Long-term results?	Effective career guidance can be a highly relevant tool to ensure that individuals' education and employment decision respond more closely to labour market demand.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to improve the transparency of online services and avoid confusion, it would be important to have a central website that is either merged with, or provides links to, other existing websites. How will you make sure that the website you refer to as "utdanning.no" becomes the central career guidance website?</li> <li>• How will you make sure that the public is aware of this new service?</li> <li>• Where will the online career counsellors come from? You suggest that existing regional career centres might nominate online counsellors. However, several counties have not yet established regional career centres and their responsibilities and working structures differ between counties. Does this proposal require a nation-wide system of career centres to work?</li> <li>• How will you evaluate the quality of this new service?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	7. MORE CARROTS AND STICKS FOR BETTER EDUCATIONAL CHOICES
	Why?	To implement stricter scaling, better guidance and more alignment of educational choices with the needs of employers and society.
	Who benefits?	Individuals, who will obtain a better chance to find a relevant job; employers, who will find more people with relevant skills; institutions, who can show that their course offerings are relevant and help students to find work after graduation; rural areas, where skilled labour is often a scarce resource.
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better guidance in secondary schools, especially in transitions between levels of education up to higher education.</li> <li>• Strengthen formal requirements for counsellors. Offer more studies of career management skills. Also introduce lifelong learning courses for teachers within career management.</li> <li>• Foresight studies for future needs of employment should be an integrated part of counsellors' knowledge base (this requires good foresight studies and the Ministry of Education is currently working on such a project).</li> <li>• ICT-tools for e-guidance – e.g Frontier, utdanning.no, Its learning</li> <li>• More experienced-based education at all levels. This also includes exchange programmes between teachers and working life.</li> <li>• Stricter scaling of student places to meet employers' needs.</li> <li>• Integrated development plans at the regional level for both the educational sector and regional development</li> <li>• Pilot projects in 3-5 counties based on applications</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	Stronger political cross-sectoral governance at national level – inter-ministerial cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out), Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices), Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships).
	Quick wins?	Several of the initiatives could have an immediate impact on education supply, in particular the scaling of higher education study places. Improved tools for e-guidance and better education and training for career counsellor could be crucial to raise the quality of career guidance. Offering more work-based learning can have a high impact on raising the relevance of skills acquired in education.
	Long-term results?	This set of actions addresses several interlinked bottlenecks that currently hinder a good match between skills supply and demand – career guidance, work-based learning, and higher education supply. If well designed and implemented, combined action in these areas has a high potential to improve alignment of skills demand and supply in the long run.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The title of the proposal mentions better “carrots and sticks” to influence educational choices. However, the proposal remains unclear about the exact types of incentives and disincentives, which could include: stronger wage signals, differentiated loan, grant and fee systems as well as non-financial incentives.</li> <li>• How will you make sure that you do not only encourage higher education institutions to offer a particular mix of programmes but also ensure that a relevant mix of courses is provided within each programme and relevant skills are provided within each course?</li> <li>• Could you facilitate this process by requiring higher education institutions to report on their graduate employment outcomes (labour market status and earnings) and by funding programmes based partly on their employment outcomes?</li> <li>• Is it possible to encourage/require work experience to be a requirement to qualify for a degree?</li> <li>• How can you monitor the quality of internships to ensure that they are high quality learning experiences?</li> <li>• How will you persuade employers to offer internships?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	8. DEVELOP A STRATEGY ON INFORMED EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER CHOICES
	Why?	Reduce mismatches with the aid of qualified education and career choices. Fewer re-selections, higher completion rate in educational programmes, increased vocational participation.
	Who benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students: Knowledge of future employment opportunities will, to a greater extent, be taken into account by students when applying for education programmes. Students will rely less on marketing and more on data for their decisions</li> <li>Employers, employees and society as a whole.</li> </ul>
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define the skills that are required for making good education and career decisions</li> <li>Ensure career counsellors have relevant skills</li> <li>Incorporate provision of entrepreneurship skills throughout the entire educational pathway</li> <li>Propose a mandate for Green Paper</li> <li>Map and evaluate the existing landscape, workflow and use of resources concerning counselling and career-guidance actors</li> <li>Propose redesigned workflow, and identify opportunities for simplification and productivity gains</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant ministries are all those who have participated in the Skills Strategy project and should involve other relevant actors</li> </ul>
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out), Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices), Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Challenge 10 (Facilitating a whole-of-Government approach) and Challenge 11 (Ensuring local flexibility and adaptability).
	Quick wins?	Short-term benefits could be gained from improving career counsellors' professional skills.
	Long-term results?	This proposal highlights the importance of career guidance to provide people with relevant information in career decision processes as well as the relevance of entrepreneurship skills for economic growth. Strengthening entrepreneurship training is of particular relevance in Norway where the majority of the population does not perceive themselves to have strong skills nor opportunities for entrepreneurship (DR, p. 115). Yet, the proposal remains unclear as to how the actions could more concretely contribute to these long-term goals.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you want to make sure career counsellors have relevant skills?</li> <li>How could you incorporate entrepreneurship skills more effectively at all stages of lifelong learning?</li> <li>To improve entrepreneurship skills and environments, you could facilitate this process by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying which skills (technical, business management and personal skills) and other support mechanisms (counselling, coaching and mentoring) that are critical for entrepreneurs are underdeveloped in Norway today</li> <li>Understanding which social groups have a high entrepreneurial potential but would need more support to establish their own businesses</li> <li>Setting up a whole-of-government action plan to incorporate skills development for entrepreneurship at the relevant stages of lifelong learning</li> <li>Shifting the balance of teaching methods from classroom teaching to more interactive, hands-on, and experiential methods such as role playing, simulations, games, and short-term business start-ups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	9. THE TAX DEDUCTION SCHEME FOR BETTER SKILLS
	Why?	To increase competitiveness by upgrading the competences and skills of the workforce in the private sector.
	Who benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enterprises benefit from reduced taxes if expenses on skills and lifelong learning of their employees are documented</li> <li>Employees benefit from better opportunities for skills development</li> </ul>
	What should the action look like?	<p>In line with the existing SkatteFUNN R&amp;D tax incentive scheme that is designed to stimulate research and development (R&amp;D) in Norwegian trade and industry, businesses and enterprises that are subject to taxation in Norway are eligible to apply for tax relief. The proposed skills tax incentive scheme would be a similar legal scheme but addressing investments in skills / human resources. Simple to operate and open to all enterprises, the scheme will boost the demand for training and education in the private sector. Employers will become more interested in lifelong learning schemes and supplementary formal education for employees. The scheme will very likely foster the need for competence strategies in private sector enterprises.</p> <p>The scheme should include tax reductions for living expenses during education courses when necessary.</p>
	Who should implement this?	Leading role: the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and the Ministry of Finance in cooperation with the Norwegian Research Council who would receive the applications. Help from the Norwegian Parliament will be useful. Working organisations must be included in the implementation of the scheme.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Priority Area 3 (Education and training for low-skilled adults), Challenge 1 (Building strong foundation skills for all), Challenge 7 (Engaging employers) and Challenge 8 (Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship).
	Quick wins?	Already today, corporate tax incentives in Norway are such that costs associated with the training of employees are deductible from taxable corporate income where the training is related to the work of the company (DR, p. 108, based on Torres, 2012). It is unclear to what extent the proposed scheme would differ from the policies already in place today. Implementation of additional tax incentives should be subject to critical assessments of deadweight-losses and risks related to increasing bureaucracy and complexity of the tax system.
	Long-term results?	Employers can be empowered to take responsibility for workforce development within their sectors and to help create solutions that respond to their own evolving needs while creating high quality skills which are genuinely valued. Success rests upon forging strong partnerships between employers, employees, trade unions and training providers supported by government.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In international comparison, employer investment in skills is relatively high in Norway. To achieve stronger employer engagement, it would be necessary to better understand the barriers currently facing some employers which prevent them from investing more in skills, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What barriers prevent SMEs from investing more in skills development?</li> <li>What are more effective ways to encourage employer engagement in skills development in a more targeted way? How could employers be incentivised effectively to invest more in the skills of specific target groups, such as low-skilled and older employees?</li> <li>How could employers, in particular SMEs, be encouraged to collaborate more effectively among each other to share the financing of skills development?</li> <li>How could employers be encouraged to collaborate more effectively with education suppliers, such as higher education institutes and adult education institutes to provide more targeted education and training?</li> </ul> </li> <li>How to define which measures give the right to a tax deduction and how to control compliance without significantly increasing bureaucracy?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	10. ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR TAILORED ADULT EDUCATION
	Why?	To ensure access to adult education or training that is suited to the actual needs of low-skilled people and that should qualify for higher education or employment.
	Who benefits?	All adults with a need for training at upper secondary level or lower.
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One door” life-long learning centres/career centres: All adults will have access to a regional career centre where they can receive professional career guidance</li> <li>• Free guidance should be a right</li> <li>• Certificates of recognition for existing competence is an essential part</li> <li>• Assess implementation of a state financed grant-skills activation scheme</li> <li>• Education should be module-based to make room for tailored education spells</li> <li>• More focus on individual needs and less on groups and rights</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	All relevant ministries the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion and directorates (Avdir, Udir, Vox, Imdi), local governments, in cooperation with social partners.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway’s 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Priority Area 3 (Education and training for low-skilled adults), Challenge 1 (Building strong foundation skills for all), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out) and Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices).
	Quick wins?	A “one-stop-shop” approach offering multiple relevant services, including prior skills and qualification assessments and free guidance, can have a high impact on reaching low-skilled adults more effectively and providing them with targeted education and training services.
	Long-term results?	Setting up flexible and demand-oriented continuous education and training policies that address the needs of low-skilled adults effectively can improve the employability and social inclusion of these adults.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should the one-stop-shop serve as a single entry point for everyone seeking education and training opportunities or do you want to specifically target low-skilled or low-qualified adults?</li> <li>• This new service would substantially overlap with services already offered by other organisations, including NAV. How do you want to avoid the risk of a lack of transparency for beneficiaries and inefficiency of service provision?</li> <li>• How would the “state financed skills activation grant scheme” function? Grants can provide effective incentives as they fully or partly cover the costs of participants. However, huge deadweight-losses can also be associated with grants when their target-group is not well defined. Could you engage employers more in reaching out to low-skilled people?</li> <li>• Who would finance the one-stop-shops?</li> <li>• How can you make sure that the education and training programmes offered are of high quality and improve the employability of participants?</li> <li>• What tools are needed for career guidance to build on user-friendly, up-to-date information on education and training options, jobs available today and tomorrow and on the skills and qualification requirements for specific jobs?</li> <li>• How can you ensure and evaluate the quality of career guidance services?</li> </ul>



STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	11. VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR SKILLS
	Why?	To create an alternative way to help low-skilled adults who have not been able to take full advantage of the initial education system to obtain good basic skills.
	Who benefits?	Low-skilled adults outside the ordinary educational track, for instance immigrants, drop-outs, low-skilled long-term unemployed etc. It should be taken into consideration who the measure should <u>not</u> target, such as fresh drop-outs, EEA short-term labour migrants etc.
	What should the action look like?	<p>Low-skilled adults who need good basic skills (below upper secondary education) are provided with a legal right to receive training in basic skills at primary/secondary level after they reach an age that is unsuitable for the ordinary educational pathway (typically 19-20 years old). This right must be met by a duty for someone – typically the county administrations – to ensure this opportunity is provided either by the public sector, the private sector or the voluntary sector or combinations thereof.</p> <p>A complementary voucher should be considered for living expenses during a course of training, to alleviate loss of income during training, if full or part-time.</p>
	Who should implement this?	The public sector, the school system, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), local businesses and volunteers. The county administrations will likely be responsible for approving providers and acquired skills. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training will retain its role as quality controller.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Priority Area 3 (Education and training for low-skilled adults), Challenge 1 (Building strong foundation skills for all), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out) and Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices).
	Quick wins?	<p>Effective financing approaches are a key requirement to provide education and training to low-skilled adults. For a voucher system to be successful, certain requirements need to be in place. From the description of the proposal it is difficult to say if any short-term benefits can be expected from this initiative. Beyond the financing mechanism chosen, the success of adult education programmes depends on other aspects, such as effective ways to reach out to participants and quality assurance as education and training providers can easily take advantage of automatic government financing mechanisms and provide low quality training.</p> <p>Vouchers can allow for relatively easy targeting. However, other countries have met difficulties in effectively reaching low-skilled populations through voucher programmes. These programmes often need intermediary institutions that can effectively reach the target group, raise their awareness and provide guidance regarding training opportunities on offer.</p>
	Long-term results?	Flexible and demand-oriented continuous education and training policies that address the needs of low-skilled adults can boost their employability and social inclusion.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the incentive for low-skilled adults to take up these vouchers?</li> <li>• Who exactly do you want to target?</li> <li>• How do you want to reach the target group?</li> <li>• Can this supply-side stimulus work even in more sparsely populated regions?</li> <li>• In what areas or sectors do you particularly want to stimulate skills development and what foundation/technical/personal skills are needed most?</li> </ul>



STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	12. SMOOTH ACCESS TO SKILLS
	Why?	Reduce barriers to education for adults with low skills and training. This applies to barriers associated with financing, legislation and rights. Adapt adult education and training to individual needs and adapt educational provision to the target group.
	Who benefits?	Clients of NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) and immigrants with low education; people who cannot take advantage of the mainstream education offered; employees with weak basic skills/education; employers with a low-skilled workforce.
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert social security (NAV) benefits to study grants during the training period. A flexible financing scheme (stipend) must be available for subsistence for those who want/need to take education up to upper secondary school level. These should be converted from unemployment benefits. Benefits must be linked with an adult's opportunity to provide for themselves and their family. Cannot be the same stipend/grant scheme that applies for young people.</li> <li>• Lifelong right to training and education.</li> <li>• Easier access to formal education up to secondary school level through regulatory amendments and financing incentives.</li> <li>• Consolidate responsibility for adult education at one administrative level – the county administrations.</li> <li>• Regional lifelong learning centres should be established and nationally financed. These centres should offer module-based and adapted education for adults. The education provided may include basic skills, primary education, upper secondary education and training, and language training.</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	The Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion. Other actors that need to play an active role are Vox, UDir, IMDi, AV-Dir/NAV, local NAV offices, regional and local authorities (County municipalities and the municipalities), parties, companies.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway's 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Priority Area 3 (Education and training for low-skilled adults), Challenge 1 (Building strong foundation skills for all), Challenge 2 (Reducing drop-out) and Challenge 3 (Informing educational choices).
	Quick wins?	The combination of a lifelong right to training and education and nation-wide access to regional lifelong learning centres can have a high impact on reaching low-skilled adults more effectively and providing targeted education and training offers, when services are provided based on prior skills and qualification assessments and high quality guidance services. However, the proposal would require more details on how to ensure high quality and relevance of the education and training offered. If not well-targeted such provision could lead to significant deadweight losses.
	Long-term results?	Setting up flexible and demand-oriented continuous education and training policies that address the needs of low-skilled adults effectively can have a high impact on their employability and social inclusion.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can you ensure high quality standards for the education and training provided, especially if the provision will be publicly financed?</li> <li>• How will you monitor and evaluate the quality of the new services and whether they actually improve participants' employability?</li> <li>• In what areas or sectors do you particularly want to stimulate skills development and what foundation/technical/personal skills would be needed most?</li> <li>• How can you ensure coherence of the national career guidance system, recognising that some counties have already developed their own approaches, and many institutions, including NAV, are already involved in the provision of career guidance?</li> <li>• Already today, some social benefits can be converted into retraining benefits. What additional types of benefits would you propose to convert, and under what circumstances?</li> <li>• Could more be done to connect the upskilling process to future jobs in emerging sectors, for example by engaging employers more actively in the process?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	13. ENTREPRENEURSHIP MATTERS
	Why?	To integrate entrepreneurship education in all higher education study programmes and to strengthen pedagogy in entrepreneurship teaching.
	Who benefits?	Teachers (better entrepreneurship skills); students (broadening their perspectives, more likely to start their own business); educational institutions (raising more money); society (growth and employment).
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A recent evaluation of the “Action plan for entrepreneurship in higher education 2010-2014” shows that entrepreneurship courses are more frequently offered in business and technology studies than in other disciplines. Entrepreneurship courses offered have decreased from 2010 to 2013 for studies in pedagogy and teaching. Law schools don’t offer it all.</li> <li>• Higher education institutions (HEIs) do not seem to fulfil the requirements of the action plan. Therefore, there should be more effective carrots and sticks to ensure implementation, e.g. financial incentives, also to stimulate closer cooperation with business and industry. Teachers should also have access to extra courses on pedagogy in entrepreneurship (lifelong learning).</li> <li>• HEIs should be obliged to report to the Ministry of Education on their progress to improve entrepreneurship skills for teachers and students</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	The Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries in collaboration with the educational institutions themselves.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway’s 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 1 (Building strong foundation skills for all) and Challenge 8 (Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship).
	Quick wins?	Across OECD countries, HEIs as well as vocational education and training and schools increasingly provide entrepreneurship education. To be effective, entrepreneurship support should be embedded within teaching, entrepreneurship needs to become a strategic objective of the institutions, and institutions need clear incentives and rewards for staff engaged in entrepreneurship teaching and promotion. In addition, entrepreneurship-dedicated structures need to be in place such as chairs, centres, incubation facilities and start-up assistance and evaluations of support approaches (for more details see OECD 2010, “SMEs, Entrepreneurship and Innovation”).
	Long-term results?	Entrepreneurship is a significant driver of employment and productivity growth and a key source of innovation. Young firms, in particular, account for a large share of all new innovations and often exploit opportunities not taken up by more established companies.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is higher education the right level to start with the development of entrepreneurship skills? How could apprenticeship programmes become better vehicles for developing entrepreneurship skills? How could you encourage younger students in primary and secondary schools to develop an entrepreneurial mind-set and relevant entrepreneurship skills?</li> <li>• How will you make sure that entrepreneurship becomes a strategic objective of education institutions and that they establish the right enabling frameworks, such as chairs and incubation facilities?</li> <li>• How will you make sure that you do not only encourage HEIs to offer entrepreneurship education but also ensure that relevant skills are provided?</li> <li>• Apart from the development of entrepreneurship skills, how can you encourage an entrepreneurial culture and ensure an ecosystem where entrepreneurship thrives?</li> </ul>

STAKEHOLDER PROPOSAL	ACTION TITLE	14. MORE RELEVANT UNIVERSITY COLLEGES
	Why?	To increase the relevance of University Colleges for regional labour markets, raise the availability of relevant skills in regions and reduce recruitment challenges in the private sector.
	Who benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students / employees will have access to more relevant and interesting education and training courses in their regions (at a relatively short distance), and the success rate will increase</li> <li>Enterprises get better skilled and motivated employees and in turn become more competitive; they will also collaborate more closely with University Colleges (possibilities for research, influencing the curriculum etc.)</li> <li>University Colleges would have more access to financial resources</li> <li>Teachers will have more opportunities to conduct practice-oriented, “non-academic” work</li> </ul>
	What should the action look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger financial incentives to attract candidates to supplementary formal education or vocational training / courses</li> <li>Establish merit system rewarding teachers interested in cooperation with enterprises and their organisations to develop curriculum and training methods relevant to societal needs. The definition of “quality” in higher education and research must be modified</li> </ul>
	Who should implement this?	Ministry of Education and Research and University colleges by giving more priority to ensuring the relevance of education as well as vocational training (more extended contact with the enterprises in the regions). Other actors that need to play an active role are representatives from relevant industries / enterprises, regional authorities, actors like Innovation Norway, SIVA and the Research Council (regional level). These actors can build effective partnerships by co-financing activities and ensuring links to existing activities in the region.
COMMENTS	Which of Norway’s 3 Priority Areas and 12 skills challenges does this respond to?	This proposal could contribute to addressing Priority Area 2 (Tackling skills imbalances), Challenge 7 (Engaging employers), Challenge 8 (Promoting innovation and entrepreneurship) and Challenge 12 (Improving implementation and building partnerships at the local and national level).
	Quick wins?	The proposal raises the importance of demand-oriented supply of education to be able to leverage the economic and social benefits of skills. However, for education institutions to fulfil this role many additional challenges related to funding and management need to be addressed (see outstanding issues).
	Long-term results?	Entrepreneurship is a significant driver of employment and productivity growth and a key source of innovation. Young firms, in particular, account for a large share of all new innovations and often exploit opportunities not taken up by more established companies.
	Outstanding issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does this proposal differ from existing partnerships on the regional level?</li> <li>How exactly will you encourage university colleges and employers to cooperate more effectively?</li> <li>How will you encourage university colleges to set up more adult education and training courses? How should this be financed?</li> <li>In order to facilitate this process, would it be helpful to encourage university colleges to attract more private funding?</li> <li>How will you monitor and evaluate the effects of this proposal and whether it really leads to the development of more relevant skills?</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 1

# PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

This project was only possible thanks to the long-term engagement of a cross-ministerial Norwegian project team and a broad group of Norwegian stakeholders, involving over **60 organisations at the national and county levels**, including various government agencies, county administrations, civil society organisations, education institutions, and social partners, among others:

### Government

- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (ASD)
- Ministry of Education and Research (KD)
- Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation (KMD)
- Ministry of Finance (FD)
- Ministry of Children, Equality & Social Inclusion (BLD)
- Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries (NFD)

### Government agencies and other public institutions

- Directorate of Education and Training
- Directorate of Health
- Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi)
- Directorate of Labour
- Statistics Norway
- Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning (Vox)
- The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (VOFO)
- The Research Council of Norway
- Innovation Norway
- Sami Parliament

### Education stakeholders (non-government)

- The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR)
- The National Union of Students in Norway
- National council for tertiary vocational education
- Organisation for tertiary vocational education students

### Regional stakeholders

- The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
- Drammen County
- Hedmark County
- Nordland County
- South-Eastern Norway Regional Health Authority
- Papirbredden career guidance centre
- Hovedorganisasjonen Virke
- NAV Alna
- Campus Helgeland

### Working life

- The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)
- The Confederation of Vocational Unions (YS)
- The Employers' Association Spekter
- The Confederation of Unions for Professionals (Unio)
- The Enterprise Federation of Norway (Virke)
- The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)
- NCE SE Kongsberg
- Nortura SA
- Proneo AS
- Young Enterprise
- Rana Produkter AS (entreprise which employs people with disabilities)
- GE Healthcare
- Relevant!

## ANNEX 2

### INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES

#### On Priority Area 1

- **Shanghai “Highland of Talent” Strategy**

- A multi-actor “action framework” on skills with a clear set of targets
- Stimulated collaborative cross-government city level legislation

Sources: Zhang, R. (2009), “The Shanghai “Highland of Talent” Strategy”, *Designing Local Skills Strategies*, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264066649-en>; UKCES (2014), website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills).

- **United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)**

- Publicly funded and industry-led organisation that offers guidance on skills issues
- Involves a competitive government fund (GBP 250 million in 2011) employers can bid for
- Funds and manages Sector Skills Councils

Source: UKCES (2014), website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-commission-for-employment-and-skills).

- **Germany, a whole-of-government approach to EU policies**

- Lead ministry has to coordinate a common approach with all other relevant ministries
- Lead ministry is legally required to report common approach to Bundestag and Bundesrat
- Short monthly meeting of all state secretaries and directors responsible for EU co-ordination, regular meetings on working level

Source: DNR EU-Koordination (2006), “Die Zukunft der Europäischen Union. Grundlagen zur deutschen EU-Ratspräsidentschaft 2007”, [www.eu-koordination.de/PDF/eur0608\\_09-sh.pdf](http://www.eu-koordination.de/PDF/eur0608_09-sh.pdf).

- **Sweden, a whole-of-government approach to security policies**

- Policy on Global Development (PGD) and legal requirement for Joint Preparation Process build on interdepartmental dialogues and joint planning
- Could be improved by a joint assessment process to ensure actors not just provide what they find important from their perspective but from a more holistic perspective

Sources: OECD (2006), “Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States”, OECD publishing, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/journal\\_dev-v8-art39-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/journal_dev-v8-art39-en); UNDP (2009), “Going Local to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals”, [www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/poverty-reduction/poverty-website/going-local-to-achieve-the-mdgs---english/UNDP\\_SNV\\_2009%20going%20local.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/poverty-reduction/poverty-website/going-local-to-achieve-the-mdgs---english/UNDP_SNV_2009%20going%20local.pdf).

## On Priority Area 2

- **Sweden “Utbildningsinfo.se” online portal**

- Informs youth and adults on employment opportunities, educational paths and providers
- An “occupational compass” provides information on the labour market situation in about 200 professions and forecasts over 1, 5 and 10 year periods with regional data

Source: OECD (2014), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Norway*, OECD Publishing, p. 62, based on OECD LEED Local Skills Strategies, [www.oecd.org/document/57/0,3746,en\\_2649\\_34417\\_48956153\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/57/0,3746,en_2649_34417_48956153_1_1_1_1,00.html).

- **Spain, ‘Barcelona Global’ school project**

- Business managers visit schools to share their experiences
- The aim of the project is to create a conversation between business and students in which high level business managers describe their own experience in business and explain which skills are needed on the job

Source: OECD (2014), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Norway*, OECD Publishing, p. 63, based on [www.barcelonaglobal.com/projects/detail/49/school-business](http://www.barcelonaglobal.com/projects/detail/49/school-business).

- **Finland, a lifelong learning guidance system**

- Covers all parts of lifelong learning from ECEC to adult education
- Targeted programmes for people at risk or those who are out of the labour market and out of lifelong learning
- National steering group for guidance and counselling to strengthen the cross-sectoral and multi-professional cooperation between key actors and stakeholders

Sources: OECD (2014 forthcoming), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Austria*, OECD Publishing, p. 75, based on CIMO (2013); Lifelong Guidance, [www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime\\_product\\_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/25493\\_Lifelong\\_guidance\\_in\\_Finland.pdf](http://www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/25493_Lifelong_guidance_in_Finland.pdf).

- **Finland, Workplace Development Programme “Tekes”**

- To promote productivity and demand-driven innovations, including non-technological and workplace innovations
- Focus on SMEs with high innovation potential
- Since 2010, Tekes has funded 224 work organisation development projects and 275 R&D projects (EUR 14 million annually) where the development of the work organisation was integrated with the development of products, services or business operations (by June 2013)

Source: Alasoini, T. (2013), *Workplace Development as Part of Broad-Based Innovation Policy. The case of Bringing the Skills and Competencies of Ordinary Employees in Innovation*, [www.tekes.fi/Global/Ohjelmat%20ja%20palvelut/Ohjelmat/Liideri/HELIX%20130613%20Workplace%20Development%20as%20Part%20of%20Broad-Based%20Innovation%20Policy.pdf](http://www.tekes.fi/Global/Ohjelmat%20ja%20palvelut/Ohjelmat/Liideri/HELIX%20130613%20Workplace%20Development%20as%20Part%20of%20Broad-Based%20Innovation%20Policy.pdf).

- **United Kingdom, Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC)**

- Administers the Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) which provides funding for knowledge exchange between universities, colleges, and firms, among others
- UK Research Partnership Investment Fund is available to all UK higher education institutions (HEIs) to support large-scale projects that can attract substantial co-investment from private sources to enhance research facilities and strategic partnerships
- Workforce Development Programme, which provides funds for HEIs that adapt the design and delivery of education programmes to employer and employee needs

Source: OECD (2014 forthcoming), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Austria*, OECD Publishing, p. 135, based on HEFC (2014), [www.hefce.ac.uk/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/).



- **United States, Government and stakeholders tackling the shortage of nurses**
  - 40 national nursing and health care organizations, formed a coalition “Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow” with an advertising campaign that received nationwide news coverage
  - The Nurse Reinvestment Act signed by the US Government in 2002 covers the establishment of a National Nurse Service Corps, building career ladders and retaining quality nurses, development of comprehensive geriatric education, and a nurse faculty loan program, among others.

Sources: Donley, R. et al. (2002), “The Nursing Shortage: What Does The Nurse Reinvestment Act Mean to You?”, 2002 *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*,

<http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ThePracticeofProfessionalNursing/workforce/NursingShortage/Resoures/NurseReinvestmentAct.html>; Nursingsociety (2014), “Facts on the Nursing Shortage in North America”, [www.nursingsociety.org/Media/Pages/shortage.aspx](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Media/Pages/shortage.aspx).

- **Germany, strengthening ICT skills of different target groups**
  - “National pact for women in ‘MINT’ occupations” (mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology)
  - Supporting young talent in ICT through the initiative “Germany: IT Powerhouse”
  - Supporting older workers through the Federal Government initiative “IT 50 plus”, conducted in collaboration with the ICT business association BITKOM and the national metalworkers’ union.

Source: OECD (2014 forthcoming), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Austria*, OECD Publishing, p. 75.

- **The Netherlands, Sectoral training funds**
  - Sector training funds based on collective labour agreements (CLA)
  - All employers of a sector are obliged by the CLA to pay a certain percentage of their wage bill to the fund. The fund invests the contributions and reimburses employers for employee training and education investments as stipulated in the CLA.

Sources: OECD (2014 forthcoming), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Austria*, p. 135, OECD Publishing, based on Van der Meer, Marc; Arjan van der Meijden (2013), “Sectoral training and education funds in the Netherlands – a case of institutional innovation?” [http://ilera-europe2013.eu/uploads/paper/attachment/358/ilera\\_paper\\_training\\_funds\\_mvdm\\_am\\_22\\_june\\_2013.pdf](http://ilera-europe2013.eu/uploads/paper/attachment/358/ilera_paper_training_funds_mvdm_am_22_june_2013.pdf).

## On Priority Area 3

- **Australia, National Workforce Development Fund**

- Public fund of AUD 558 million for four years to address emerging skills needs within key industry sectors
- Businesses are encouraged to identify current and future development needs, and apply for funding to upskill existing employees
- Targeted grants for particular groups of employees, such as indigenous people and older workers ensure that employers also include disadvantaged groups

Source: OECD (2014 forthcoming), *Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Austria*, OECD Publishing, p. 135, based on Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (2014), "National Workforce Development Fund" [www.awpa.gov.au/our-work/national-workforce-development-fund/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.awpa.gov.au/our-work/national-workforce-development-fund/Pages/default.aspx).

- **Germany, National Strategy for basic adult education:**

- National strategy to improve foundation skills of all adults
- Actions include a nationwide TV and radio campaign on the importance of foundation skills; the expansion of course offerings, in particular in cooperation with adult education centres and the public employment service (PES)
- Creation of networks and regional adult education coordinators
- Bundesländer agreed to expand the exchanges of good practices

Source: BMBF (2012), *Nationale Strategie für Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung Erwachsener*, BMBF, [www.bmbf.de/de/426.php](http://www.bmbf.de/de/426.php).

- **North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, education and training vouchers (*Bildungsscheck NRW*):**

- Voucher programme for employees and SMEs to reach low-skilled and disadvantaged groups
- Vouchers can be used for programmes that serve to improve professional qualifications, technical skills or key skills, such as: (vocational) qualifications, language courses, IT courses, learning and working techniques
- Offered to both employees and SMEs
- Selected contact points grant the vouchers and offer free guidance to individuals and advice to companies

Source: MAIS (2013), *Berufliche Weiterbildung mit dem Bildungsscheck, Arbeitspolitik in Nordrhein-Westfalen*, Ministerium für Arbeit, Integration und Soziales NRW, [www.arbeit.nrw.de/arbeit/erfolgreich\\_arbeiten/angebote\\_nutzen/bildungsscheck/](http://www.arbeit.nrw.de/arbeit/erfolgreich_arbeiten/angebote_nutzen/bildungsscheck/).

- **Sweden, Introduction Programme for Asylum Seekers with targeted help for low-skilled people**

- After arrival, migrants join an Introduction Programme, organised by the municipal refugee reception service, in consultation with the PES
- Based on a preliminary assessment to determine people's employability, the programme develops an action plan in cooperation with the migrant, involving specific vocational upgrading or training, as required

Source: Lemaître, G. (2007), "The Integration of Immigrants into the Labour Market", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 48, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/235635254863>.

- **Sweden, "step-in jobs"**

- Step-in jobs are subsidised jobs in the public or the private sector which offers possibilities for migrants to combine language training with part time employment. The wage subsidy amounts to 75 percent of the gross salary (max. SEK 750 per day). The salary is regulated by collective agreements.

Source: Swedish Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality (2008), *Memorandum. Update on Policy Developments*, [www.oecd.org/sweden/41706122.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/sweden/41706122.pdf).

- **Belgium (Flanders), targeting unemployed people with disabilities and mental disorders**

- PES caseworkers pay particular attention to disabilities and mental health problems that are diagnosed in multidisciplinary screenings
- PES cooperates with specialised centres for the training, guidance and intermediation of job seekers with a work disability.

Source: European Commission (2012), *PES and Older Workers. Toolkit for Public Employment Services*.

## ANNEX 3

### DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR APPROACHING NORWAY'S PRIORITY AREAS

The following matrices can provide a useful analytical framework when approaching concrete steps to set up action plans in the two thematic Priority Areas “Tackling skills imbalances” and “Education and training for low-skilled adults”. They can be used as a checklist or tool for discussion with stakeholders when aiming to develop a comprehensive overview of the issues at stake.

#### 3.1 Tackling skills imbalances

a) *Have you understood and accounted for the temporal dimension of skills imbalances in Norway?*

	Today's mismatches	Mismatches in near future	Mismatches in long term
1. Identifying mismatches			
2. Better matching supply and demand			
3. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes			

b) *Have you understood and accounted for the local dimension of skills imbalances in Norway?*

	Local	Regional	National	International
1. Identifying mismatches				
2. Better matching supply and demand				
3. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes				

c) Have you understood and accounted for where skills imbalances are most pressing in the economy?

	For individual	Within firm	Within sector	Between sectors
1. Identifying mismatches				
2. Better matching supply and demand				
3. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes				

d) Have you made sure to tackle the issue in a comprehensive way throughout the whole policy process?

	Problem identification	Policy design and budgeting	Implementation	Monitoring/evaluating
1. Identifying mismatches				
2. Better matching supply and demand				
3. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes				

e) Have you found solutions that do not only promise quick wins but sustainable, longer-term results?

	Quick wins	Longer-term results
1. Identifying mismatches		
2. Better matching supply and demand		
3. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes		

### 3.2 Education and training for low-skilled adults

a) Have you understood what barriers low-skilled people face, what types of skills they would particularly need to improve their labour market prospects?

	Foundation skills	Specific skills	Non-cognitive skills
1. Identifying the low-skilled			
2. Getting low-skilled to participate in education and training			
3. Providing relevant and accessible education and training			
4. Improving skills			
5. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes			

b) Have you made sure to tackle the issue in a comprehensive way throughout the whole policy process?

	Problem identification	Policy design and budgeting	Implementation	Monitoring/evaluating
1. Identifying the low-skilled				
2. Getting low-skilled to participate in education and training				
3. Providing relevant and accessible education and training				
4. Improving skills				
5. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes				

c) Have you found solutions that do not only promise quick wins but sustainable, longer-term results?

	Quick wins	Longer-term results
1. Identifying the low-skilled		
2. Getting low-skilled to participate in education and training		
3. Providing relevant and accessible education and training		
4. Improving skills		
5. Translating better skill matching into better economic/social outcomes		





# OECD Skills Strategy

## Action Report

## Norway

Better skills policies help build economic resilience, boost employment and reinforce social cohesion. The OECD Skills Strategy provides countries with a framework to analyse their skills challenges and develop appropriate actions along three pillars: 1. Developing relevant skills, 2. Activating skills supply, and 3. Using skills effectively. Each OECD Skills Strategy Action Report builds on a national Diagnostic Report and offers priorities for action as well as a set of stakeholder proposals to address countries' individual skills challenges, which are identified by national stakeholders and OECD comparative evidence.

These reports tackle questions such as: How can countries improve their performance in developing relevant skills, activating skills supply and using skills effectively? What is the benefit of a whole-of-government approach to skills policy? How can governments build stronger partnerships with employers, trade unions, teachers and students to deliver better skills outcomes? OECD Skills Strategy Action Reports provide new insights into these questions and help identify the core components of successful skills strategies.

This report is part of the OECD's ongoing work on building effective national and local skills strategies.

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- [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org) for the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data, and
- [skills.oecd.org/](http://skills.oecd.org/) for OECD work on skills.

### Further reading

OECD (2012), *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives: A Strategic Approach to Skills Policies*, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264177338-en>.

OECD (2013), *OECD Skills Outlook 2013: First Results from the Survey of Adult Skills*, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264204256-en>.