Norway

TEACHERS

SABER Country Report 2015

Policy Goals	Status
1. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers There are clear expectations for what students should learn. The statutory definition of teachers' working time recognizes non-teaching hours. Official guidance on teachers' use of time could be more focused on tasks related to school improvement.	Established
2. Attracting the Best into Teaching Teachers are required to have qualifications formally on par with those of other professions. Teacher working conditions, along with career opportunities, may be attractive. However, salaries may be less attractive to competent individuals.	Established
3. Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience The minimum level of education to become a teacher was ISCED 5A in 2015. Classroom experience requirements for novice teachers could be strengthened.	Established
4. Matching Teachers' Skills with Students' Needs There are incentives for teachers to teach critical shortage subjects, as well as incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools.	Established
5. Leading Teachers with Strong Principals There are specific education programmes for principals to develop their leadership skills. However, these programmes are not officially required to become a principal. Principals are explicitly expected to act as instructional leaders, but a principal's performance is not rewarded.	Latent
6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning Student achievement data are collected, and made available to inform teaching and policy. There are no required teacher assessments in place to monitor or evaluate teacher performance at the national level.	Latent
7. Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction Teacher professional development opportunities include activities that are associated with instructional improvement, and are aligned with professional needs.	Established
8. Motivating Teachers to Perform Promotion opportunities are linked to performance assessed at the local level, and performance reviews can carry salary implications. Teachers can be dismissed with cause. There are no performance evaluation requirements for teachers.	Emerging

Data collection on Norway's teacher policies was completed in 2015. Consequently, the findings in this report reflect the status of the country's teacher policies at that time. In addition, although Norway scores below "Emerging" in some of the SABER-Teachers policy goals, it is worth mentioning that the Norwegian system is highly decentralized and the policies captured by the rubric tend to exist at the local rather than national level.

Overview of SABER-Teachers

There is growing interest across the globe in attracting, retaining, developing and motivating great teachers. Student achievement has been found to correlate with economic and social progress (Hanushekand Woessmann, 2007, 2009; Pritchett and Viarengo, 2009; Campante and Glaeser 2009). Teachers are the key. Recent studies have shown that teacher quality is the main school-based predictor of student achievement; several consecutive years of outstanding teaching can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2010; Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2005; Nye and Hedges, 2004; Rockoff, 2004; Park and Hannum, 2001; Sanders and Rivers, 1996). However, formulating appropriate teacher policies to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported and competent teacher remains a challenge. Evidence on the impacts of many teacher policies remains insufficient and scattered, the impact of many reforms depends on specific design features, and teacher policies can have quite different impacts depending on the context and other education policies already in place.

SABER-Teachers aims to help fill this gap by collecting, analysing, synthesizing and disseminating comprehensive information on teacher policies in the primary and secondary education systems around the world. SABER-Teachers is a core component of SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results), an initiative of the World Bank Education Global Practice. SABER collects information about the policy domains of different education systems, analyses it to identify common challenges and solutions, and makes this information widely available to inform countries' policy-makers on where and how to invest in order to improve the quality of education.

SABER-Teachers collects data on ten core areas of teacher policy to offer a comprehensively descriptive overview of the policies in place in each participating education system (Box 1). Data are collected in each participating education system by a specialized consultant using a questionnaire so as to ensure the comparability of information across different education systems. Data collection focuses on the rules and regulations governing teacher management systems. This information is compiled in a comparative database. Interested stakeholders can access the database for detailed information, which is organized into categories that describe how different education systems manage their teaching force, as well as copies of supporting documents. The full database is available on the SABER website.

Box 1. Teacher policy areas for data collection

1. Requirements to enter and remain in teaching
2. Initial teacher education
3. Recruitment and employment
4. Teachers' workload and autonomy
5. Professional development
6. Compensation (salary and non-salary benefits)
7. Retirement rules and benefits
8. Monitoring and evaluation of teacher quality
9. Teacher representation and voice
10. School leadership

To offer informed policy guidance, SABER-Teachers analyses these data to assess how well each system's teacher policies promote student achievement based on the global evidence to date. Specifically, SABER-Teachers assesses each education system's progress in achieving eight teacher policy goals (Box 2).

Box 2. Teacher policy goals for evaluation

1. Setting clear expectations for teachers
2. Attracting the best into teaching
3. Preparing teachers with useful training
4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs
5. Leading teachers with strong principals
6. Monitoring teaching and learning
7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction
8. Motivating teachers to perform

Figure 1. Eight teacher policy goals

All high-performing education systems fulfil these eight teacher policy goals to a certain extent in order to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported and competent teacher. These goals were identified through a review of research studies on teacher policies, as well as an analysis of policies of top-performing and rapidly improving education systems. Three criteria were used to identify the teacher policy goals, which had to be: (1) linked to student performance through empirical evidence; (2) a priority for resource allocation; and (3) actionable, meaning they identify actions that governments can take to improve the education policy. The eight teacher policy goals exclude other objectives that countries might wish to pursue to increase the effectiveness of their teachers, but on which there is too little empirical evidence at present to allow for specific policy recommendations.

By classifying countries based on their performance in each of the eight teacher policy goals, SABER-Teachers helps diagnose the key challenges to cultivating effective teachers. For each policy goal, the SABER-Teachers team identified policy levers (actions that governments can take to reach these goals) and indicators (that measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers). Using these policy levers and indicators, SABER-Teachers classifies the progress of education systems towards achieving each of the eight teacher policy goals using a four-tiered scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced). The scale assesses the extent to which a given education system has put in place the type of teacher policies related to improved student outcomes (Annex 1). The main objective of this assessment is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher policies of an education system and thus pinpoint possible areas for improvement (Vegas et al., 2012).

The main focus of SABER-Teachers is policy design, not policy implementation. SABER-Teachers analyses the teacher policies formally adopted by a given education system. This type of analysis is an important first step towards strengthening the policy and institutional frameworks that policy-makers most directly control and that influence how well a system functions. At the same time, policies 'on the ground', i.e. policies as they are actually implemented, may differ quite substantially from policies as originally designed. In fact, they often do differ due to the political economy of the reform process, lack of capacity on the part of the organizations charged with implementing them, and/or the interaction between these policies and specific contextual factors. Since SABER-Teachers collects only limited data on policy implementation, the analysis of teacher policies presented in this report should ideally be complemented with other data-gathering efforts that focus on how well teacher policies are actually implemented on the ground.

This report presents the results of the SABER-Teachers tool as applied in Norway. A collaborative effort between the UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 and the World Bank Group's SABER-Teachers initiative made this report possible. All data collection, related analysis, and report preparations were completed by UNESCO using the World Bank Group's SABER tools. The report describes the performance of Norway's education system in achieving each of the eight teacher policy goals. It also contains comparative information from education systems that have consistently scored highly on international student achievement tests and those that have previously participated in the SABER-Teachers initiative. This report has been formally endorsed by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Additional information on the teacher policies in the education systems of Norway and other countries can be found on the SABER-Teachers' website.

Country Context

Economic Context

Norway is the 26th largest economy in the world (World Bank, 2014). Its main export products are raw materials, including oil, natural gas and fish. Additionally, Norway has a high degree of income equality (SSB, 2015), a generous welfare state and a high employment level at 74.3 per cent of the adult population (SSB, 2015). Among adults (25–64 years-old), 42 per cent have tertiary education in Norway (OECD, 2015).

Education Context

Norway has a strong tradition of decentralization and school autonomy. In this sense, schools are 'owned' by local communities and accountable to them. Decentralization is especially strong at primary and lower secondary education levels where most of the schools are run by municipalities. In this decentralized system, the Ministry of Education and Research, through the Directorate of Education and Training, is responsible at the national level for setting the curriculum and providing support to municipalities and school owners; they in turn follow national priorities and make their own policies to regulate schools and teaching at the local level.

Compulsory education in Norway comprises 10 years of formal schooling: primary school (grades/years 1–7) and lower secondary school (grades/years 8–10). Upper secondary education and training is voluntary. However, students who have completed primary and lower secondary school are entitled to upper secondary education, which leads to a university degree or enables them to earn vocational qualifications. In Norway, compulsory education is free and primarily financed by local authorities. Private provision of education services is limited.

Both access indicators and student learning outcomes are high in Norway at all education levels. Currently, 92 per cent of all 16–18-year-olds are enrolled in upper secondary education or training programmes (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2014). Only 3 per cent of pupils in primary and lower secondary education attend private schools (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2014). Similarly, Norway's results on PISA are close to the OECD average in mathematics, science and reading, and have changed little since 2001.

Additionally, annual education expenditures per student in Norway are among the highest across all OECD countries, at US$15,500 (OECD, 2015). Norway spends approximately 5 per cent of GDP in education (including tertiary education levels and university).

In 2006, Norway launched The Knowledge Promotion Reform, which was a comprehensive curriculum reform to clearly establish competence goals and literacy. This reform emphasized early reading and writing, and altered the structure of upper secondary education. The reform covered primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, as well as vocational and technical training.

Teacher Policy Context

The programme 'Promotion of the status and quality of teachers – a joint effort for a modern school of knowledge' encompasses the key policies that govern the teaching profession and gears it towards improving student learning. This programme regulates the requirements to become a teacher, and raises the bar so that only the top-performing high school graduates can enter the teaching profession. It also has provisions that guide professional development opportunities for teachers and principals, and requires teachers to complete a 5-year master's degree. Along with these requirements, the programme also contributes to creating professional communities and school networks to support teachers and promote a mutual learning work environment in schools and municipalities.

Norway's Teacher Policy System Results

Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

Established●●●○

Setting clear expectations for the student and teacher's performance is important for guiding the teachers' daily work and aligning the resources necessary to help them constantly improve their instructional practice. In addition, clear expectations help to ensure coherence among the various key aspects of the teaching profession, such as initial teacher education, professional development and teacher appraisal.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 1: (1) clear expectations of what students should know and be able to do; and (2) useful guidance on teachers' use of time in order to improve instruction at the school level.

Policy

(1) In Norway, there are clear expectations for what students should learn and be able to do after completing each school year. There are national standards for what students must know and be able to do. The national curriculum (reformed in 2006) guides teachers of required subject content and provides measurable learning indicators that should be achieved by students after completing each grade.
The Norwegian National Curriculum comprises: (i) a Core curriculum; (ii) the Quality Framework; (iii) subject curricula; (iv) a distribution of teaching hours per subject; and (iv) individual assessment. The Core curriculum indicates the main goals and values, and the cultural and scientific fundaments of the education system, while the Quality Framework comprises the indicators and tools for assessing educational quality at the different education levels. Similarly, the subject curricula indicate the competence goals in each subject.

(2) Norway has a statutory definition of teacher's working time that recognizes non-teaching hours. According to the Work Time Agreement, the share of work time allocated to Norwegian primary school teachers for teaching is 44 per cent (741 hours per year in teaching out of 1,687.5 hours per year in total). Teacher tasks related to instructional practice in the SABER model (mentoring, collaboration on the school plan, curricula design, internal evaluations) is not officially stipulated at the national or local level, although it is generally interpreted as part of a teacher's assignment. However, teacher tasks such as teaching, supervising students, grading assessments and integrating difficult student populations are officially stipulated in laws and regulations in Norway.
Successful education systems such as those of Ontario (Canada), Finland, Japan, South Korea and Singapore devote considerable time at the school level to activities that are related to instructional improvement, such as collaborative teacher analysis of instructional practice, mentoring and professional development (Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011; Darling-Hammond 2010; Levin, 2008). In addition, these systems tend to devote a smaller share of teacher's time to actual contact time with students, but a relatively larger share of time to teacher collaboration, on-site professional development, and research on the effectiveness of various teaching strategies. Japan, for example, devotes about 40 per cent of teachers' working time to these types of activities, while Ontario currently devotes 30 per cent (Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011).

Table 1. Teachers' official tasks related to instructional improvement

	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Mentor peers		✓		✓
Collaborate on school plan		✓	✓	✓
Design curriculum		✓		✓
Participate in school evaluation		✓		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

Recent impact evaluations of the curriculum reform have pointed out that there are differences between the

vision of knowledge, as depicted in the Core curriculum, and the one portrayed in the subject curricula (Dale et al., 2011). The vision of knowledge in the Core curriculum is broader than in the subject curricula and this can reflect a discrepancy. Additionally, according to the research mentioned above, a part of the competence goals in the curricula is vaguely worded. This lack of clarity can make it difficult for teachers to adequately assess their students. However, despite these challenges, teachers have reported that they have experienced an improvement in assessment practice since the reform. In a survey from 2012, seven out of ten primary school teachers alleged that the recent reform of the curriculum had led to better assessment practices (Hodgson et al., 2012).

Finally, studies on teachers' use of time in Norway show that teachers spend nearly 25 per cent of their time teaching in the classroom, 30 per cent in lesson planning, 20 per cent in meetings, 15 per cent correcting assignments and providing written feedback, and 10 per cent meeting and communicating with parents (Strøm et al., 2009). Curriculum work and professional development account for a minor proportion of the overall time outside of teaching.

Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

Established●●●○

The structure and characteristics of a teaching career can make it more or less attractive to talented individuals. They may be more inclined to become teachers if they see that entry requirements are on par with those of well-regarded professions in which compensation and working conditions are adequate, and attractive professional development opportunities exist.

SABER-Teachers considers four policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 2: (1) requirements for entering the teaching profession; (2) competitive pay; (3) appealing working conditions; and (4) attractive career opportunities.

Policy

(1) Requirements to enter the profession are highly stringent in Norway and are designed to attract talented candidates. The level of required education for teachers may indicate the attractiveness of the profession. While not the only way to communicate an attractive profession, it serves as one of the indicators: education systems where teacher positions are competitive often have rigorous entry requirements. Systems where entry into the profession is most demanding require a research-oriented bachelor's or master's degree. Norway requires minimum upper secondary grades of 4 (out of 6) in mathematics and 3 (out of 6) in Norwegian to enter initial teacher education programmes. In addition, potential applicants need a minimum of 35 grade points (out of 60) in upper secondary school to enter initial teacher training courses. In 2015, Norwegian teachers were required to have a bachelor's degree (ISCED 5A) to be allowed to teach, along with a minimum amount of practical experience. They also had to pass a formal assessment of completed and approved work requirements, according to the Norwegian regulation. From 2017, teacher education requires a master's degree for all levels in Norwegian schools. The Education Act and associated regulations require candidates to hold both professional qualifications and teaching qualifications to be eligible for an appointed teaching post.

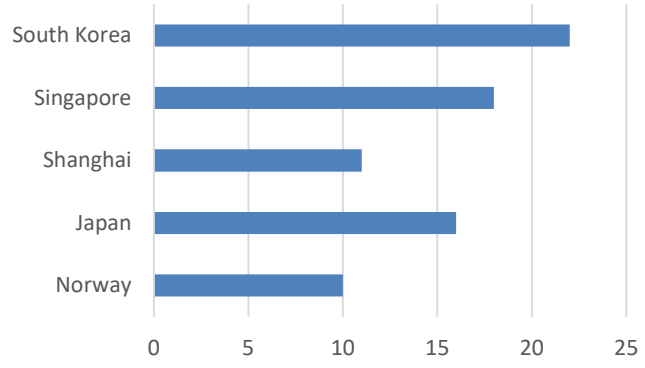
(2) The start pay and the highest pay/initial pay ratio for Norwegian teachers may be less attractive to competent individuals. Teacher start pay depends on the teacher's level of education. Teachers at the level of ISCED 5 are paid 61 per cent of per capita GDP, which in the SABER model is considered relatively low. However, compared with the start pay in other professions in Norway at ISCED 5 level, the salary is not particularly low (With, 2016). The ratio of the highest pay to the initial pay in the Norwegian salary schedule for teachers is 1.22 (ISCED 5 level), which is considered relatively low in the SABER model, and is also low compared with other countries (With, 2016). Teachers in Norway tend to have higher starting salaries than teachers in other OECD countries, but salaries do not increase as much with experience (OECD, 2015). Salaries also do not vary according to teacher performance.

(3) Teacher working conditions may be attractive in Norway. Working conditions can play an important role in the decision to become a teacher. Talented candidates who have opportunities in other professions may be discouraged from becoming teachers if working conditions are unpleasant, unreliable or unsafe. SABER-Teachers measures working conditions through pupil-

teacher ratios to monitor overcrowding and compliance with infrastructure requirements. High-performing systems have a maximum teacher-student ratio of less than 30 and 20 students per teacher in primary and secondary education respectively.
In Norway, no centralized data are available on the percentage of Norwegian schools that comply with adequate infrastructure conditions. However, Norway benefits from one of the lowest ratios of students to teaching staff among OECD countries: 10:1 at primary and secondary level. In addition, instead of using student-teacher ratios to understand teachers' working conditions, Norway measures the average group-class size (16.8 students per class at primary and lower secondary), which is considered to make working conditions appealing (Vegas et al., 2012).

(4) Career opportunities may be attractive to competent individuals in Norway. Teachers in most education systems have the opportunity to be promoted to the position of principal at some point in their careers. In addition to these 'vertical' promotions, most high-performing education systems also offer 'horizontal' promotions to academic positions that allow teachers to grow professionally, yet remain closely connected to instruction, instead of moving to managerial positions (OECD, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2010). Norwegian teachers have the option to apply to both school administration posts (such as school principals) and academic leadership positions. In addition, promotion opportunities are linked to performance. This may signal to the candidates interested in the teaching profession that there are opportunities for professional growth.

Figure 2. Student-teacher ratio, primary school



Source: SABER-Teachers database

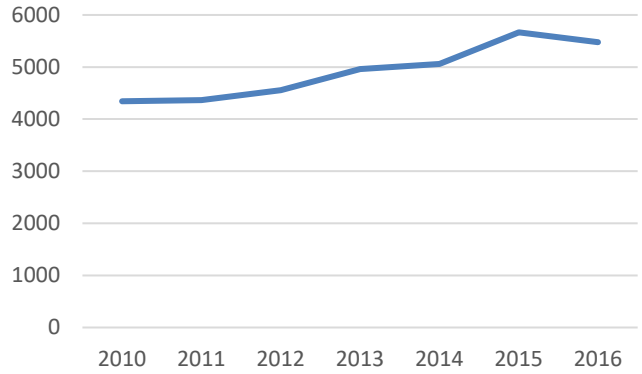
Implementation

In the last decade, more than 95 per cent of full-time teaching positions (FTE) have been filled with teachers with approved teacher status. At the upper secondary level, 93 per cent of teachers hold university level qualifications (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2014).

Since 2008, the number of qualified first applications to teacher initial education in Norway has increased significantly (Figure 3). This increase is higher than the overall increase in the number of applicants to other higher education degrees. Similarly, the mean grade point average of the applicants to two of the most relevant initial teacher education programmes (higher primary and lower secondary teacher education (GLU 5-10 and integrated master) is higher than that of applicants to other higher education degrees.

However, the grade point average to enter the education programme for primary school teachers (grades 1-7) has not increased as much. In fact, the grade point average of GLU 1-7 applicants is lower than the overall average for applicants to higher education (Database on Statistics on Higher Education, 2017). Norwegian Statistics (SSB) expects a teacher shortage for primary education teachers in the coming years.

Figure 3. Number of qualified first applications to teacher training from 2010–2016



Source: GNIST Indicator Report, 2016

Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

Established●●●○

It is crucial to equip teachers with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom. Success requires subject matter and pedagogic knowledge, as well as classroom management skills and a great deal of teaching practice. Good preparation puts all teachers on an equal footing, giving them a common framework for improving their instructional practice.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 3: (1) minimum standards for pre-service training programmes; and (2) required levels of classroom experience for all teachers.

Policy

(1) In Norway, initial teacher education takes place at the ISCED 5A level. Candidates to the teaching profession who do not hold this qualification are not allowed to hold open-ended teaching positions. Virtually all high-performing countries require that teachers have an educational level equivalent to ISCED 5A (a bachelor's degree), and some systems also require a research-based master's degree (OECD, 2011). In Norway, a new regulation will take effect in 2017 that will require a research-based master's degree (above ISCED 5A) to become a teacher.

(2) Teachers are required to have practical experience before entering the teaching profession, and induction programmes are offered at the local level. Practical experience is a critical factor in preparing teachers to enter the profession. The more teachers are able to try out their pedagogical theories, subject-matter knowledge, and classroom management skills, the better prepared they are for their careers. Most high-performing systems require teacher entrants to have considerable classroom experience before becoming independent teachers; some of these systems also provide mentoring and support during teachers' first and even second year on the job (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ingersoll, 2007). In Norway, teacher trainees are required to have three months (100 days) of classroom experience during their initial teacher education (Table 2). As of 2017, teachers will be required to have 110 days of classroom experience. Other top-performing systems such as Japan or Singapore require their teaching candidates to have between 1–2 years of professional experience before entering the classroom, which is higher than the amount required by Norway. In addition, they offer induction programmes that aim to facilitate the transition of new teachers into teaching, which usually lasts longer than 7 months. These programmes include mentoring and coaching activities with more experienced teachers, and they have the potential to make teachers more effective in the classroom and reduce teacher turnover. Although in Norway there is no formal induction scheme for newly appointed teachers at the national level, at the local and school levels, municipalities and schools usually provide mentoring to new teachers throughout their first year in the profession. Some experienced teachers receive training to become mentors as part of professional development activities in Norway.

Table 2. Required classroom experience, secondary school teachers

	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
<3 months				
<12 months	✓		✓	
12-24 months				✓
>24 months		✓		

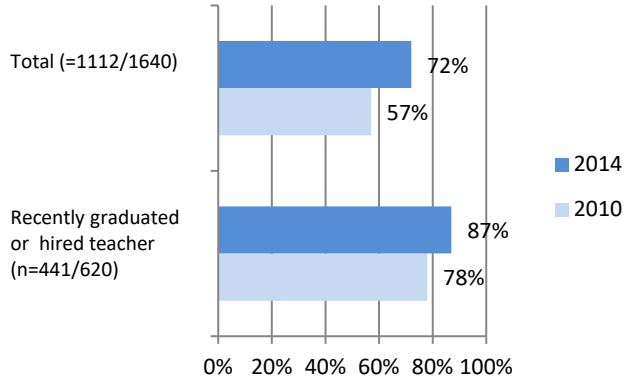
Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

As mentioned above, even though there is no teacher induction scheme or requirement to participate in mentorship programmes for novice teachers at the national level, mentoring programmes are widespread in Norway. Statistics show that a majority of municipalities and schools have established a mentor programme for novice teachers, and this is particularly evident in municipalities and schools that had novice teachers employed at the time of this report (Figure 4). Experienced teachers are trained with formal credits in

mentoring as part of the further education system in Norway, and they work as mentors for novice teachers.

Figure 4. Share of Norwegian schools with a mentor programme available for novice teachers



Source: Rambøll, 2015

Goal 4: Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

Established●●●○

Ensuring that teachers work in schools where their skills are most needed is important for the equity and efficiency of an education system. First, it is a way of distributing teachers as efficiently as possible, making sure that there are no shortages of qualified teachers in any given grade, education level or subject. Second, it is a means of ensuring that all students in a school system have an equal opportunity to learn. Without purposeful allocation, it is likely that teachers will gravitate towards schools serving better-off students or those located in more desirable areas, deepening inequalities in the education system.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 4: (1) incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools; and (2) incentives for teachers to teach subjects in which there is a critical shortage of instructors.

Policy

(1) In Norway, there are some incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools, and teaching experience and job title are not the only factors considered when deciding transfer priorities. Attracting effective teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools (that are in disadvantaged locations or serve underprivileged populations) is a challenge for many countries and often requires specific incentives. Teachers are offered extra pay to work in hard-to-staff schools in the capital municipality of Oslo where there is a large share of students with immigrant backgrounds, among other challenges. In addition to the monetary bonus, novice teachers are offered student loan reductions to work in the three northernmost counties in Norway, which are considered hard-to-staff areas.

(2) Norway has identified critical shortage subjects, and there is one incentive for teachers to teach them. Ensuring that teachers work in schools where their skills are most needed is important for the equity and efficiency of the education system. In Norway, teacher shortages have been identified in English, mathematics, Norwegian language, Norwegian sign language and Sami language. As a result, in Norway, there is a policy that stipulates that teachers willing to teach certain subjects can be offered higher salaries. While not recognized as an incentive within the SABER Teachers framework, the Norwegian national government also facilitates and subsidizes professional development opportunities for teachers of critical shortage subjects. For example, teachers who did not study English can be trained to teach English through professional development programmes and then become English teachers.

Table 3. Incentives for teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools

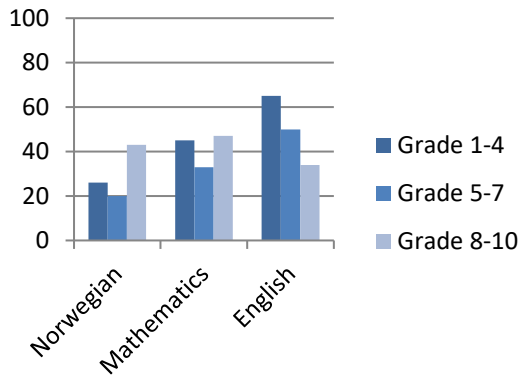
	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Better chance of promotion			✓		✓
Higher basic salary		✓			
Monetary bonus	✓	✓	✓		
Subsidized education	✓		✓		
Housing support		✓			✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

The Education Act (2015) mandates that school staff must have relevant expertise in the subjects they teach. Norway has identified critical shortage subjects, and the authorities are promoting continuing education for teachers to fill these gaps. Statistics show that the proportion of teachers with less than 30–60 formal credits in their teaching subjects ranges between 20 and 70 per cent across primary schools in Norway (Figure 5). In this credit system, 30 credits are equal to a full-time semester of education, while six semesters of 30 credits/study points is the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. From 2017, Norwegian teachers are required to have 60 credits in a specific teaching subject in order to be allowed to teach that subject in upper secondary education and in most subjects of the lower secondary education level. For the rest of the subjects of lower secondary, the requirement is 30 credits. Professional development plans are implemented to ensure that current teachers achieve the competencies they need and earn the necessary credits.

Figure 5. Share of teachers who do not meet the competency requirements of the Education Act



Source: Ministry of Education and Research, 2016

Goal 5: Leading teachers with strong principals

Latent●○○○

The quality of school heads is an important predictor of student learning. Capable principals act as instructional leaders, providing direction and support to teachers in order to improve instructional practice at the school level. In addition, capable principals can help attract and retain competent teachers.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 5: (1) investment by the education system in developing qualified school leaders; and (2) the decision-making authority given to school principals to support and improve instructional practice.

Policy

(1) In Norway, there are specific educational programmes for principals that support the development of their leadership skills. However, participation in these programmes is not required to become a principal. Research from high-performing education systems suggests that principals can develop leadership skills through supported work experience or specific training courses. For example, the systems of Japan, South Korea, Shanghai (China) and Singapore all require that applicants for principal positions participate in specific coursework and/or a specialized internship or mentoring programme designed to develop essential leadership skills (OECD, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2010). In Norway, although participation in training programmes for principals is not compulsory, applicants for principal positions who have participated in programmes with credits have an advantage and are sought after by the municipalities (employers). In general, education at ISCED 5A level is required to become a principal in Norway, but other than that, there are no specific training requirements for principals. Nor is a principal's performance rewarded in Norway.

(2) Norwegian principals are explicitly expected to act as instructional leaders and to evaluate teacher performance. Once education systems have qualified principals in place, they need to focus on improving classroom instruction (Barber and Mourshed, 2007). High-performing education systems such as those of Finland, Ontario (Canada) and Singapore consider their principals to be instructional leaders. They are expected to be knowledgeable in teaching and curriculum matters, as well as provide guidance and support to teachers. Principals in these systems evaluate teachers, provide feedback, assess their school's needs for professional development, and direct instructional resources where they are most needed (Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011). In Norway, the Norwegian Education Act delineates a clear instructional leadership role for principals.

Implementation

Researchers used data from the OECD Teaching and Learning Survey (OECD, 2013) to conduct an extensive evaluation of the national principal training programme (Hybertsen et al., 2014). Results show that 80 per cent of the principals who participated in the education programmes especially tailored for principals constantly evaluate their teachers, compared to 72 per cent of principals who did not participate in education programmes. In addition, it is common for principals who have completed the programme to establish a professional development plan for their schools. These findings, combined with other findings from TALIS, suggest that participation in principal education programmes leads to a stronger performance by principals, oriented towards improving teaching practices.

Table 4. Mechanisms to support the development of principals' leadership skills

	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Courses or other training requirements			✓	✓	✓
Participation in mentoring or internship programme		✓		✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers database

Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning

Latent●○○○

It is essential to assess how well teachers are teaching and whether students are learning in order to devise strategies to improve both processes. First, education systems must identify poorly performing teachers and students before they can provide struggling classrooms with the adequate support they need. Second, teacher and student evaluations help identify good practices, which can be shared across the system to help improve school performance.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 6: (1) availability of data on student achievement; (2) adequate systems for monitoring teacher performance; and (3) multiple mechanisms for evaluating teacher performance.

Policy

(1) Student achievement data are collected in Norway and made available to inform teaching and/or policy. All high-performing education systems monitor student performance to inform teaching and teacher policies, but they do so in very different ways. They may conduct large-scale system-wide assessments, student evaluations (by teachers), or employ other standardized student learning methods. Regardless of the mechanisms they use, high-performing systems ensure that three main functions are fulfilled:

1. The education system collects complete and relevant student achievement data on a regular basis.
2. Public authorities have access to these data and use them to inform policy-making.
3. A feedback mechanism shares these data and relevant analyses at the school level, which is then used by teachers to improve their instructional practice.

Norway uses large scale national tests and examinations conducted yearly in 5th grade and upwards by the Directorate of Education and Training to inform teaching and monitor education quality levels. Tests are conducted in 5th, 8th and 9th grades in English, mathematics and reading. Student achievement data and data on school and classroom learning environments are made available to decision-makers. Findings are disseminated and used to provide support to teachers and schools. The results of these tests inform teaching lesson plans and instructional practices within the school. By policy, Norwegian teachers have to be trained on how to conduct student learning assessments.

(2) There are no national requirements or official systems of teacher assessment in place to monitor or evaluate teacher performance in Norway. Norwegian teachers are not required by law to participate in

national evaluations of teacher performance. However, most municipalities and schools in Norway carry out systematic evaluations to assess their teachers. Evaluation criteria vary across municipalities and schools, and may include an evaluation of class leadership, goal oriented teaching, and peer and supervisor feedback. The results are used by school owners – the communities and municipalities – to improve performance.

Although teacher assessments are not required in Norway, the national authorities (Directorate for Education and Training), the National Association of Local and Regional Authorities, representing the school owners, (KS for its acronym in Norwegian), the Union of Education Norway (*Utdanningsforbundet*, the largest teacher organization), and the School Student Union of Norway (SSUN, *Elevorganisasjonen*) joined forces to develop a 'Teaching Assessment Guide'. The purpose of this guide is to help students and teachers come together to assess and improve training in subjects. The aim is that the *Teaching Assessment – A Guide for Students and Teachers* contributes to a joint reflection on what creates good learning from both the teacher and student perspective. The principles are outlined below:

1. The assessment is conducted by both the teacher and the students. The assessment shall develop dialogue between the teacher and the student, and it must be about matters they can influence either together or separately.
2. The assessment shall be directly related to education in the individual subjects.
3. The assessment shall be about learning, working methods, teaching strategies, content, and the organization of teaching sessions.

(3) There are mechanisms to evaluate teacher performance in Norway, but they are neither systematic nor regulated. Research suggests that no single method of evaluating teacher performance is fail-safe. Most high-performing systems conduct teacher evaluations using multiple data collection mechanisms and varied assessment criteria. Ideally, a comprehensive teacher evaluation framework combines student results, teacher portfolios, classroom observations, and student/parent feedback. International experience and research both indicate that none of these approaches taken separately produce a balanced and objective evaluation of teacher performance. Norway's municipalities and schools use various criteria to assess teacher performance, including teaching methods, student assessments, and student academic achievement. Methods used range from teacher performance evaluations to classroom observations. However, although municipalities and schools conduct teacher evaluations, the Norwegian education system does not establish specific criteria requirements by policy (Table 5).

Table 5. Criteria for evaluating teacher performance

	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Subject matter knowledge		✓			✓
Teaching methods		✓	✓	✓	✓
Student assessment methods		✓	✓	✓	✓
Students' academic achievement			✓		

Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

No data are available on how many counties and municipalities in Norway have policies on teacher assessment or conduct teacher assessments. In addition, no aggregated data exists on how teachers perform in teacher evaluations.

Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Established ●●●○

Support systems help improve instruction at the school level. In order to continually improve their practices, teachers and schools need to be able to analyse the specific challenges they face in classroom teaching, to access information on best practices for addressing these

challenges, and to receive specific external support tailored to their needs.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 7: (1) opportunities for teacher professional development; (2) collaborative professional development that focuses on improving instruction; and (3) assignment of professional development training on the basis of perceived need.

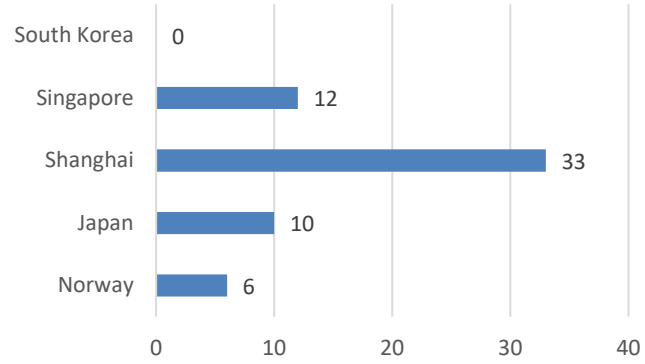
Policy

(1) There are several opportunities for teacher professional development. In Norway, the Work Time Agreement stipulates that teachers devote at least six workdays to professional development activities per year**.** The professional development programme in the national strategy 'Competence for Quality' comes in addition to the six days of required professional development. As the national government and the school owners share the costs of the professional development programme, teachers can attend 'Competence for Quality' professional development while receiving a full salary.

(2) Teacher professional development in Norway includes some activities that associate research with instructional improvement. Research suggests that effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for in-school analysis of instructional practice. As mentioned earlier, high-performing education systems such as those of Japan and the city of Ontario (Canada) devote as much as 30 per cent of teachers' school time to professional development and instructional improvement activities. In Norway, these activities include observation visits to other schools and participation in teacher or school networks, engaging in research, and mentoring and/or coaching.

(3) Teacher professional development in Norway is assigned based on perceived needs. In Norway, needs are identified either through statistics from the Directorate of Education and Training on critical shortage subjects at national level and by collaborative evaluations at municipality and/or school level, or through individual applications by teachers for any continuing education programme. School owners have the final responsibility of assigning teachers to professional development programmes, but regulations suggest a minimum of six days of professional development is required for all teachers on a yearly basis (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Required or suggested days of teacher professional development per year



Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

Approximately 80,000 teachers hold teaching positions in schools in Norway. The number of participants in professional development for teachers under the State subsidized strategy (Competence for Quality) has increased steadily since 2009. Compared with 2013, the number of participants doubled in 2014, and in 2015 it was expected that around 5,000 teachers would participate (Directorate of Education and Training, 2015). Compared with other professions, the share of Norwegian teachers who participate in some type of professional development programme during the year is high (Adult Education Survey, 2007).

Results from the Participant Survey 2014 show that teachers are largely satisfied with continuing education courses and with the arrangements made for their participation by the school where they work. A high percentage of participants state that they have changed, or will change, their own teaching and ways of working after undergoing professional development activities.

Evaluations also indicate that participating teachers benefit considerably from the available opportunities for additional training and continuing education programmes (Gjerustad and Næss, 2016).

Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform

Emerging●●○○

Mechanisms that adequately motivate teachers enable school systems to show their seriousness in achieving education goals, making a teaching career attractive to competent individuals and rewarding good performance while ensuring accountability.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach Goal 8: (1) initiatives that link career opportunities to teachers' performance; (2) mechanisms that hold teachers accountable; and (3) performance based compensation.

Policy

(1) Promotion opportunities in Norway are linked to performance at the local level. To ensure teachers are capable before granting them long-term contracts, authorities need both a probation period upon initial hires and the right not to offer long-term contracts to teachers who do not perform well during the probation period. In Norway, there is no mandatory probation period for teachers before they are granted open-ended appointments, and performance on the job does not necessarily factor into whether teachers receive this type of appointment.

(2) There are minimum mechanisms in place to hold Norwegian teachers accountable. Professional development or performance evaluation is not required by law to remain in the teaching profession. Requiring teachers to meet some standards to remain in the teaching profession can facilitate the removal of ineffective teachers. One minimum standard is consistent teacher attendance. Research in both developed and developing countries indicate that teacher absenteeism can reach high levels, negatively impacting student performance (Chaudhury et al., 2005; Herrmann and Rockoff, 2009; Miller, Murnane and Willett, 2008; Rogers and Vegas, 2009). Norwegian teachers can be dismissed for absenteeism (not counting sick-leave), misconduct and poor performance, in addition to child abuse. Teacher absenteeism can even result in salary deductions.

(3) Teacher compensation is to a certain degree linked to performance in Norway, but this is not evident in the salary scale. To align teacher incentives, systems that are most effective at motivating teachers provide incentives to perform well (e.g. performance bonuses). In Norway, performance reviews may carry salary implications, but its extent is uncertain, and they may also vary from school to school and from municipality to municipality. In addition, by policy, Norwegian teachers have no monetary bonus opportunities.

Table 6. Requirements to remain in the profession, primary and secondary school teachers

	Norway	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Professional development		✓			
Performance evaluation		✓	✓	✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers database

Implementation

It is unclear to what extent the policy by which teachers can be dismissed due to absenteeism is enforced in practice. There is a current policy initiative to strengthen teachers' promotion and career opportunities in Norwegian schools. The current government recently launched the programme 'Competence for Quality for teachers'. This programme allows existing teachers to apply for specialist positions. This is a new career path now available to teachers through which they can specialize in mathematics and national language, and from 2017, in practical and aesthetical subjects (the latter may be similar to Liberal Arts in the United States). Relevant tasks for teacher specialists include: (i) carrying out a professional school-based assessment; (ii) taking up initiatives to raise the competencies of colleagues; and (iii) providing guidance to other teachers at the school and leading academic projects.

Applications for teacher specialist positions will undergo research-based evaluations. The evaluations will in turn inform decision-making policies on how to expand career paths for teachers in Norwegian

schools. In the framework of these positions, authorities emphasize that teacher specialist positions shall contribute to schools' collective learning and development, and retain skilled teachers. Given that specialists' tasks involve activities associated with instructional improvement, such as classroom observation and collaborative professional development, it is expected that they contribute to strengthening schools' ongoing work on quality assurance and development.

Policy Implications

This SABER country report has offered a snapshot of Norway's key teacher policies and how they compare with those of top global performers in education. This section presents some policy implications for the further improvement of the teacher policy framework. These recommended measures are derived from the above analysis and interviews conducted in Norway. Policy suggestions are provided only to the priority areas where the level of performance is below 'established'.

Matching teachers' skills with students' needs (Goal 4)

There are national level incentives for teachers who teach critical shortage subjects, but not for those who work in hard-to-staff schools, especially in those schools outside the capital that serve vulnerable immigrant students.

Policy options:

- Monitor teacher supply and demand systematically so as to be aware of current shortages at national and local levels. An important measure in this regard would be the establishment of a national teacher registry with mapping of teachers' competencies and experiences, updated annually.
- Provide additional funding to hire teachers in hard-to-staff areas.
- Provide visible incentives for teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools (e.g. higher salaries).
- Provide incentives for student teachers who specialize in subjects with teacher shortages (e.g. higher salaries).

Leading teachers with strong principals (Goal 5)

Although principal education programmes exist, participation is not required to become a principal. Thus, some principals may not be receiving adequate training before taking on a principal position.

Policy options:

- Make principal education programmes a mandatory requirement to become school leaders.

Monitoring teaching and learning (Goal 6)

Student achievement data are collected and made available to inform teaching or policy. There are no official national requirements or central systems in place to evaluate teachers and monitor their performance.

Policy options may include:

- Introduce guidelines for a national teaching evaluation system with feedback from several sources. These guidelines should include information on how to use the results of teacher evaluations to inform professional development and improve teaching.
- Consider the design and implementation of a systematic teacher evaluation system incorporated into the Education Act. This national framework should be based on an assessment of local evaluation systems to find the most effective solutions in evaluating and supporting schools and teacher quality.

Motivating teachers to perform (Goal 8)

Promotion opportunities are linked to performance at the local and school levels, and performance reviews can carry salary implications. In addition, teachers can be dismissed with cause. However, these salary implications are not clear in the salary scale, and requirements for teachers to progress and remain in teaching could be more stringent.

Policy options may include:

- Establish guidelines for municipalities and school owners on linking teachers' performance with teachers' salary, monetary bonuses, and promotions.
- Increase requirements for teachers to progress and remain in teaching (e.g. granting open-ended appointments and promotions based on performance, and requiring participation in professional development teacher evaluations).

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Annex 1: SABER-Teachers Ratings

The SABER-Teachers team has identified policy levers (actions that governments can take) and indicators (that measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers) for each of the eight policy goals referenced in this country report. For example, for Teacher Policy Goal 1 'Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers', the SABER-Teachers team has identified the following policy levers and indicators:

Table A1.1 Setting clear expectations for teachers

Policy Levers	Indicators
A. Are there clear expectations for teachers?	1. Are there standards for what students must know and be able to do?
	2. Are the tasks that teachers are expected to carry out officially stipulated?
B. Is there useful guidance on the use of teachers' working time?	1. Are teachers' official tasks related to instructional improvement?
	2. Does the statutory definition of working time for primary school teachers recognize non-teaching hours?
	3. What is the share of working time allocated to teaching for primary school teachers?

Each goal is defined in the first paragraph of the section relating to that goal in the country report. Policy levers for achieving that goal are identified in the second paragraph. The remaining text in each section provides details about the indicators that measure each of the levers.

Using the policy levers and indicators, the SABER-Teachers tool evaluates the performance of an education system on each of the eight teacher policy goals using a four-tiered scale (latent, emerging, established and advanced) that describes the extent to which the system has established teacher policies associated with improved student outcomes.

This four-tiered rating system represents a continuum of education systems, from education systems with no teacher policies at all (or, in some cases, policies that are detrimental to the encouragement of learning) to more comprehensive, developed systems with teacher policies oriented towards learning. SABER-Teacher ratings can be defined in the following manner:

- Advanced systems, rated on a particular policy goal, have established multiple policies conducive to learning for each policy lever used to achieve that goal.
- Established systems have at least one policy and/or law in place that uses those policy levers.
- Emerging systems have only some appropriate policies in place to achieve the policy goal.
- Latent systems have no or few teacher policies.

See Vegas et al. (2012) for more details about these definitions, as well as a detailed review of the policy levers and indicators used by SABER-Teachers.

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The **Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)** initiative produces comparative data and knowledge on education policies and institutions, with the aim of helping countries systematically strengthen their education systems. SABER evaluates the quality of education policies against evidence-based global standards, using new diagnostic tools and detailed policy data. The SABER country reports give all stakeholders in educational results—from administrators, teachers and parents to policy-makers and business people—an accessible, objective snapshot showing how well the policies of their country's education system are geared toward ensuring that all children and youth learn.

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Teachers for Education 2030

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