

Wise women

Since 1955 the total number of pupils and students has increased from approximately 550 000 to more than 1 million. This means that almost one out of four Norwegians are studying.

Primary and lower secondary school

With the change-over from seven years to nine-years compulsory primary school, the number of pupils increased from the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s.

The number of pupils fell until the mid-1990s but then increased sharply when school attendance became compulsory for six-year-olds in 1997 (Reform 97). In the autumn of 2007 there were 616 400 pupils at primary and lower secondary schools.

Upper secondary school

After a minor decline in the number of pupils (including apprentices) in upper secondary education in the 1990s, there has been an increase the last years.

More than 90 per cent of 16-18 year olds attend upper secondary school compared with 65 per cent in 1980.

Universities and colleges

The marked growth in higher education levelled off at the end of the 1990s. The total number of students is 219 500 (including students abroad) and almost one out of three 19-24 year olds are now enrolled in higher education.

One out of four drops out of upper secondary education

Nine out of ten Norwegian youths aged 16-19 are currently enrolled in upper secondary education, which can thus almost be regarded as compulsory. However, about one in four drop out before their education is completed, with the highest dropout rate being found among pupils in vocational studies. There are also clear gender differences, with boys dropping out more often than girls.

Women in majority

Since the mid-1980s, women have been in the majority among students, and today six out of ten students are women. The share of women is particularly high at university colleges (64 per cent).

Women now also make up the majority (62 per cent) of the graduates at universities and university colleges. Women make up 56 per cent of students at Master degree level and 65 per cent at Bachelor degree level. With regard to PhDs, women are still in the minority: in 2007, almost 45 per cent of doctorates were taken by women.

More women than men with higher education

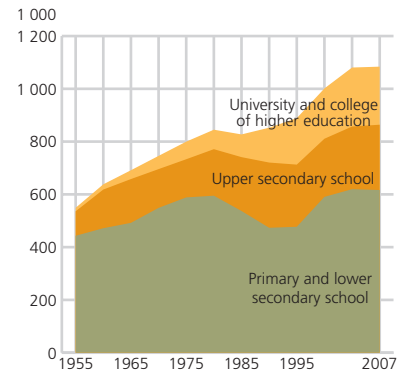
Three times as many Norwegians now have a degree from a university or university college compared with 1970, and more women than men now have a higher education. However, men still have a somewhat higher education than women.

There are now far more women than men with higher education in the age group under 50. The gender differences are particularly significant among those aged 25-29: 49 per cent of women have higher education, compared with 32 per cent of men. In this age group women now outnumber men in Master degree studies.

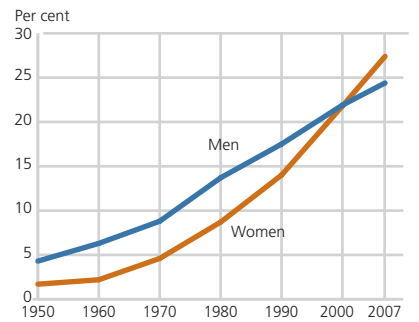
Fewer users of Nynorsk

Following a marked decline from 1950 to 1976, the percentage of users of Nynorsk (one of the two official forms of Norwegian) in primary and lower secondary schools stabilised at around 17 per cent. However, the percentage

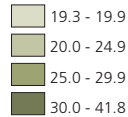
Number of pupils/students in primary and lower secondary education, upper secondary education, and university/college of higher education



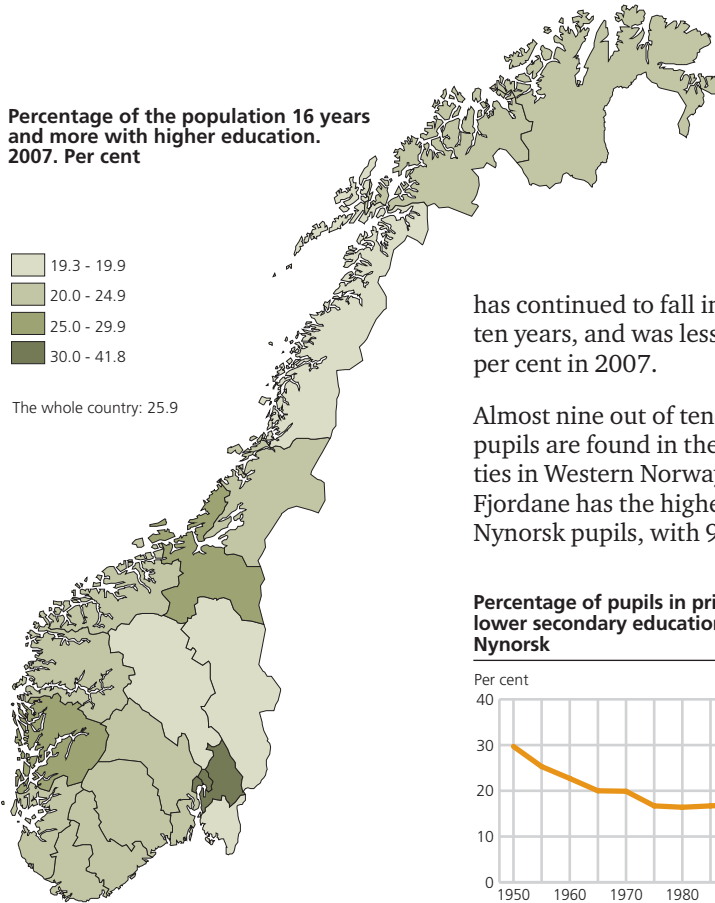
Percentage of men and women with higher education



Percentage of the population 16 years and more with higher education. 2007. Per cent



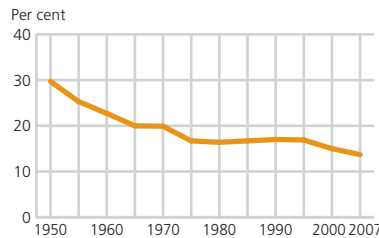
The whole country: 25.9



has continued to fall in the last ten years, and was less than 14 per cent in 2007.

Almost nine out of ten Nynorsk pupils are found in the four counties in Western Norway. Sogn og Fjordane has the highest share of Nynorsk pupils, with 97 per cent.

Percentage of pupils in primary and lower secondary education using Nynorsk



Four out of ten Oslo residents have higher education compared with two out of ten in Hedmark and Oppland. The differences are even greater between municipalities:

Municipalities with the highest/lowest percentage of residents with higher education. 2007

	Per cent
Highest	
Bærum	45.3
Asker	43.0
Oslo	41.8
Nesodden	36.8
Oppegård	35.8
Lowest	
Moskenes	9.7
Karlsøy	9.5
Torsken	9.1
Værøy	8.8
Røst	8.6

Pupils and students abroad: Most popular countries and subjects. 2007/2008

	Number of students
Country	
United Kingdom	2 498
Denmark	2 501
Australia	1 448
Sweden	1 051
USA	874
Poland	963
Hungary	680
Subjects	
Medicine	2 349
Business and administration	1 835
Art	964
Social sciences	818
Science and technology	638
Humanities	566
Physiatrics	458
Therapeutics	440
Journalism/media	407

Source: The State Educational Loan Fund.

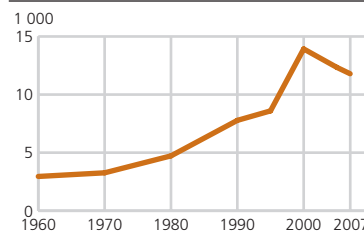
Studies abroad

More and more young people are studying abroad. The number of students has increased five-fold since 1960, with the largest increase in the 1990s, but has now dropped.

In 2007, there were 11 800 students studying abroad in addition to 6 700 exchange students and part-time students, representing about 10 per cent of the total student population.

A total of 66 per cent of part-time students abroad are women, while the share of women who complete their education abroad is 58 per cent.

Number of students abroad



Source: The State Educational Loan Fund.