

## National seminar in Norway

### Introduction

The planning of the seminar started in May 2014, to be sure we could combine it with another national seminar for all the User organizations in the disability field in Norway. This is an annually seminar arranged by Statped. In Norway long distances and difficult communications force us to take such practical considerations, especially when we want many participants.

In autumn 2014 the planning phase was followed by a meeting with representatives from departments, directorates and employers organizations, to be sure they would commit themselves to join the seminar and take part in the difficult and necessary discussions about the transition from school to labor market for pupils with special needs.

### Aims and objectives

The INVESTT project was presented with focus on the Norwegian part of the project and some central experiences, both from the school's point of view and in a research perspective. This concluded in two main challenges in the Norwegian context:

- How to apply Universal Design in Vocational Education and Training to guide all students, with a wide range of abilities, towards success in the open labor market?
- How to help young persons with disabilities reach the same skill level as other students and improve their transition from school to the open labor market?

In spite of a school for all in Norway, where all students have the same right to be included in vocational education, with transition to labor market as part of the school system, the INVESTT-project has made it clear that these are still unsolved challenges in our community, and challenges that can't be solved without cooperation between sectors and stakeholders at all levels.

Consequently, these two questions or main themes functioned as a common thread through the whole day and all the different posts on the agenda.

### Local partners

Statped was responsible for the seminar and the main costs, as these questions are central in their mandate. The participation was totally free for those invited. Statped opened up for until 100 participants from all parts of Norway, and their central secretariat organized the whole seminar in cooperation with the Norwegian INVESTT-group.

### Date and place

The seminar was held at a Hotel in Oslo on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, with a schedule from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### Program

In addition to presenting the INVESTT-project, we had invited different persons and groups to contribute in different ways with their experiences or opinions on the day's main theme. First, short speeches from leaders of two umbrella youth organizations; one for all students in primary,

secondary and upper secondary school and one for different disability organizations. Then we had a session with a group of young people who all had met difficulties in school and / or labor market. They shared their experiences and gave the audience some advice to prevent this from happen again. After lunch we heard about some successful projects about cooperation between school and labor market, which showed some opportunities that lies in our system. At the end of the day, the participants were invited to discuss the themes in groups, before a panel with representatives from different stakeholders told about their aims and activities to contribute to solve the challenges and then opened up for questions from the audience. See the program in annex.

We have reason to hope that the seminar by putting the themes on the agenda, and pointing out some ways to handle the challenges, at least will make some difference to these important but difficult questions.

### **The profile of the participants**

In advance nearly 80 persons were on the list of participants. 66 persons showed up. In addition to represents from all relevant user organizations, we had participants from departments and directorates linked to school, social care and labor market, from national, regional and local school authorities, schools, organizations for employees and employers, and from Statped. The meeting room was organized with round tables, where participants were mixed in order to facilitate fruitful discussions. See list of participants in annex.

### **An overview of the needs of stakeholders**

Of course this diversity of stakeholders represented a diversity of needs and interests. Our aim was to show some of the complexity in these different needs and interests, but at the same time point out the common need of coping with them, and point out some possible ways to do this. We've learned from the INVESTT-project that there's no other solutions than to cooperate across stakeholders and interests.

### **Annexes:**

- *List of participants*
- *Program*

## Pictures



«Forandringsfabrikken».



Leader of the Student Organization, Benjamin Myrstad.



Prof. Stein Erik Ohna from University of Stavanger.