



BERGEN RESEARCH TRIP

08-12/09/2025



RESEARCH TEAM

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INSTITUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2025

VISITED

09

TUESDAY

- Olsvik Skole (combined primary and secondary school)
Bergen kommune - Olsvik skole
- Red Cross (youth workers on site and mobile)
Red Cross Youth - Student Bergen
- Ung Norge (children and youth work for those in/from the welfare system, vocational training) UngNorge Bergen - YOUNG Norway

10

WEDNESDAY

- Hyssingen Production School (upper secondary school, commercial enterprises disengaged youth 16-24, some ex-offenders)
Produksjonsskulane
- Austrheim VGS (vocational upper secondary school) Austrheim vgs.

11

THURSDAY

- Knarvik VGS (vocational upper secondary school & TAF) Knarvik vgs.
- Stend Skole (upper secondary school, adapted and adult education)
Stend vgs.

12

FRIDAY

- Vestlandshuset (Dept. For Business Inclusion, County Council)
Startside - Vestland fylkeskommune

INTRODUCTION

The HCI Skills Gateway project was approached by Kenny McAllister in May 2025 to enquire whether we would be interested in an initial fact-finding trip to Norway to explore international best practices in vocational training, youth pathways, and community-driven employment initiatives and to understand how these could be adapted and scaled within Fife, and from an HCI point of view, the wider region. HCI agreed to commit £5,000 for an initial trip, with the possibility of more funding should it be evident that real value could be shown.



Red Cross cafe

Morag, Cecilie, Kenny, and Chris undertook the trip 8th-12 September and visited a variety of educational establishments, two community organisations, as well as the Department for Business Inclusion within the local authority.

Our main objective was to find out what they do that we can adapt, and this overview is a snapshot of what was gleaned following our visits to the various organisations.



Bergen

EDUCATION



The Norwegian school system is structured differently from the Scottish system. All children complete ten years of compulsory education, beginning with Primary School in the year they turn six. This stage lasts for seven years and is followed by three years of Lower Secondary School. After completing compulsory schooling, pupils may choose to continue into Upper Secondary School, where they select either the General Studies track—preparing them for university—or the Vocational Studies track, which equips them for skilled trades and professions. During our research trip to Bergen, we focused primarily on Vocational Studies, youth pathways, and community-driven employment initiatives.

Image 01 - Stend - farming

Image 02 - Energy skills partnership - TAF program at Knarvik

Image 03 - Stend- the bicycle workshop (Department of basic social skills)

OLSVIK SKOLE

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

<https://www.bergen.kommune.no/omkommunen/avdelinger/olsvik-skole>

Olsvik Skole is a 1-10 school which means that they have a Primary and Secondary School rolled into one school. Olsvik Skole lies in a deprived area of Bergen where some of their pupils struggle with poverty, mental health issues and social and emotional barriers. Some pupils from Olsvik Skole have previously taken part in FLYT (a youth development program) with good results.



Olsvik School

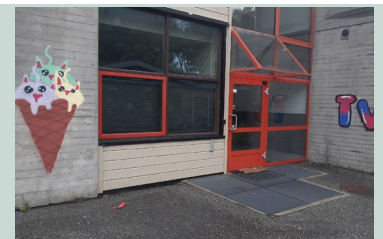
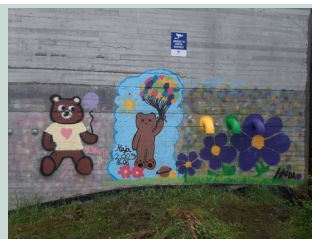


Olsvik Skole decorated by graffiti created by 16 students
Images courtesy of Facebook page FAU ved Olsvik SKole

FAU ved Olsvik Skole
June 16 · 🌐

Da har Olsvik skole igjen fått ny grafittkunst på grå vegger 🙌
Takk til 16 unge kunstnere under veiledning av Trine Sejrup og Liene Drubiņa! Og takk til [Loddefjord og Olsvik Områdesatsing](#) for å ha gjort grafittkurset mulig ❤️

Olsvik school has once again got new graffiti art on gray walls 🙌
Thanks to 16 young artists under the guidance of Trine Sejrup and Liene Drubiņa! And thanks to [Loddefjord og Olsvik Områdesatsing](#) for making the graffiti course possible ❤️
🌐 · [Hide Translation](#) · [Rate this translation](#)



AUSTRHEIM VGS

<https://www.austrheim.vgs.no/>

UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

This is a small upper secondary school located on the outskirts of Bergen, in a region shaped by industrial activity due to its proximity to Mongstad Base. The local labour market plays a significant role in shaping the school's educational offerings, which are closely aligned with employment opportunities in the area. As a result, the school has been highly successful in securing relevant apprenticeships for all its pupils within the surrounding region.



1



2

1 Austrheim mock care ward

2 Austrheim mock care ward



5



6

3 *woodwork*

4 *woodwork*

5 *workshop*



3



4

6 *Blue skills*

7 *Blue skills*



7

KNARVIK VGS

UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

<https://www.knarvik.vgs.no/>



Knarvik vidaregåande skule

Our visit to Knarvik Upper Secondary School was an eye opener for us in many ways. They presented us their **TAF model** (Technical and General Studies) where pupils gain two qualifications: Academic qualification for higher education and a Work Certificate (qualified trades worker). This originally was a request from industry as usually pupils choosing the vocational route, would only achieve the Work Certificate.

Knarvik VGS, along with other upper secondary schools in the area work together with Nordhordland Næringslag (an industry service) to ensure that all young people have a meaningful apprenticeship throughout their 4 years vocational studies. This service liaises with all the schools in the region. This cooperation is showing to be fruitful as their goal is to give 100% of pupils an apprenticeship - A goal they reach every year.

“Nordhordland has the best and closest collaboration between the industries and education. This is a result of the TAF program” - Baste Tveito, Former director of Nordhordland Næringslag.



Academic program



TAF-program: Dual education

PROGRAMS AT KNARVIK VGS.:

Academic program (studiespesialiserende)

Vocational programs

- Civil
- Health
- Electrical
- Industrial (TIF/Mechanical)

TAF-program: Dual education

Adapted learning groups with a focus on practical skills and everyday life training (tilrettelagte grupper)

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

~850 students

120 teachers and staff

Previously two schools

(separate vocational and academic schools)

Two campuses:

- Juvikstølen
- Kvernhusmyrane

TAF MODEL

AT KNARVIG VGS

TAF = Teknisk og Allmenne Fag
 Technical and General Studies
 4 year program

Two qualifications:

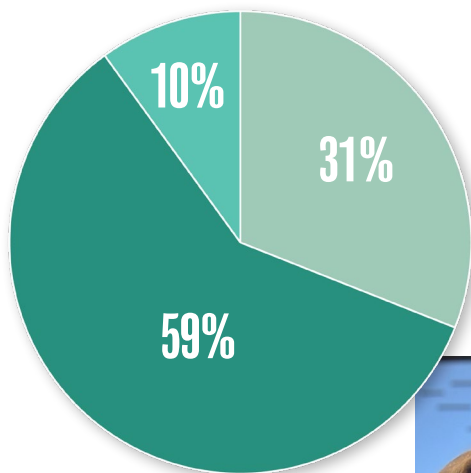
- Academic qualification for higher education
- Work certificate (qualified worker)

Request from the industry

About 60 different companies in the TAF-program at Knarvik vgs

EDUCATION AFTER TAF

TAF-students per level of education
 Finished at Knarvik 1996-2013 N=254



- University postgrad. (4+ yrs)
- University undergrad. (3 yrs)
- Professional Education

Source: TAF 2025 presentation

Image: Vivian and Cecilie



GENDER DISTRIBUTION AT TAF

| | TAF 2009-2019 | Avg. Norway 2009-2019 |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| B&C % girls | 13% | 5% |
| Electrics % girls | 30% | 6% |
| Health % boys | 12% | 16% |
| Mech % girls | 34% | 10% |

Statistics from Knarvik vgs. and SSB: <https://www.ssb.no/statbank/list/vgu/>

Vestland fylkeskommune

Source: TAF program at Knarvik vgs. (11.09.2025) presentation

TAF IS DIFFERENT FROM NORMAL VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

Normal vocational program (2+2)

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1st year | School |
| 2nd year | School |
| 3rd year | Workplace |
| 4th year | Workplace |

Academic program (3 years)

| | |
|----------|--------|
| 1st year | School |
| 2nd year | School |
| 3rd year | School |

| | | |
|----------|--------|-----------|
| 1st year | School | Workplace |
| 2nd year | School | Workplace |
| 3rd year | School | Workplace |
| 4th year | School | Workplace |

TAF-program (4 years of combination of school and training)

Source: TAF program at Knarvik vgs. (11.09.2025) presentation

"THE MISSING LINK" BETWEEN SCHOOL AND WORK

- Have focus on businesses and local municipalities to take apprentices, and in different subjects.
- The school help the students writing a CV and an application.
- The students are always in practice in companies that need apprentices!
- The companies get to know a person and finds out if he /she fits in!!
- And often they are apprentices there later

STEND

ASN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

<https://www.stend.vgs.no/>

Stend is a school like nothing we have ever seen before. It has 43 buildings, 700 acres of agricultural land and 1300 acres of forest. Stend is a school with many purposes. They work with pupils in need of special educational support. A lot of the work they do is practical and some pupils don't get grades. The most important thing is to create a space where they thrive and are able to feel mastery in what they do.

Practical education
in smaller groups

• Forest and landscape gardening

• Warehouse and Service

• Companion animals

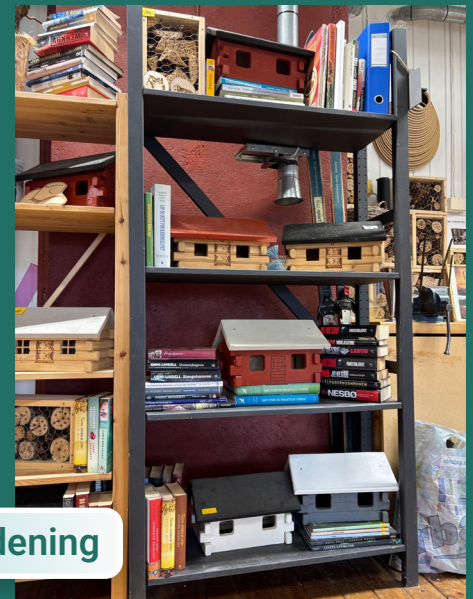
• Farming



Stend school



Stend onsite warehouse



Stend student workshop



Stend market shop

THE GOAL OF THE TRAINING

- Practical training in Norwegian, mathematics, English, science, social studies, physical education, nature-based production, and activities.
- The training emphasizes:
 - Social skills
 - Communication, AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)
 - Independence - ADL (Activities of Daily Living)
 - Participation and involvement
 - Empowerment of the students' wishes, needs, interests, opinions, and experiences



Stend traditional out buildings

HYSSINGEN PRODUCTION SCHOOL

DROPOUTS FROM UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL



<https://www.produksjonsskulane.no/>

Hyssingen Production School is one of the few schools of its kind in Norway, working specifically with young people who have dropped out of upper secondary education.

Unlike traditional schools, Hyssingen does

not follow a formal curriculum. Instead, it focuses on practical training through workshop-based learning. The school's main goal is to help young people feel part of something meaningful, while fostering a sense of mastery, personal growth, and belonging. This, in turn, helps young people make informed choices about their future—whether that means returning to upper secondary education or entering the workforce. The school works closely

with the Follow-up Service (Oppfølgingstjenesten) from NAV to ensure that every pupil leaves with the skills, confidence, and knowledge needed to continue their education or pursue employment.



Images:

- 1 Woodwork product
- 2 Hyssingen woodwork
- 3 Hyssingen cafe apprentices
- 4 Pressing vinyl commercial enterprise
- 5 Hyssingen blue vinyl
- 6 Hyssingen

3RD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

FLYT



FLYT - THIS SCHOOL YEAR

- 501 young people in Flyt
- 55 young people in Bergen

FLYT - NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

- 500 young people in Flyt
- 100 young people in Bergen

Source: Presentasjon av Flyt Bergen 2025 komprimert

FLYT is program supported by the Crown Prince and Crown Princess’s Foundation in Norway, designed to help students aged 15–16 transition successfully from lower to upper secondary school. The program focuses on building life skills, resilience, and social inclusion for young people who may be at risk of dropping out or facing challenges such as low motivation, mental health issues, or difficult home environments. Delivered in collaboration with schools and local authorities, FLYT offers group sessions, mentoring, and practical tools that strengthen self-confidence, goal-setting abilities, and a sense of belonging—ultimately aiming to increase school completion rates and empower youth to shape a positive future.



Images Source : Presentasjon av Flyt Bergen 2025 komprimert



RED CROSS



<https://www.studentbergen.com/student-organisations/roede-kors-ungdom/>

2



We visited Red Cross – Felleverket, a place for young people aged 13-25. This is a place where everyone can feel safe and listened to and the volunteers working here were nothing short of exceptional. They had a great building in the heart of the city with different rooms for activities.



One of the things that really stood out to us was their Street mediation technique.

Street Mediation is a course you participate in, where you get to know other participants through various exercises that teach you about communication, conflict resolution, and mediation. Developed by the Red Cross, the program empowers participants not only to handle challenges and conflicts in their own lives but also equips them with the tools to support others facing similar situations. By fostering these skills, Street Mediation strengthens young people's confidence and ability to contribute positively to their communities.

The Red Cross also operates a mobile outreach bus, allowing them to connect with young people directly in their own neighbourhoods. Thanks to a special agreement with the local government, they have been granted free parking privileges, enabling them to park wherever needed without restrictions. In addition, the Red Cross maintains a close partnership with the local police and has a direct emergency line in case they encounter any safety concerns while working on the streets.

Images:

- 1 Red Cross street meditation team
- 2 Red Cross street meditation team
- 3 Red Cross cafe



UNG NORGE

<https://ungnorge.no/ungnorge-bergen/>

UNG NORGE

We also met with Jeanette from the Organisation Ung Norge. We were blown away with all the great work they do with youth with background from the welfare system in Norway. Ung Norge Shop is an outlet – clothing store where anyone can buy discounted new clothes. They have partnered up with one of the biggest Clothing chains in Norway that provide them with new and trendy clothes for free. They told us stories about young people that came in and were able to buy a new suit for their communion (a big celebration for youth in Norway), something they would not be able to do if they had to pay full price. The money raised from the shop goes straight back to Ung Norge and their work with young people.

Ung Norge also work to support young people coping with everyday life, provide them with a support network and help them gaining work experience. They have an ongoing project with Fiskerimuseet (Museum of fishery) in Bergen where they are working to give young people work experience within fishery, boats and redesign. They follow the competency goals from the Norwegian plan for Curriculum LK20.

We are keeping in touch with Ung Norge to see how they get on with this project. Ung Norge has also expressed their interest in coming to Scotland to see up close how the Community Trade Hub is working with young people over here.



Ung Norge craft area



Ung Norge music area



Ung Norge front

VISIONS AND VALUES

IN NORWEGIAN SCHOOLS

One of the most striking impressions from our visits to these institutions was their shared commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils. The phrase “No one left behind” was echoed by many of them, reflecting a strong collective ethos. A common thread across the schools and programs was their emphasis on life skills and personal proficiency. There is a clear overarching goal: to support young people not only academically, but also in their personal development and ability to navigate life with confidence.

Norway demonstrates that by embedding apprenticeships within community enterprises, ensures young people gain social responsibility, social conscience, educational and employment qualifications, and real-world readiness. What was also evident is that social development and pastoral care are built into the education system and also provided by 3rd sector organisations such as The Red Cross, and Ung Norge.

HCI envisage a community of partners of business, trade representatives, education providers (primary, secondary, FE, HE, CPD/upskilling), and the 3rd sector working together to train the next and future generations into meaningful, sustainable construction, green energy, and engineering jobs, not just disengaged youth, but adult returners, veterans, ex-offenders, and others seeking to return to the job market. From an HCI point of view we would like to see much of the educational model and social development scaled to reach across the region. If our 3rd sector and early intervention partners adopted some of the best practice we observed in the Norwegian blended system, we can see how this would align to workstream one of the HCI 2:0 proposal. Similarly, if we adopted and adapted areas of that blended model and TAF system, this would align closely with workstream five.

Many who hosted the team are keen to establish an ongoing relationship and are actively looking for a return visit. It would be logical for this to take place in Fife, hosted by CTH but we would also propose site visits to some of the other projects supported by HCI. We envisage hosting a round table discussion to gather as much information as possible in an effort to steer the future of our education system to meet current and future workforce demands.



Vestlandshuset (Dept. For Business Inclusion, County Council)