



# NORWAY STUDY VISIT

**BERGEN, VESTLAND COUNTY**

**MUNICIPALITY**

**ERASMUS+ MOBILITY AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Trade Hub (CTH) undertook a study visit to Bergen, Norway to explore vocational education models, apprenticeship pathways, and community engagement approaches that support young people into positive destinations. The visit formed part of a wider ambition to develop international partnerships and explore Erasmus+ collaboration opportunities.

The study visit enabled the CTH team to compare delivery models between Norway and Scotland, particularly in relation to supporting young people who may disengage from mainstream education. Norway's integrated apprenticeship pathways and strong municipal guidance services provide an effective structure that ensures young people can transition successfully into employment, further education, or vocational training.

The visit reinforced the strength of the Community Trade Hub approach currently delivered across Fife. The practical, skills-based learning environment provided by CTH works well but understanding strengths on Norway's approach and successful elements observed within Norway's vocational training framework blended together can only create a stronger project. The visit also identified opportunities for future collaboration between Scottish and Norwegian partners around youth employability, apprenticeship pathways, and international learning exchanges.





## 2. BACKGROUND TO COMMUNITY TRADE HUB

Community Trade Hub operates across Fife, Scotland delivering practical vocational learning programmes for young people. The organisation focuses on providing hands-on skills training across sectors such as mechanics, construction, hospitality, and engineering.

Many young people who attend Community Trade Hub programmes benefit from a more practical learning environment compared to traditional classroom settings. Through partnerships with schools, employers, and community organisations, CTH supports pupils to gain qualifications, develop confidence, and move towards employment, apprenticeships, college, or university.

The organisation also works closely with secondary schools across Fife, supporting pupils who may be at risk of disengagement. The model focuses on providing practical learning experiences that demonstrate clear links between education and employment opportunities.

This visit to Norway allowed the team to examine how similar approaches are embedded within the Norwegian education and apprenticeship systems.

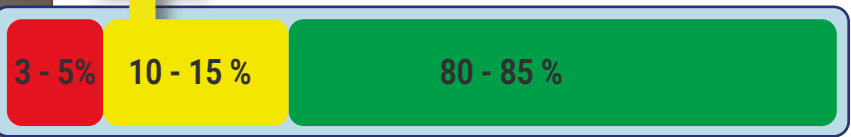


Åsane Kulturhus and Åsane Videregående Skole, a cultural centre and high school located in Bergen, Norway.

# 3. PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

## THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY VISIT WAS TO:

- Explore Norway's vocational education and apprenticeship model.
- Understand how municipalities coordinate guidance and youth support services.
- Examine community organisations supporting young people and families.
- Identify learning that could strengthen Community Trade Hub delivery in Scotland.
- Develop relationships with potential international partners for Erasmus+ collaboration.
- Compare pathways supporting young people aged 14–19 transitioning into employment.



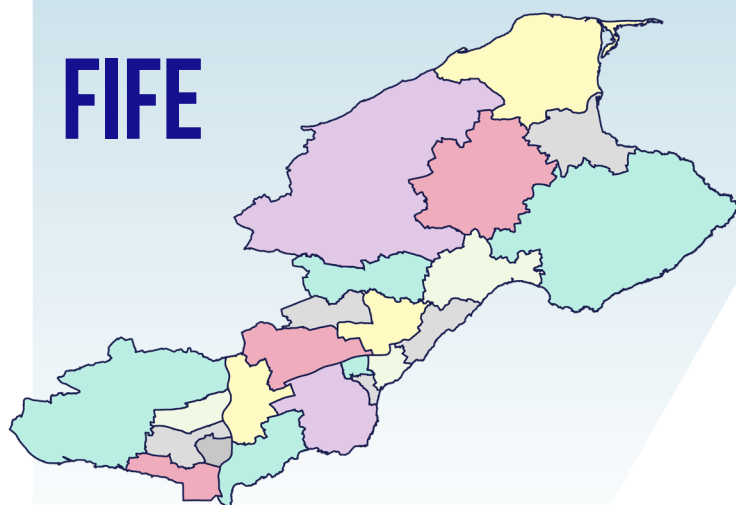
**Our main target:**  
**Boys (and girls) who need a motivation boost for school heading for 10th grade.**

Guttas Campus

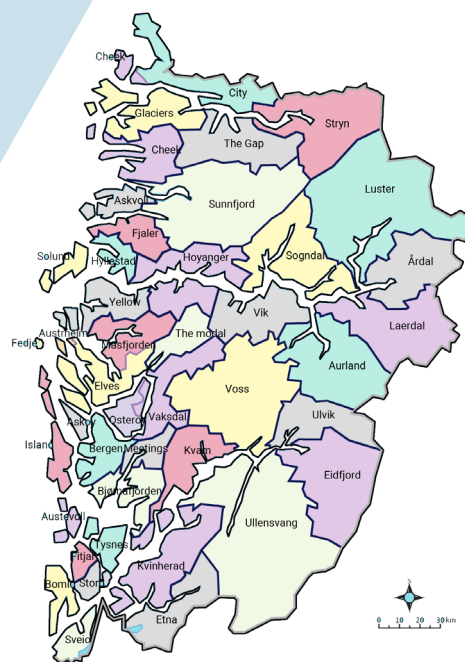
# 4. LOCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The visit took place in Bergen, within the Vestland County Municipality of Norway. The region shares several similarities with the Scottish region of Fife, where Community Trade Hub operates.

Both regions combine urban and rural communities and face similar challenges around ensuring young people successfully transition from education into employment.



## FIFE



## VESTLAND

Rettleiingstenesta  
Vestland fylkeskommune

Fife has a population of approximately 350,000 people, while the wider Bergen region has a comparable population size. This similarity made the comparison between systems particularly relevant when considering how lessons learned in Norway could inform practice in Scotland.

19,12 mill NOK dropout-cost per person

Rapport 2010/7



Samfunnsøkonomiske konsekvenser av marginalisering blant ungdom

The estimation covers unemployment and social security support during the whole lifespan

Stortinget / skriftlige spørsmål og svar 21.12.2020



The visit included engagement with municipal services, schools, apprenticeship providers, and community organisations working with young people.

# 5. ORGANISATIONS AND SERVICES VISITED

## VESTLAND COUNTY MUNICIPALITY – GUIDANCE SERVICE

The municipal guidance service supports young people across the region with career guidance, education pathways, and transitions into employment. The service plays a key role in supporting pupils who may be unsure about their future direction.

**Guidance service**  
Vestland County Municipality

- OIB - In- company training (vocational and vocational training in the company )
- OT - Follow-up service
- PPT - Educational-psychological service
- VO - Secondary education adult education

  
**Rettleiingstenesta**  
 Vestland fylkeskommune


- Interact with the upper secondary school
- Interact with the labour market, municipalities , NAV and others actors




## OPPLÆRING I BEDRIFT (OIB) – APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

**Opplæring i bedrift (OIB)**  
Arbeidsoppgåver

Guidance for training officers, training companies, and apprenticeship candidates	Special follow-up challenging cases	Meeting in case of risk of termination of the apprenticeship contract
Company visit	Courses for apprenticeship supervisor and the examination board	Help to apprenticeship placement
Process application for completion funding	Recruit new apprenticeship companies	Process the termination of a contract





This programme coordinates apprenticeship placements and supports collaboration between employers and educational institutions. It ensures that young people develop both theoretical knowledge and real workplace experience.

## SLETTEBAKKEN FRIVILLIGSENTRAL

A community hub designed to build participation and engagement through social activities, volunteering, and community initiatives.



**Slettebakken youth crew**

- 18 teenagers 15-18 yrs, working for their community every month – making activities and participating in common efforts between organisations

# LOCAL SCHOOLS

Visits to schools provided insight into how vocational learning and technical subjects are integrated within mainstream education.

# COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Several organisations were visited that focus on youth engagement, wellbeing, and social inclusion within local communities.



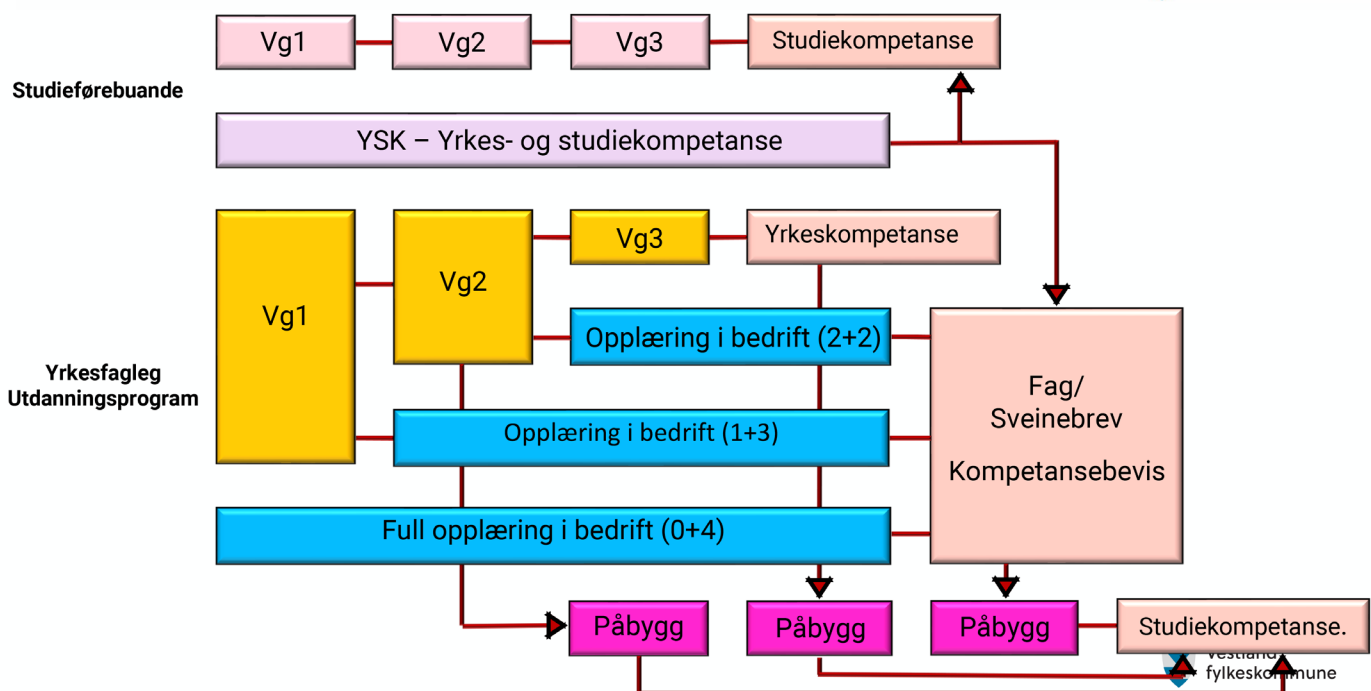
# 6. THE NORWEGIAN APPRENTICESHIP

One of the most significant elements of the Norwegian system is the structured apprenticeship pathway. Students typically complete two years of school-based vocational education before transitioning into two years of workplace apprenticeship training.

This '2+2' model ensures that young people gain both theoretical knowledge and practical industry experience.

Alternative pathways also exist where students may move earlier into workplace training or undertake extended employer-based learning programmes. These flexible pathways ensure that young people with different learning styles can still progress successfully.

The strong partnership between education providers and industry ensures that training remains aligned with labour market needs.



Infographics from: The guidance document Bergen Center West - Rettleingsstenesta Bergen Sentrum Vest

# 7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND YOUTH SUPPORT

Community organisations play an important role in supporting young people across Bergen. Centres such as Slettebakken Frivilligsentral provide safe spaces where individuals can take part in structured activities, learn new skills, and build social connections.

These community hubs focus on participation, co-creation, and inclusion. Activities include arts, sports, learning groups, volunteering opportunities, and social support networks.

The model demonstrates how community-based environments can support young people who may struggle within traditional educational settings.



## Rules of interaction

- We shall have fun
- Failing is fine
- We profit from each others' strengths
- We give each other positive feedback
- We take responsibility for our own reactions
- We talk with, and not about, each other
- Everyone contributes to the well-being in the team

*Disagreements should quickly be addressed with the persons involved! Think how, when & where.*



**Praise in public – punish in private!**



## Common meetings for local organisations

- 20+ organisations in the mix
- In common: organises free, open activities for children and youth in the local community
- Every six weeks
- Get to know about and support each others activities, to the benefit of the children and the community



*Slettebakken Frivilligsentral*

# 8. LEARNING AND OBSERVATIONS

## SEVERAL KEY OBSERVATIONS EMERGED FROM THE VISIT:

- Early exposure to working environments increases motivation and engagement.
- Apprenticeships provide a clear pathway from education into employment.
- Municipal guidance services ensure young people receive structured career advice.
- Community organisations strengthen social support networks for young people.
- Strong collaboration between public services and employers is essential.



Guitbas Campus

Idrettsrådet i Bergen  
Organisasjonstødd i  
NORGES  
IDRETTSFORBUND

X+Y

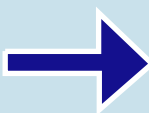
Prosjektleder: Sandrino Arenas Dato: 10.02.2026



**FRA PROSJEKT TIL  
BÆREKRAFTIG  
MODELL**

LIM Modellen: "LIM`et i landsbyen"

Positive  
psychology



Character  
strenght

LIM project



Many of these principles align closely with the Community Trade Hub approach in Scotland.

Slettebakken Frivilligsentral



Norway Study Visit

## 9. COMPARISON BETWEEN

# NORWAY AND SCOTLAND

While both Norway and Scotland prioritise supporting young people into positive destinations, the Norwegian system seems to integrate vocational learning later within education.

In Scotland, vocational training often only becomes available to students later in their school journey or upon leaving. Community Trade Hub addresses this gap by providing early practical experiences that demonstrate clear career pathways. In many cases, this occurs two years before students are allowed to leave school, allowing them to gain vital experience skills and qualifications to support transitioning into a positive destination as a school leaver.

As a third-sector organisation, we work with many students who struggle to engage with mainstream settings. Our alternative community vocational center re-engages these pupils and provides the necessary support to help them transition back into a mainstream environment. If funding continues to be put into the mainstream to fix the problem, we will continue to have the problem; investment in alternative curriculum is key.

The Norwegian model highlights how stronger employer partnerships and structured apprenticeships can further enhance youth transitions into employment. And blended with our approach, employers are happy to offer more job opportunities.

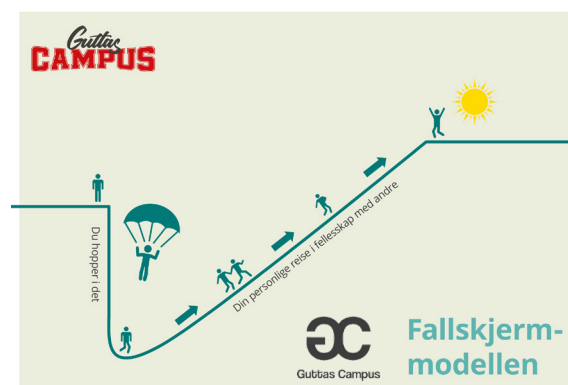


# 10. OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITY TRADE HUB



The visit reinforced confidence in the Community Trade Hub model. The organisation already delivers many of the principles observed within Norway's system, including practical learning environments, strong industry links, and personalised support for young people.

The visit also highlighted opportunities to strengthen partnerships with employers, expand apprenticeship opportunities, and further integrate community learning environments.



**Rettleiingsstenesta**  
Vestland fylkeskommune

**Opplæring i bedrift, OiB**  
**Apprentice in a company**

Rettleiingsstenesta  
Bergen Sentrum Vest

18.02.2026

# 11. FUTURE COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

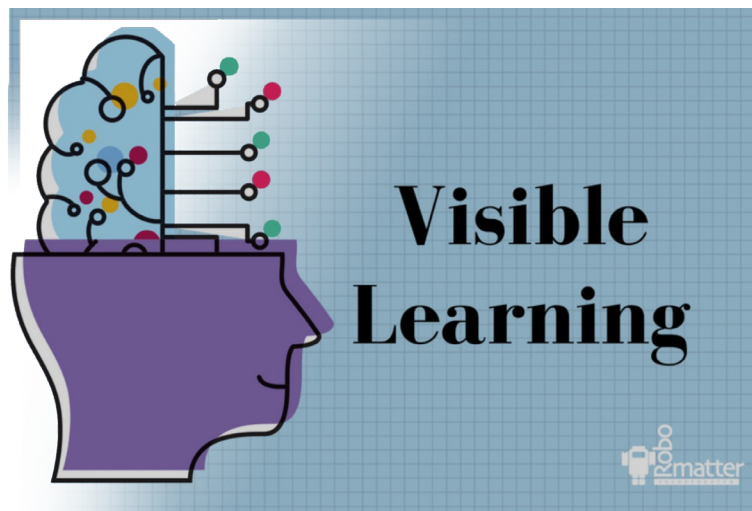
## SEVERAL POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES WERE IDENTIFIED:

- Erasmus+ collaboration with Norwegian partners.
- Exchange visits between Scottish and Norwegian organisations.
- Development of international vocational learning projects.
- Knowledge sharing around apprenticeship systems and youth engagement models.



We see the FIELD project as a close match to our current work. If they had the operating system to evidence their progress, it would be a game changer in terms of reaching the 20% target in Norway.

Norwegian partners are expected to visit Scotland in May to explore collaboration opportunities further.



# 12. CONCLUSION

The Norway study visit demonstrated how strong collaboration between education systems, community organisations, and employers can create effective pathways for young people.

Community Trade Hub's model already reflects many of these principles. The visit confirmed that the organisation is well positioned to continue developing innovative vocational programmes that support young people into employment, apprenticeships, and further education.

The experience also established the foundations for future international partnerships and Erasmus+ collaboration that will benefit young people across both Scotland and Norway if successful in the bids.

