



Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe

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Evidence-based co-authored and open-access report of most promising pioneering policies and practices

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## Norway: country-specific practical implications and recommendations

*Ivan Tokheim, Maria Sundfør Kråkenes, Espen Søreide Dyngeland, Jan Skrobanek, Solvejg Jobst*

### **Free Core Time \***

**Practical implications:** Free kindergarten of 20hrs per week is provided for low-income families to prepare children for the educational system and develop important language- and social skills. Additionally, all Norwegian families with more than one child attending kindergarten get fee-exemption for the third child onwards. This has demonstrably increased uptake and access to pre-primary education, as well as literacy, math skills and language proficiency for disadvantaged children (e.g. those with migratory backgrounds or low socioeconomic status) within the trial project areas. **Recommendations:** The positive results yielded from the trial project led to it becoming a state-wide policy in 2015. Free Core Time shows promising results in kindergarten attendance for low-income families in Norway, including those with migratory background. Results are consecutively measured and evaluated. Free kindergarten can be recommended to ensure all children are given the opportunity to prepare for entering primary school.

### **Area Focused Measures (AFM) in Loddefjord and Olsvik**

**Practical implications:** Evaluations of the programme are not yet available, as AFM in Loddefjord and Olsvik run from 2019-2026 and such evaluations have not been conducted at this stage. However, our research data indicates challenges in engaging the local community, challenges regarding the intersection of different drivers of inequality, e.g. class, ethnicity, gender and generation, and challenges particularly reaching out to those young who need help and support most. **Recommendations:** One of the most promising aspects of AFM is their implementation of a new position as “resource-person” in the selected schools. The “resource person” must have formal teacher education; however, a significant percentage of their position at the school is dedicated to the AFM-program. This entails that they have more time for identifying needs among target groups, planning and executing different psycho-social initiatives, based on the needs of the given school-context. This position is highlighted by all informants as an effective one, however nuanced by the fact that its implementation is not always formally sedimented. A “resource-person” with a “freer” position than a traditional teacher allows for different relationships, with an overarching aim of interpersonal learning-outcomes, rather than specific content-matter.

### **TAM (Safety, Responsibility, Sense of Mastery)**

**Practical implications:** The PIONEERED-research data show both promising results and uncover the need for further investigations to achieve measurable outcomes. TAM has been successful in reintegrating at-risk students to the formal system, hence being given the chance to continue their education and qualify to enter the labour market. Numerous anecdotal evidence testifies to TAM’s role in increasing the self-confidence, motivation, and mental wellbeing of pupils at TAM. **Recommendations:** Based on our preliminary findings from TAM, we call for a more open approach from the formal educational system, bridging the gap between formal and non-formal actors; strengthening the position/attractiveness/availability of vocational education as a counterpoise to the academisation of traditional schooling; integrating a broader spectre of professional competencies in traditional school-systems, and finally and importantly, the formal

recognition of non or pre-institutionalised practices in documents and discourse pertaining to educational policy.

\*Changes during the PIONEERED-project period: starting from August 2023, kindergarten expenses no longer apply to children in the most northern parts of Norway (Finnmark and Nord-Troms).