**Norway: teacher specialist: a new career path for teachers**

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**As part of the government’s initiative to keep good teachers in the classrooms, the education ministry has been conducting a pilot project since 2015/16 on a new professional career path for teachers, the so called teacher specialists. It is based on the Promotion of the status and quality of teachers strategy and aims to offer teachers new challenges and professional development.**

The function of introducing the teacher specialists is two-fold.

* It will provide skilled teachers with good opportunities for academic development to increase their motivation for teaching.
* It will help strengthen the professional community and the development of the school as a learning organisation.

Teacher specialists’ main function will be teaching. They can have several other tasks related to their field of specialisation depending on the schools needs and decisions and/or local initiatives. Examples of other tasks include:

* assessing the need for, and take the initiative to include work-place based competence raising and collegial guidance;
* cooperating with universities and university colleges in development projects.

Initially, the initiative was addressed to Norwegian language and mathematics teachers. Since autumn 2019, the scheme was expanded to include teachers in the following fields:

* sciences;
* general education, primary school (grades 1 to 4);
* Norwegian language, with special emphasis on reading and writing;
* practical and art subjects;
* vocational education;
* professional digital competence subjects.

The target group for the pilot project are teachers in primary and secondary school, as well as teachers who teach adults at these levels. Teachers in both public and private schools approved under the law of independent schools may participate in the pilot phase.

The school owners (counties or municipalities) will cover half the costs. They are responsible for developing suitable plans for the assignments of teacher specialist and clarifying their roles and responsibilities. School owners are also responsible for ensuring guidance and dissemination of information to colleagues.

Participants in the pilot project are expected to summarise and share their experience with other school owners and schools, as well as contributing to the evaluation of the scheme.