

# FOLKEHØGSKOLERÅDET

Folkehøgskolene  
Folkehøgskoleorganisasjonene  
Folkehøgskolebladene

J.nr. 3/16/Rundskriv  
FHSR-rundskriv 3/16  
Oslo 2. februar 2016

## Flyktninger på folkehøgskole

Folkehøgskolerådet viser til FHSRr-skriv 29/15 og til informasjon gitt på rektormøtet i Bodø om flyktninger på folkehøgskoler. Flere folkehøgskoler har henvendt seg til Folkehøgskolerådet med spørsmål om hvordan de kommer i kontakt med kommuner og IMDi for å få gjort kjent at de gjerne tar inn flyktninger.

IMDi er kjent med hvilke skoler som har åpnet opp for flyktninger i vårsemesteret og alle kommunene har fått samme informasjon. Utspillet ligger hos kommunene, men dessverre har bare et fåtall av kommunene oppdaget hvilke muligheter som ligger i folkehøgskolene for god integrering.

Folkehøgskolerådet er i god kommunikasjon med Kunnskapsdepartementet og IMDi om utfordringene og har en felles forståelse om at det er viktig å nå ut med kunnskap om folkehøgskolenes tilbud. De vedlagte tekstene kan også være nyttige for skolene i samtaler med kommuner og enkeltsøkere.

Folkehøgskolerådet har sendt følgende tekst til IMDi sammen med vedleggene til dette rundskrivet:

*For folkehøgskolene er det maktpåliggende at de som begynner på folkehøgskole vet hva de går til, at de gjør det med et aktivt ønske om å dra dit og at de er i rett alder og utdanningsnivå.*

*Vi er kjent med at det kan være behov for opplysninger om hva folkehøgskole er.*

*Vedlagt følger to enkle engelske tekster om folkehøgskolen. Tekstene er på mange måter konsentrert fra de to nettstedene nedenfor. Tekstene og nettstedene kan være til hjelp for IMDi, kommuner og unge og mindreårige flyktninger når folkehøgskole er et alternativ for bosettelse.*

*Det er mange faktaopplysninger/svar å finne på folkehøgskole.no: <http://www.folkehogskole.no/om-folkehogskole> (norsk). Engelske tekster i sin nyeste utgave : [http://www.folkehogskole.no/?page\\_id=44](http://www.folkehogskole.no/?page_id=44)*

I et svar til Folkehøgskolerådet i dag skriver IMDi:

*Status er at IMDi i januar har formidlet 25 enslige mindreårige flykninger for bosetting i de seks kommunene Oslo, Elverum, Sør-Varanger, Suldal, Ringerike og Orkdal, som har inngått avtaler med folkehøgskoler. I tillegg har kommunene Skånland og Surnadal tatt kontakt med IMDi om bosetting av 20-25 enslige mindreårige i august som skal på folkehøgskole. Det er dermed foreløpig tale om ca. 50 enslige mindreårige som kommuner ønsker å benytte folkehøgskole for. Oppmerksomheten rundt tilbud på folkehøgskoler bidrar dermed allerede til raskere bosetting av enslige mindreårige 17-åringer.*

*Brevet med oppfordringen til kommunene om å benytte folkehøgskoler ble sendt 18.12.15, og IMDi sendte samtidig ut en oversikt til kommunene over folkehøgskoler med ledige plasser i januar. De seks kommunene som ønsket å bruke tilbudet har funnet frem til aktuelle kandidater i samarbeid med IMDi. Det er kommunene som har det hele og fulle ansvaret for bosetting og for å vurdere opplysninger om den enkelte og hvilket tiltak som passer og når. En del kommuner foretrekker at de enslige mindreårige først bosettes i et ordinært botiltak i kommunen før det etter hvert vurderer hvilke utdanningstiltak som vil passe best for den enkelte. Folkehøgskoler som ønsker å tilby skoleplass til enslige mindreårige fra neste skoleår bør derfor kontakte aktuelle kommuner. IMDi vil etter ønske fra Folkehøgskolerådet bidra med aktuell informasjon, blant annet oversikt over kommuner som bosetter enslige mindreårige og oversikt over hvilke grupper det etter hvert er behov for å bosette.*

*På kort varsel er det vanskelig å finne mange enslige mindreårige som kommunene anser som aktuelle for et tilbud på folkehøgskole allerede i januar og februar. Det er et begrenset antall enslige mindreårige flyktninger som per i dag innfrir de kravene som kommunene med henvisning til folkehøgskolene stiller om samme alder, kjønn og nasjonalitet, tilstrekkelig utdanningsbakgrunn og språkkunnskaper, interesser som passer til tilbudet, og behov og atferd som ikke krever mer oppfølging enn ordinære elever.*

Med hilsen for Folkehøgskolerådet

Edgar Fredriksen /s/  
leder

Odd Arild Netland /s/  
sekretær

Vedlegg 1: Kort beskrivelse på engelsk om hva folkehøgskole er.

Vedlegg 2: Litt lengre beskrivelse på engelsk om hva folkehøgskole er.

# FOLKEHØGSKOLERÅDET

## Vedlegg 1.

## Facts about the Folk High Schools

A year at a folk high school in Norway gives you a unique opportunity to be part of the Norwegian culture, learn Norwegian, and participate in an exciting learning community along with other young people from Norway and the rest of the world.

### **Folkehøgskole or Folk High School, What Is It?**

Folk high schools are one-year boarding schools offering a variety of exciting non-traditional and non-academic subjects, as well as academic subjects. The idea of folk high schools is learning for life, an opportunity to grow both individually, socially, and academically in small learning communities where all students live on campus in close contact with staff and their fellow students. One important part of the folk high school experience is to form a community, a common bond within the student body, in class and out of class. Learning for life happens all day long.

### **For whom**

Students can be any age and can have any level of educational experience. Most students who attend folk high schools are young adults between the ages of 18 and 25. Especially common are 19 and 20 year olds. There are international students attending almost every folk high school.

### **Many schools**

You will also have many choices on where you want to study; there are 78 folk high schools spread throughout Norway. Students are from all parts of Norway as well. Schools average 80 to 90 students, but can have between 40 and 150. Diversity in the student body is highly valued, and everyone makes an effort to make international students feel welcome.

### **Teaching Method: Learning by Doing**

The main teaching method is hands-on, to have you learn by doing. By experiencing the very things you are learning about, your knowledge and understanding become greater and more valid. And you are far more likely to remember something after you've seen it applied in real life. Classes are conducted in a free and open spirit, progressing through interactions and dialogues between students and teachers. Folk high schools reinforce their experiential education through study trips to other countries.

### **Being a non-Norwegian speaker**

Most classes are taught in Norwegian. However, many schools will offer Norwegian courses, and nearly every one of the staff and students speak English, which can be of help in the beginning. After this year, you can expect to understand and speak Norwegian reasonably well. The level of proficiency will of course depend on your own efforts, but living in a Norwegian-speaking environment gives you great advantage for learning.

At different schools you can choose Norwegian language and culture as a major subject or as an elective. In the latter case you have the opportunity to choose between the other major subjects offered.

### **What Do You Gain from a Folk High School Year?**

The educational program allows the student to follow his or her own interests and abilities. Students become self-motivated actors in developing their own education. Every student leaves with a broadened horizon, social insights, more confidence in themselves, and tools for lifelong learning. Undoubtedly, students are better prepared for whatever path lies ahead of them, whether it is in a university, in the workplace, or in the broader world.

### **Folk High School, What It Is Not!**

It is important to highlight that by law, folk high schools conduct no formal examinations and issue no degrees. After finishing your school year, you will receive a diploma detailing what you have participated in. Although receiving financial support from the state, the folk high schools are independent from the regular educational system in Norway.

International students who want to continue to study in Norway do not automatically qualify for enrollment as students in a Norwegian college or university after folk high school; they must meet the same entry requirements as other international students.

### **Entry Requirements**

The folk high schools do not require specific diplomas, previous education, or occupational experience. As an international student, you are expected to know English well or speak some Norwegian. Classes are held 6 days a week, and attendance is required in all but special circumstances. Having a job while you attend a folk high school is not feasible, as lectures and activities will also take place in the evenings and during weekends.

# FOLKEHØGSKOLERÅDET

## Vedlegg 2

## Facts about the Folk High Schools

### Who Attends Folk High Schools?

Folk high schools are open to all, and every year about 7300 students attend the 80 folk high schools. Approximately 10 % of all Norwegians have spent a year in a folk high school.

Most schools admit students 18 years and older. By far the largest group of students is young adults, between 18 and 20 years old. There are international students attending almost every folk high school. In recent years, there have been students from more than 70 different countries.

### Why Do Young People Go to Folk High School for a Year?

Typically, folk high school students are looking for unconventional educational experiences at a place which both enlightens and trains for participation in a democratic society. The subjects taught give insight, knowledge and practice which you do not find among other schools. Many people need a year to consider what to do next in terms of education and occupation, a break between upper secondary or high school and their continuing studies at a university, or a break from a standardized curriculum and the exam pressures in the traditional school systems. By “doing something different” students develop self-confidence, and become self-motivated, active citizens. The unique social life is also an important reason for many to choose a year at a folk high school.

### What Do You Gain from a Folk High School Year?

It is difficult to define what students get out of a year at a folk high school, as each student has their own experiences, challenges, frustrations, and triumphs. A common theme from each experience is personal growth and development in a social setting that focuses on “learning for life”. A student’s educational program allows the student to follow his or her own interests and abilities. Students become self-motivated actors in developing their own education. Every student leaves with a broadened horizon, social insights, more confidence in themselves, and the tools for lifelong learning. Undoubtedly, students are better prepared for whatever path lies ahead of them, whether it is in a university, in the workplace, or in the broader world.

### What level of Norwegian Proficiency Can You expect?

Folk high schools are probably the single best way of gaining first-hand and practical knowledge of Norwegian. You can expect that through the year you will be able to use the language on an everyday level to communicate with native speakers. Depending on whether you choose Norwegian as a major subject or not, your level of advanced Norwegian will vary.

### What does life-long learning mean?

The schools offer a variety of subjects, but their common denominator is an educational program where you focus on your own interests and abilities. The folk high school experience is meant to challenge the whole person - the complete you. The idea behind this form of education is that learning only becomes a significant part of our lives if we are actively involved and share responsibility for it. A year at a folk high school will broaden your horizon. A broad spectrum of subjects will inspire you to go on with your education and future career. Along with social insights, they are useful tools on your road ahead. The folk high schools call this “learning for life”. In addition, through for instance solidarity projects and a focus on your role as an active citizen, the schools try to expand your social perspective to incorporate outlooks from the rest of the world. In the interaction between different people, different opinions, and different values, your own opinions and values are confronted, making you more aware of the choices that you yourself make.

### Lifelong learning and the pedagogical ideas of Grundtvig

The folk high schools are part of a Nordic tradition of lifelong learning, endorsing equality and democracy as core values. The pedagogical ideas of N.S.F. Grundtvig in the 1840s is said to be the founding of the folk high school movement. The folk high schools today build on a holistic view of the students and challenge them to grow individually, socially and academically. Learning-by-doing is the basic educational philosophy of the schools, and their core methods are dialogue-based and experiential. The schools strive for challenging classes and courses, but the educational challenges are embedded in the your personal and social growth, too. This focus on the whole person is the strength and unique character of the folk high schools, where the point is to motivate, teach, inspire and foster commitment in you, the student. The schools give you the freedom to learn in your own way.

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Since the first school was founded (not by Grundtvig) in 1844, it has been an evolving structure which has always struggled to balance the need for organization and institutionalization with the necessity of individual and small group freedom. In sum, it can be captured by the following:

**Purpose:** To enliven and enlighten the individual as an integral part of the community; To transform our communities to be more democratic, just, and sustainable.

**Pedagogy:** Learning experiences must honor:

- A full range of expression, of heart, mind, and body;
- A partnership between students and teachers in a dialogue of free and critical inquiry;
- The community experience (history, mythology, etc.), including analysis which probes its history in light of its current needs; A democratic experience, especially valuing the “common person.”

The knowledge and skills: “cultural competence” (experience with people different by class, ethnic identity, gender, etc.); critical thinking and communication skills to support analysis and problem-solving.

## Practical Information:

### Folk High School, What It Is Not!

It is important to highlight that by law, folk high schools conduct no formal examinations and issue no degrees. After finishing your school year, you will receive a diploma detailing what you have participated in. Although receiving financial support from the state, the folk high schools are independent from the regular educational system in Norway.

International students who want to continue to study in Norway do not automatically qualify for enrollment as students in a Norwegian college or university after folk high school; they must meet the same entry requirements as other international students.

### Entry Requirements

The folk high schools do not require specific diplomas, previous education, or occupational experience. As an international student, you are expected to know English well or speak some Norwegian. Classes are held 5 or 6 days a week, and attendance is required in all but special circumstances. Having a job while you attend a folk high school is not feasible, as lectures and activities will also take place in the evenings and during weekends.

### When Does School Start?

The school year starts in middle or late August and lasts until the middle of May. Some schools offer half-year (semester) courses, starting in middle or late August or early January.

### Which Language Is Spoken?

All instruction is given in Norwegian, except some classes that specifically teach “Norwegian Language and Culture”. A few schools have international courses taught in English.