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**Abstract**

This article discusses the merger of 98 vocationally-oriented colleges into 26 state colleges in Norway. The mergers, which took place in 1994, have in many ways proved to be a successful reform. The colleges now have more competent administration and professional leadership, and they have become far more visible and acquired a higher status. Still, several of the aims of the reform ? to improve teaching and research and to make the colleges more cost-effective ? can so far not be said to have been fulfilled. In addition, many academic staff feel that the new colleges have become bureaucratised, that the identity of the individual vocational programmes have been weakened, and they blame the reform for a general retrenchment in financial resources. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Kyvik, Svein, E-mail: svein.kyvik@nifu.no