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Title

The mismatch between the unmet need for and supply of occupational English skills : an investigation of higher educated governance staff in Norway / Glenn Ole Hellekjaer ; Tone Fairway

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Abstract

Nordic universities are involved in a global competition against American and UK universities, whose main competitive advantage is their placement in English-speaking countries. The authors argue that Nordic universities need to do more to offset this advantage than merely offer English-Medium (EM) courses to foreign and domestic students. They also need to systematically address their students' need for advanced occupational English skills. To underpin this claim, the authors use data from three different needs analyses: (1) a large-scale survey of language use and needs in Norwegian government ministries, (2) a qualitative follow-up study based on interviews of state directorate staff, and (3) a follow-up survey of ministerial job advertisements. These show that while almost 89 % of ministerial staff use English at work on a regular basis, almost 80 % of the highly educated staff have no formal English courses beyond upper secondary school, and that this leads to communication problems. The job advertisement data show that this is because language skills are invariably required in

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combination with professional degrees that do not necessarily include language modules. It concludes by arguing the need to integrate language-learning goals into EM courses and to supplement these with occupational English and communication courses. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Hellekjaer, Glenn Ole, E-Mail: g.o.hellekjar@ils.uio.no