

Monday Seminar Mathematics Education

Monday 18 January, J2-009, 14.15-15.30 University of Agder, Gimlemoen Campus

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Why have Norway and Sweden declined so much in mathematical performance?

Norway and Sweden distinguish themselves as the two countries with the greatest decline in mathematics performance in upper secondary school. Publication of results from TIMSS Advanced in December 2009 revealed a marked decline in Norwegian 3MX performance in mathematics – the only country with even greater decline was Sweden. At the same time the proportion of pupils who choose the subject has dropped in both countries. The results for upper secondary school have many similarities with earlier results from TIMSS and PISA in compulsory school, this applies to both performance and teaching in the subject. What characterises teaching in Norway and Sweden when they are compared with other countries? In what type of tasks is pupils performance weak? In what type of tasks do they perform well?