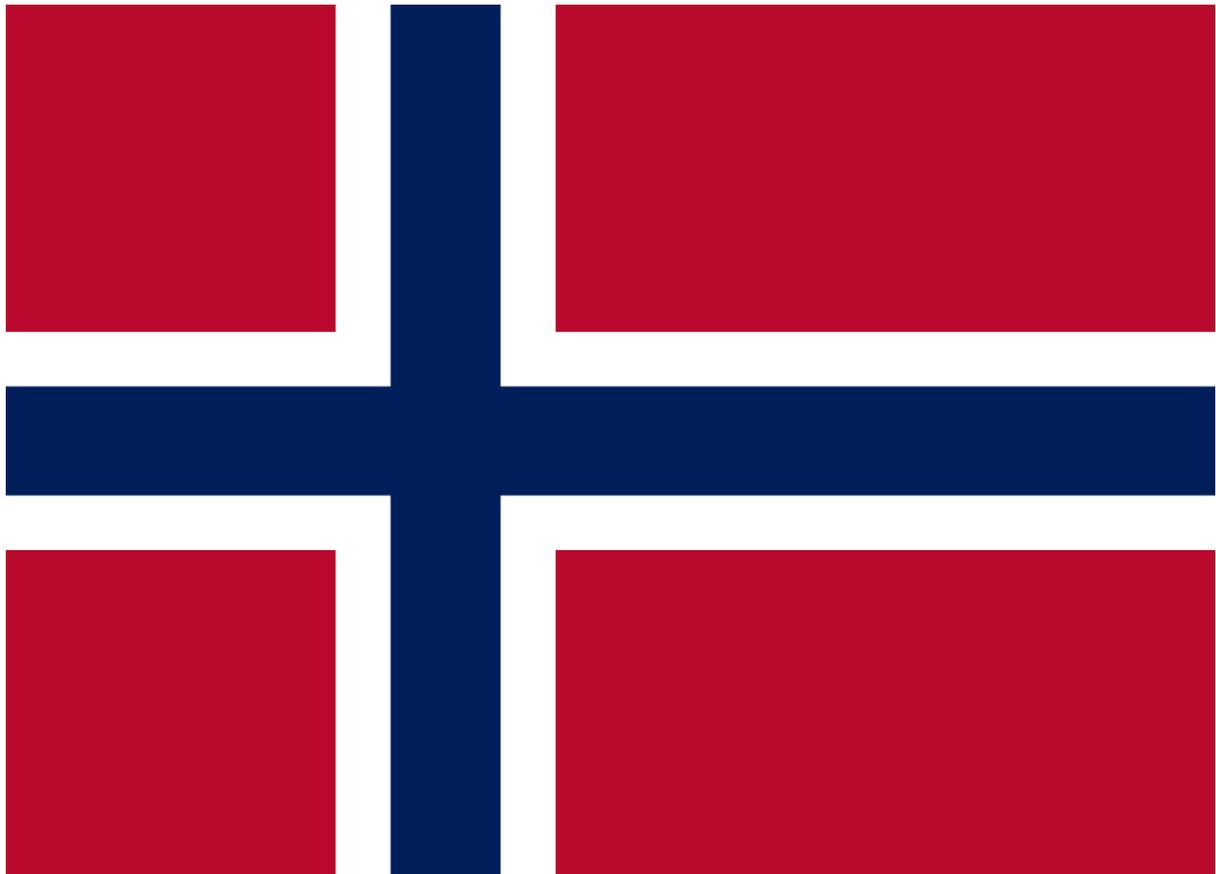


The History We Live: Student's Perspective on the 21st Century



Norway Chapter 1: Country and Politics

6th grade, Vettre skole, Norway

1. General information about Norway

Capital: Oslo

Other Large Cities: Trondheim, Bergen, Stavanger

Government: Constitutional Monarchy

King and Queen: King Harald and Queen Sonja.

Prime Minister: Jonas Gahr Støre.

Population: Around 5,5 million people.

National Holiday: 17th of May.

Highest Mountain: Galdhøpiggen 2469 m.

Spoken Language: Norwegian & Samisk

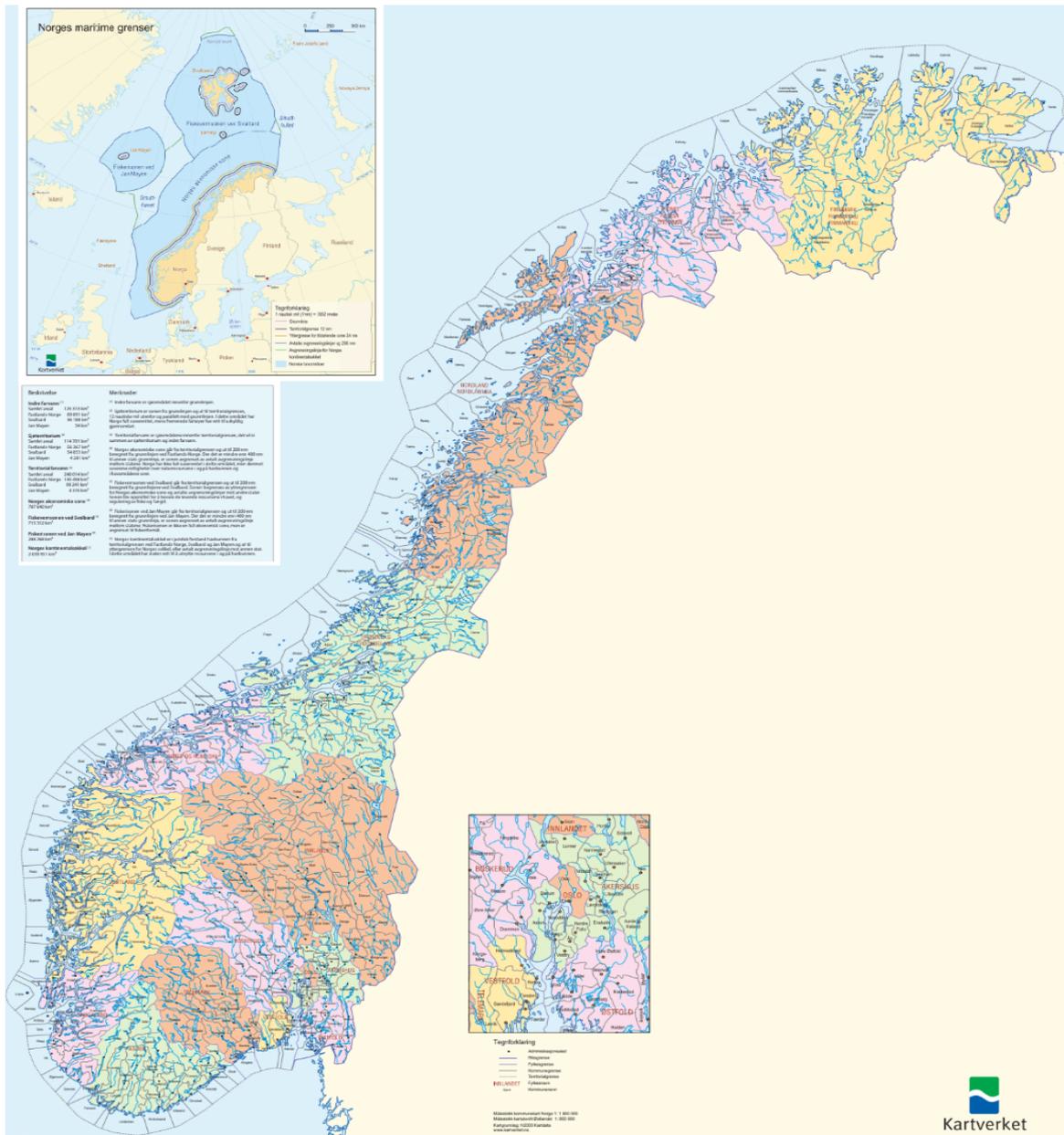
Written Language: Bokmål & Sidemål (nynorsk) + Samisk

Major Industries: Oil and gas, fish, tourism

Geography

Norway is one of the Scandinavian countries and is located in Northern Europe. Norway has borders with Sweden, Finland and Russia. The landscape is well known for its long coastline, many fjords and mountains. In 2024 Norway was divided into 15 counties and 357 municipalities. The map below shows Norway's counties and the two islands Svalbard and Jan Mayen are shown in the left corner. These two islands are only accessible by boat or plane.

Svalbard consists of nine small islands and is located between the mainland of Norway and the North Pole. Here you can experience Polar Nights and Midnight Sun, and often see northern lights (you can also experience these in the northern parts of mainland Norway). Polar Bears live on Svalbard. The landscape here consists of glaciers and arctic desert. The main settlement is in Longyearbyen. They use snowmobiles. Many people do their research here. The Global Seed Vault "Doomsday Vault" is a backup storing seeds from all around the world. [Virtual Tour of the Doomsday Vault](#).



Picture from:

<https://www.kartverket.no/om-kartverket/nyheter/eiendom/2024/januar/kommune-og-fylkesendringene-per-1.-januar-2024>

The state system

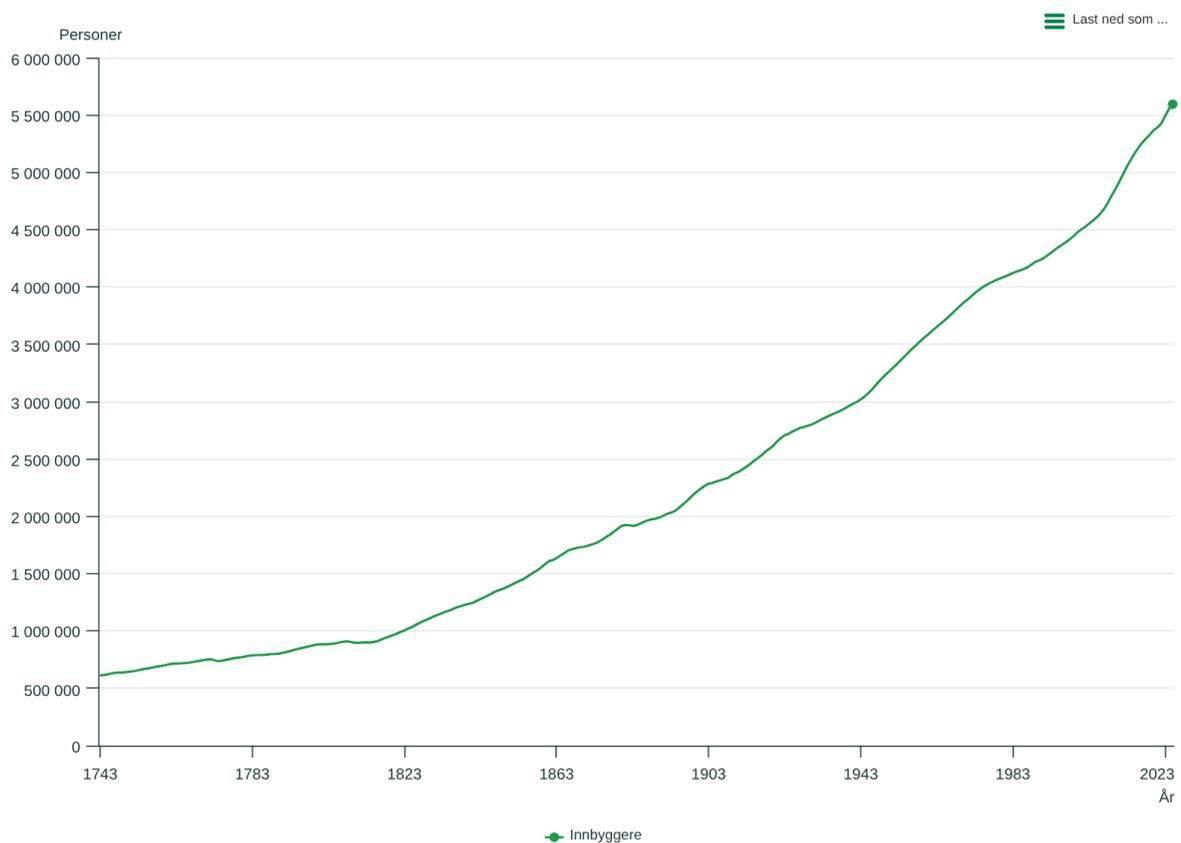
Norway has a constitutional monarchy. *Stortinget* (the Parliament) is in charge of making laws, keeping an eye on the Government and deciding how the National Budget is spent. *Regjeringen* (the Government) holds the executive power. *Domstolen* (the courts) holds the judicial power. This means the courts are the "referees" of the country. They look at the laws made by *Stortinget* and decide if someone has broken them or if a person has been treated fairly. The highest court is called the Supreme Court and its job is to make the final decision

on the most important cases to make sure the law is followed correctly for everyone. The courts are independent. The separation of powers is fundamental to Norway's democracy, preventing any single branch from having too much control and power. Everything is based on the Constitution, which is the highest set of rules in Norway. It makes sure the Government follows the law and protects the rights of the Norwegian people.

Take a look at [Stortinget.no](https://www.stortinget.no) if you want to read more about the Norwegian parliament.

Population

Norway's population has increased from 4.49 million in 2000 to around 5.62 million in 2025 (SSB). The population is slowly growing, mostly because people are moving to Norway from other countries.



Kilde: Befolkning, Statistisk sentralbyrå

Picture from: <https://www.ssb.no/befolkning/faktaside/befolkningen>

Currency

The currency in Norway is the Norwegian krone (NOK). It also uses the symbol Kr which is issued by [Norges Bank](#). This is an example, but the valuta varies!

Norwegian Kr	Euro €	Dollar \$
1 Kr	0,085 €	0,099 \$
5 Kr	0,43 €	0,50 \$
10 kr	0,85 €	1,15 \$
50 Kr	4,27 €	4,96 \$
100 Kr	8,53 €	9,90 \$
500 Kr	42,65 €	49,52 \$
1000 Kr	85,30 €	99,05 \$

Some other facts about Norway

- Norway is not a member of the EU but participates in the Single Market via the EEA Agreement (since 1994).
- Norway has over 1,000 road tunnels, including the Lærdaltunnelen which is the world's longest road tunnel at 24.5 kilometres (about 15 miles).
- Norway has won more medals in the Winter Olympics than any other country in the world.
- The top three ski athletes from Norway are: Marit Bjørgen, Ole Einar Bjørndalen & Bjørn Dæhlie. They do not compete anymore.

2. Leadership

Norwegian Prime Ministers from 2000-2025:

Period	Prime Minister	Party
2000–2001	Jens Stoltenberg	Ap
2001–2005	Kjell Magne Bondevik	KRF
2005–2013	Jens Stoltenberg	Ap
2013–2021	Erna Solberg	Høyre
2021–Present	Jonas Gahr Støre	Ap

- **[Kjell Magne Bondevik](#) (KrF) 2001-2005 :**

He has served two terms as Norway's Prime Minister. His first term was from 1997 to 2000 and ended when his government stepped down over a landmark environmental issue. His second term lasted from 2001 to 2005. He is well-known for his pioneer work on mental health awareness and his focus on human rights. After his time as Prime Minister he moved into a global role by founding The Oslo Center to promote peace and democracy worldwide. Now, in 2026, he serves as a respected elder statesman and an advisor on diplomatic missions.

- **[Jens Stoltenberg](#) (Ap) 2000-2001 & 2005-2013:**

He served two terms as Norway's Prime Minister before spending a decade as the head of NATO. Today he manages the country's finances as Minister of Finance. His first term as Prime Minister was from 2000 to 2001, which happened because the previous government fell apart. His second term was doubled and lasted from 2005 to 2013. He is well-known for leading Norway with calm and unity during the 2011 terror attacks.

- **Erna Solberg (H) 2013-2021:**

Following a historic low result for the bourgeois party “Høyre” in the 2025 elections, Solberg announced at the national convention the same year, that she would step down as the leader. A reason for the loss of her popularity could be seen in context with the disclosure of her husband, Sindre Finnes. Finnes had conducted over 3,600 stock trades during Solberg's eight years in office as the prime minister. This was a precarious problem because of the inside information he could have received and furthermore Solberg's credibility as a politician.

- **Jonas Gahr Støre (AP) 2021- Present ti**

Jonas Gahr Støre is the current Prime Minister of Norway, an office he has held since 14th of October 2021. He also serves as the leader of the Norwegian “Labour Party” (Arbeiderpartiet). Previously, Støre has held several ministerial positions as “Minister of Foreign Affairs” and “Minister of Health and Care Services”.

The Royal Family

- King Harald V and Queen Sonja.
- Crown Prince Haakon and Crown Princess Mette-Marit.
- Princess Ingrid Alexandra and Prince Sverre Magnus (children of the crown prince and princess).



Picture from: [TheOsloBook](#)
Crown Princess Mette-Marit, Crown Prince Haakon, Queen Sonja, King Harald

King Harald was born in 1937 and has been king since 1991. He is married to Queen Sonja. The Norwegian Royal Family is well known and liked amongst the Norwegian people.

- **Marius Borg Høiby**

Marius Borg Høiby is the son of the Crown Princess Mette Marit from an earlier relationship. He is currently undergoing investigations, and is facing court on February 3, 2026. He is accused of 32 charges involving several different women. The most serious charges are four counts of rape, domestic abuse against his ex-girlfriends, and physical violence. He is also accused of illegal filming, making death threats, vandalism, and driving without a license. While he has admitted to one fight and breaking some things while high on drugs, Marius denies the charges mentioning rape and abuse. If found guilty, Marius could face a sentence up to 10 years in prison.

- **Princess Märtha Louise and her family**

Princess Märtha Louise is the first child of the King and Queen, but at that time there was a law stating that only a prince had the right to inherit the throne. That is why her younger brother Haakon became the crown prince of Norway. That law has now been changed so that princess Ingrid Alexandra (the firstborn child of crown prince Haakon and crown princess Mette-Marit) can inherit the throne in the future. In Märtha's childhood years, she was often subjected to media and paparazzies, exposing her private life. The Norwegian people have a great interest in the Royal Family, and it was quite unorthodox when she decided to marry the charismatic writer and painter Ari Behn and revoked her royal title. They married in the famous Norwegian church Nidarosdomen in 2002. Tragically, Behn ended his life on Christmas Day in 2019 and left Märtha and their three daughters in deep sorrow.

In 2007, Princess Märtha co-founded an alternative therapy and education center called “Astarte Education”. It quickly became known as the “School of Angels” due to its focus on spiritual practices and Märtha's claims that she was clairvoyant and could communicate with angels. The education center operated until 2018.

In 2019, a self-declared shaman named Durek Verret made it public that he was in a relationship with former Princess Märtha Louise. The Norwegian media didn't take lightly on this, and it escalated in a storm of media pressure. Many people claimed that Durek was exploiting the former princess, and wanted attention to his practice as a shaman and business where he claimed to sell energetic crystals that could cure almost any kind of disease. The shaman also claimed that he could expel demons, and had a lot of controversial statements about cancer and the Corona Virus. As if that weren't enough, Durek had also been facing allegations of sexual assault by a former associate.

In 2024, Märtha and Durek got married in the iconic town of Geiranger, situated at the end of the famous Geirangerfjorden. The wedding was only for special invited guests, and the public media was not allowed. This sparked a debate about whether the Norwegian people should have rights or not to get insight into the wedding. After all, she had been a princess of Norway. In 2025, the documentary “Rebel Royals” ([trailer](#))

[here](#)) was released on Netflix. In this documentary, the audience finally got insight into what happened on the wedding day. The couple also had a lot of controversial statements throughout the documentary regarding the royal family, and not at least the media coverage of their relationship.

Some Political Affairs and Scandals (2000-2025)

22 July 2011 - Utøya

On July 22, 2011, Norway was subjected to a horrific terrorist attack carried out by a far-right extremist named Anders Behring Breivik. He had neo-nazi and anti-immigrational views, and believed that his actions were part of a larger mission to "protect" Norway, even though his violence was cruel and unjustifiable. The attacks began when Breivik set off a bomb in the government quarter in Oslo. The explosion caused massive damage to buildings and killed eight people. Shortly after detonating the bomb, Breivik traveled to Utøya, an island where the "Labour Youth Party" (AUF) was hosting its annual summer camp. Disguised as a police officer, he carried out a mass shooting, tragically killing 69 people, most of them teenagers who were on the island to discuss political and social views. This event deeply shocked Norway and the rest of the world.

Benjamin Hermansen (2001)

One of the most tragic events in Norway is the murder of Benjamin Hermansen in 2001. The murder took place in Holmlia in the southern part of Oslo. Benjamin was a fifteen years old, half Ghanaian and half Norwegian boy. Benjamin lived alone with his Norwegian mother because his father died when he was little. Benjamin and his best friend were outside near the local grocery store when two young adults approached them. Benjamin and his friend tried to run away, but the two adults got hold of Benjamin and stabbed him multiple times in the stomach and heart area causing his death. It was later confirmed that the motivation for the murder was due to Neo-nazi beliefs. The two men that killed Benjamin got sentenced to 21 years in prison.

#MeToo

Trond Giske was a top leader in the "Norwegian Labour Party" until the "MeToo-movement"

in 2018. Several women reported him for sexual harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and touching throughout many years. These women were often much younger and held lower positions, leading to accusations of abuse of his political power. The Labour Party concluded he had broken their rules against sexual harassment, and he was forced to resign. Although Giske said he would leave politics for good, he started a new local political wing called Nidaros. This allowed him to make a comeback and get elected back into the Norwegian Parliament in 2025. As today, he is once again a member of the Parliament, which remains controversial because people are divided on whether someone who committed sexual harassment should be allowed back into a position of power.

Sindre Finnes

While his wife, Erna Solberg, served as Prime Minister (2013–2021), Sindre Finnes made over 3,600 undisclosed stock transactions in companies affected by government policies, creating significant conflicts of interest. The economic crime unit (KRIPOS) chose not to pursue the event as a criminal insider trading case, and Solberg remained as the leader for the party called “Høyre” until 2026.

Bjørnar Moxnes

In June 2023, Bjørnar Moxnes, former leader of the political party “Rødt”, was caught on camera stealing some Hugo Boss sunglasses from a duty-free shop on Oslo Airport. He resigned as the party leader after the incident and had to pay a 3,000 NOK fine. Despite the scandal, Moxnes was re-elected as a minister in the 2025 election and continued his job in the Storting.

The Justice Minister’s Wife (The Bertheussen case)

In 2019, Laila Bertheussen, the Justice Minister’s Wife, was arrested. The case had a rather strange starting point. Bertheussen claimed that a theater group who had portrayed her were terrorists. According to Bertheussen, the group had been vandalizing her car and her house. The car was set on fire using flammable liquid, and her house was subjected to graffiti writings with the word racist in different forms. Remarkably, the case took a u-turn when the police found out that she had been doing it herself. The intention was to make people feel sorry for her and her husband, so that they would blame the theater group. Her husband had

to resign from his post, and Bertheussen was sentenced to jail for 18 months.

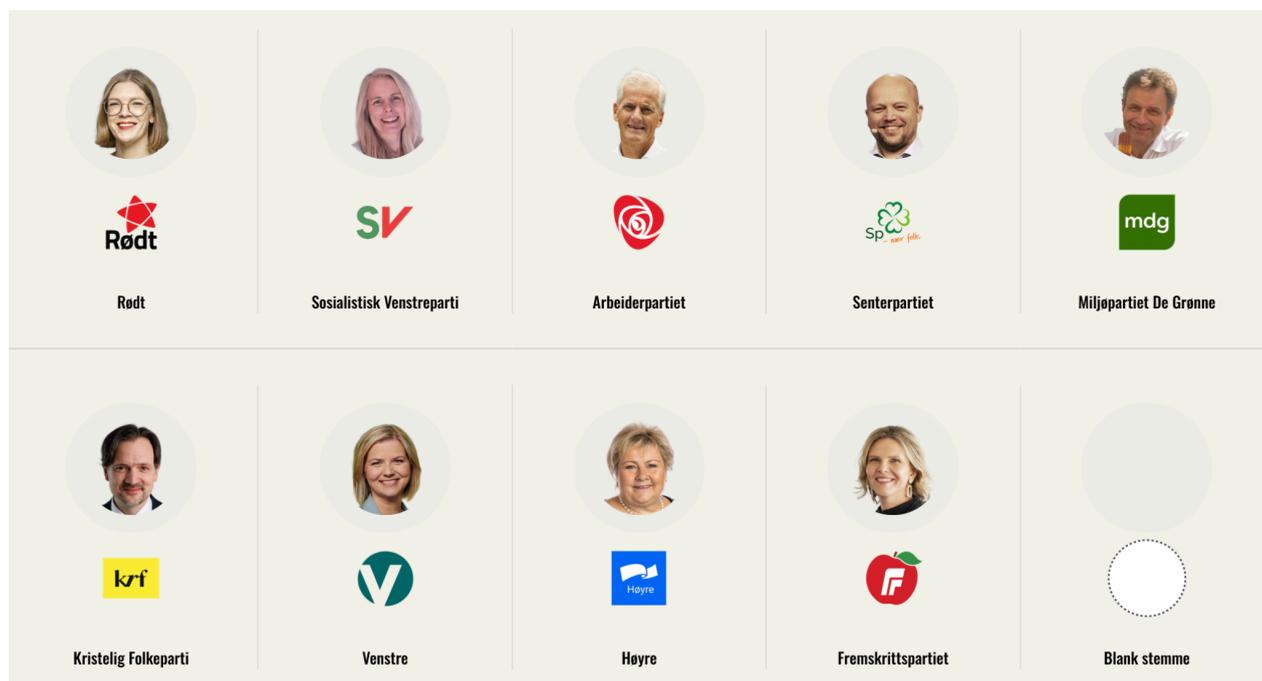
The commuter housing scandal

In 2021, it was revealed that several politicians had abused their entitlement to tax-free commuter apartments if they lived more than 40km from Oslo. This was paid for by the taxpayers money, and the scandal led to resignations, tax reassessments, and even criminal cases. Not at least, it shook the public's trust in politicians. The trigger was the discovery that Kjell Inge Ropstad, former “Children’s and Family Minister”, had received an apartment tax-free, and rented it out while living at his parents house. Many high standing politicians from the left wing faced massive media attention, but the only politician who admitted guilt and actually accepted his punishment, was Espen Teigen from the right wing party “Fremskrittspartiet”. He was sentenced to prison in nine months, while all the others walked free.

The “Master’s Degree” scandal

This scandal involved two cabinet ministers in the Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre’s government in 2024. Ingvild Kjerkol (Minister of Health and Care Services) and Sandra Borch (Minister of Research and Higher Education) were exposed for plagiarism. It started when a 27 year-old business student shared excerpts of Borch’s degree on X after she had been a vocal advocate for stricter rules against plagiarism. Reporters later found out that over 20% of her master thesis was based on other’s work. Later that year it was also confirmed that Kjerkol’s master thesis was not only plagiarism, but also contained fabricated interviews. Her former University concluded that this was far more serious than “sloppiness”, and revoked her degree. This case led to resignations, widespread debate about hypocrisy, academic integrity, and double standards in higher education.

3. The Main Norwegian Political Parties



Picture from: <https://barnasvalg.reddbarna.no/partiene>

Rødt: Political party since 2007.

SV - Sosialistisk Venstreparti: Political party since 1975.

Ap - Arbeiderpartiet: Political party since 1887.

Sp - Senterpartiet: Political party since 1920.

Mdg - Miljøpartiet De Grønne: Political party since 1988.

Krf - Kristelig Folkeparti: Political party since 1933.

Venstre: Political party since 1884.

Høyre: Political party since 1887.

Frp - Fremskrittspartiet: Political party since 1973.

Norway's 2025 election resulted in a multi-party parliament dominated by "Arbeiderpartiet" (53 seats), which currently leads a minority government. The opposition is led by the conservative party "Fremskrittspartiet" (47 seats) and "Høyre" (24 seats). In 2026, the government operates through cross-party negotiations, focusing on national security, the economy, and climate goals, with no option for early elections until 2029.

What do you know about Norway?

[JEOPARDY about Norway](#)

Sources:

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Map of Norway:

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Picture of The Royal Family: <https://theoslobook.no>

The Norwegian documentary: “[Etter Benjamin](#)”

About Benjamin Hermansen: <https://snl.no/Holmlia-drapet>

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Marius Borg Høiby:

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More Of Marius Borg Høiby: [Marius Borg Høiby](#)

The Justice Minister’s Wife:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/15/partner-of-norwegian-ex-minister-jailed-over-faked-attacks-on-home>

Store Norske Leksikon:

Svalbard: <https://snl.no/Svalbard>

Norge: <https://snl.no/Norge>

Kjell Magne Bondevik: https://snl.no/Kjell_Magne_Bondevik

Erna Solberg: https://snl.no/Erna_Solberg

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Sindre Finnes: https://snl.no/Sindre_Finnes

Bjørnar Moxnes: https://snl.no/Bj%C3%B8rnar_Moxnes

Laila Bertheussen: https://snl.no/Tor_Mikkel_Wara

Utøya: https://snl.no/terrorangrepene_i_Norge_22._juli_2011

#MeToo: <https://snl.no/metoo>

Prinsesse Märtha Louise: https://snl.no/M%C3%A4rtha_Louise

Durek Verrett: https://snl.no/Durek_Verrett