



ROYAL MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

*Norway*

# A New Europe in the Making – Norway and the EU Candidate Countries



# Norway and EU Enlargement

Foreign  
Minister  
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## WHY IS NORWAY INTERESTED IN THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION?

The ultimate goal of the enlargement of the European Union is to secure peace and stability in Europe. This is in the interest of all European countries, whether or not they are members of the EU. NATO enlargement is inspired by the same goal and is equally important for the future of Europe.

## WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES FACING EUROPE?

The successful conclusion of the two enlargement processes will represent a major step forward. An important factor in this connection is that EU enlargement will contribute to economic development and increased welfare in the candidate countries.

Integrating Russia into various forms of European and Atlantic cooperation is of primary importance, not only as a contribution to peace and security, but

also in order to meet common challenges such as major environmental problems.

Massive political and financial efforts will be required to heal the wounds of a decade of war and strife in the Balkans. All European countries have a responsibility for contributing to peace-making in the Balkans. Norway has played an active role in this area and will continue to do so.

## TO WHAT EXTENT WILL THE EU ENLARGEMENT INFLUENCE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN NORWAY AND THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES?

The enlargement of the European Union also means an enlargement of the European Economic Area (EEA). Norway is not a member of the EU, but has since 1994 participated in the internal market through the EEA Agreement. On entering the EU the candidate countries will also become members of the EEA. The EEA will form the basis for economic relations between the candidate countries and Norway. In practical terms this will mean that the four freedoms, i.e. the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons, will apply to the relations between the candidate countries and Norway.

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The ultimate goal of EU enlargement is to secure peace and stability in Europe



# Norway and the Candidate Countries – The EEA Agreement

Although Norway is not a member of the European Union, it has close ties with the Union through cooperation agreements.

The European Economic Area (EEA Agreement) is the cornerstone of the relations between Norway and the EU. Through this agreement Norway has been part of the internal market since 1994. With the exception of trade in agricultural products and fish, the same rules apply to trade between EU member states and Norway as to trade between the member states themselves.

All the EU member states and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein are parties to the EEA Agreement. New EU legislation is incorporated successively into the agreement in order to guarantee the smooth functioning of the internal market for all the participating countries.

On becoming members of the European Union the candidate countries will be

required to become parties to the EEA Agreement, which will then become the formal basis for economic relations between Norway and the new members. The free trade agreements that have governed trade relations between Norway and the candidate countries will then cease to exist.

Through separate agreements Norway participates in the Schengen cooperation, in the Europol cooperation, and in a number of EU programmes for example in the fields of education, research and culture.

In the field of foreign and security policy a partnership between the EU and Norway has been established through the political dialogue within the framework of the EEA. In addition, Norway strongly supports the development of a common European security and defence policy (ESDP) and works closely with the EU in developing a European crisis management capability.

Norway participates in a number of EU programmes, e.g. in the fields of education, research, and culture



## The EEA Agreement is the cornerstone of the relations between Norway and the EU



# Norway and the Candidate Countries – The Government Plan of Action to Increase Cooperation and Contact

For the past ten years Norway has supported the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe in their efforts to develop democratic institutions, establish a socially oriented market economy and improve the environment. More than NOK 3 billion, around EUR 400 million, has been allocated for these purposes.

In March 2001 the Norwegian Government launched a Plan of Action to increase contact and cooperation with the EU candidate countries. The purpose of the Plan of Action is to cooperate with the candidate countries in their preparations for EU membership and participation in the EEA. An additional aim is to create a platform for broader and closer contacts between Norway and the candidate countries. Under the Plan of Action Norway finances cooperation projects in selected areas.

Projects are selected on the basis of the candidate countries' own priorities and Norwegian capabilities and capacities.

The main focus of the Plan of Action is on the following areas:

- democracy, fundamental rights and gender equality
- the environment, health, energy, research, education and culture
- public administration
- justice and home affairs

The Plan of Action covers the period 2001–2006. It will be continually adjusted and revised in the light of experience and developments in the region. Flexibility and effectiveness will be emphasized when project proposals are selected and evaluated.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is cooperating with government agencies, local authorities and NGOs in both Norway and the candidate countries on the implementation of the Plan of Action.

For more information on the Plan of Action, including deadlines, application requirements and the application form, see the Internet addresses on the back page.

Under the Plan of Action Norway supports projects within areas like justice, public administration, health and gender equality



The purpose of the Plan of Action is to cooperate with the candidate countries in their preparations for EU membership and participation in the EEA



# The Plan of Action – Broad Practical Cooperation

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Under the Norwegian Plan of Action to increase contact and cooperation with the EU candidate countries a separate programme has been established for research and education. The programme promotes greater contact and cooperation between Norwegian universities and colleges and their partners in the candidate countries.



## ENVIRONMENT

Improving the state of the environment in the candidate countries is an important part of the preparations for EU membership and an important contribution to the global environment. The Plan of Action has so far emphasized support for regional projects that are coordinated by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe in Hungary.



## HEALTH

Health is a priority area. Norway plays a central role in the efforts under the auspices of the Baltic Sea cooperation to combat communicable diseases in the Baltic Sea region.



## JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

In the field of justice and home affairs, Norway and the candidate countries cooperate on the implementation and enforcement of the Schengen rules.

## LABOUR RELATIONS

The requirement of an effective market economy is one of the most central of the accession, or Copenhagen, criteria. Norway has therefore given priority to the development of labour relations in the candidate countries.



MEMBERS OF EFTA   
CANDIDATE COUNTRIES   
MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 

**FACTS ABOUT NORWAY 2002:**

OFFICIAL NAME: The Kingdom of Norway

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Constitutional monarchy

AREA: 385 155 km<sup>2</sup>

MAINLAND: 323 758 km<sup>2</sup> (7.6 per cent protected)

SVALBARD AND JAN MAYEN: 61 397 km<sup>2</sup> (57.1 per cent protected)

POPULATION: 4 504 000 as of 1 January 2001

MONETARY UNIT: Norwegian kroner, NOK

1 EURO 7,45 NOK as of August 2002

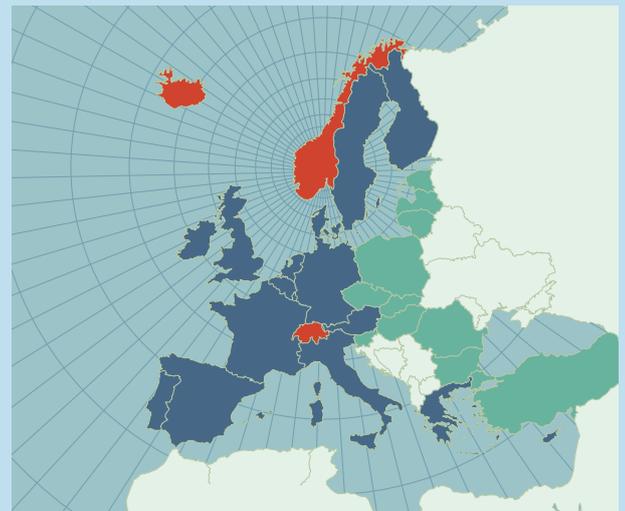
LENGTH OF COASTLINE: 25 148 km, including fjords

LARGEST LAKE: Mjøsa, 362 sq. km

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN: Galdhøpiggen, 2 469 m

ECONOMIC INDICATORS: GDP, 2000: 1 423 864 mill NOK/ 191 123 mill EURO

GDP PER CAPITA, 2000: 317 051 NOK/ 42 557 EURO



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**INTERNET ADDRESSES:**

GENERAL INFORMATION: <http://odin.dep.no/ud/>

EMBASSY INFORMATION: <http://www.embassies.mfa.no/>

INFORMATION ON THE PLAN OF ACTION: <http://odin.dep.no/ud/engelsk/publ/handlingsplaner/>

All applications under the Plan of Action are to be submitted through the Norwegian embassy in the respective countries.

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