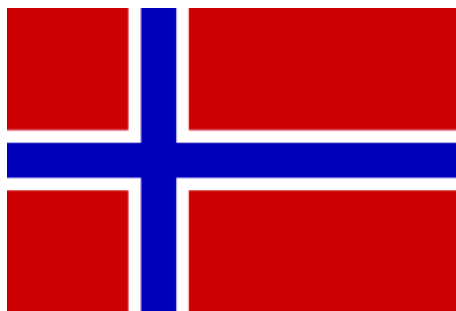




**Youth**Partnership

# **COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH POLICY IN NORWAY**



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**Youth**Partnership  
Council of Europe  
European Commission



c/o Council of Europe :: Directorate of Youth and Sport :: F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France  
Fax: (33) 3 88 412 778 :: E-mail: [youth-partnership@coe.int](mailto:youth-partnership@coe.int) :: [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

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## 1. Statistics on young people

Number and percentage of young people in global population per 1.1.07 (Source: [www.ssb.no](http://www.ssb.no)):

	N	%
Total population	4 681 100	100
Citizens aged 13 - 30	1 061 301	22,7

Number and percentage of young people by gender in global population per 1.1.07 (Source: [www.ssb.no](http://www.ssb.no)):

	N	%
Male (13 - 30)	540 237	11.5
Female (13 - 30)	521 064	11.1

## 2. Actors and Structures

### 2.1 Public authorities

#### 2.1.1 National public authorities:

##### Ministry in charge of youth

The Ministry of Children and Equality has the main responsibility for coordinating the government's work related to children and youth. The overarching goal of youth policy in Norway is to provide secure living conditions and a safe environment for children and young people as they grow up. See [www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no) for more information.

- *Minister:* Anniken Huitfeldt
- *Duration of mandate:* 2009 (The Government is elected for a period of 4 years)

##### **Youth Department in the Ministry**

Main tasks of the Youth Department

The Department of Children and Youth Policy is responsible for developing and coordinating general child and youth policy. One out of four sections is working with questions related to child and youth. This includes grants to children's and youth organisations, international exchange schemes for young people and measures for young people in the larger urban communities. The department is also responsible for the development programme aimed at strengthening the environments in which children grow up, for measures for young people in rural areas and for ensuring compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. See [www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no) for more information.

- *Number of people who work in this ministry in the Youth Department:* 10
- *Director responsible for Youth in the Ministry:* Director General: Mr Haktor Helland
- E-mail: [postmottak@bld.dep.no](mailto:postmottak@bld.dep.no)

- *Contact person in the youth department competent for European youth policy:*  
Bjørn Jaaberg Hansen, Senior Advisor (responsible for international coordination)  
Tel: (+47) 22 24 26 12, e-mail: [bjorn.hansen@bld.dep.no](mailto:bjorn.hansen@bld.dep.no)

## **Other national public bodies directly involved in youth policy**

### *Other Ministries*

Most of the ministries in Norway work with issues related to welfare and living conditions for children and youth. The following ministries are the most important ones regarding youth:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion
- Ministry of Health and Care Services
- Ministry of Justice and the Police
- Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs
- Ministry of Education and Research

### *Offices*

**The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir)** is the Norwegian governmental office for the welfare and protection of children and families. Its main objective is to provide high quality services to children, young people and families in need of assistance and support regardless of where in Norway they live. For more information about Bufdir, see: [www.bufdir.no](http://www.bufdir.no)

**The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training** is responsible for the development of primary and secondary education. The Directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research. In this capacity the Directorate has the overall responsibility for supervising education and the governance of the education sector, as well as the implementation of Acts of Parliament and regulations. The objective of the Directorate is to ensure that all pupils and apprentices receive the high quality education they are entitled to. For more information see [www.uttanningsdirektoratet.no](http://www.uttanningsdirektoratet.no).

**The Directorate for Health and Social Affairs** is responsible for the implementation of certain components of health and welfare legislation, initiation and sustenance of inter-sectorial cooperation, and to promote improvements through funding selected projects. The Directorate is subordinate to the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. For more information see [www.shdir.no](http://www.shdir.no).

**The Ombudsman for Children (Barneombudet)**. Norway was the first country to establish a commissioner, or ombud, empowered by law to protect children and their rights. Since 1981 the Ombudsman for Children in Norway has worked continuously to strengthen national and international legislation affecting children's welfare. For more information about The Ombudsman for Children, see: [www.barneombudet.no](http://www.barneombudet.no)

**The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud** shall work to promote real equality and equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnic background, religion, disabilities, sexual orientation and age. For more information about the ombud see [www.ldo.no](http://www.ldo.no).

**The Saami Parliament's Youth Policy Committee** seeks to enhance young Saami's co-determination and influence on Saami parliamentary policies, and help the Saami Parliament to shape its present and future policies related to young people. One of the main objectives is to plan and host the Saami Parliament's youth conference. The Committee consists of 5 members who are appointed for a two-year period. The members are 18-20 years of age, and come from all parts of Norway.

### **Parliamentary commission in charge of youth issues**

*Name:* The Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs

*Name of president / chair:* May-Helen Molvær Grimstad

*Role and competence:*

The Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs works with (Source: [www.stortinget.no](http://www.stortinget.no)):

- Matters related to families, children and youth
- Gender equality
- Consumer affairs
- Cultural affairs

### **2.1.2 Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

Norway has 19 counties. The county councils are autonomous elected bodies. One of their responsibilities is to coordinate children and youth questions in the region/county and especially regarding secondary school education.

### **2.1.3 Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

Norway has 431 municipalities. The local authorities are autonomous in deciding how to work with issues concerning children and youth.

## **2.2 Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)**

### **Structure and major organisations of (voluntary) social welfare and social services for young people**

Youth older than 18 years are adults in the eyes of the law. This gives them the same rights as all other adults to financial support such as unemployment benefit and social assistance. Youth under the age of 18 are still children in legal terms and receive social assistance from the child welfare services when needed. In some cases the support given can be extended until the recipient reaches the age of 23. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is the national unit in charge of child and youth welfare services. In addition there are child and youth welfare services in all municipalities.

## **2.3 Non-public actors/structures & youth services with competencies in the youth field**

Mention and describe non-public actors/structures who are directly or indirectly involved in youth policies, and have influence in the policy-making process and in the decision making process.

### **2.3.1 [Youth councils](#)**

The Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU) is an umbrella organisation uniting more than 70 nationwide non-governmental organisations for children and youth. The LNU represents youth in relations with authorities and other significant institutions. In addition regional Children and Youth Councils operate in 12 of Norway's 19 counties. These councils are umbrella organisations for regional youth organisations. They are consulted on youth related matters at the regional level. Find more information at [www.lnu.no](http://www.lnu.no)

### **2.3.2 Youth NGOs**

About 70 nationwide youth organisations receive government funding. Most of them are members of the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU). The largest youth NGO in Norway is the Norwegian Band Federation (Norsk Musikkorps Forbund) with more than 43,000 members under the age of 26. Another large youth organisation is Youth Against Racism, with more than 27,000 members. At [www.lnu.no](http://www.lnu.no) there is an overview of youth organisations in Norway.

Landsforeningen Ungdom og fritid (The Norwegian Association of Youth Clubs). The organisation has approximately 570 youth clubs as members. It is a multi-purpose organisation for social, cultural and educational efforts. Ungdom og fritid organises events for member clubs, and offers help and advice to members and employees of youth clubs. This organisation is a member of The European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC). [www.ungogfri.no](http://www.ungogfri.no)

Unge funksjonshemmede (Norwegian Federation of Youth Organisations of Disabled People) is a coalition of youth organisations for disabled people in Norway. Unge funksjonshemmede works to influence decision makers to ensure equal rights for disabled youth and to improve accessibility in the society at large, schools and higher education. Unge funksjonshemmede also works to promote cooperation between organisations for disabled youth. [www.ungefunksjonshemmede.no](http://www.ungefunksjonshemmede.no)

## **2.4 Other structures**

The Norwegian Forum for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (FFB) is a network of organisations, institutions and individuals who are interested in children's rights in Norway and internationally. The FFB's objective is to promote the exchange of information on and experience with working for children, and to be a source of inspiration for continued development of the understanding of the rights of children. For more information, see [www.ungnett.org](http://www.ungnett.org)

The Ombudsman for Children has its own consultation group. For more information, see [www.barneombudet.no](http://www.barneombudet.no)

The Network of Youth Researchers consists of about 80 researchers from universities, university colleges and research institutes. The network meets two to four times a year.

### 3 Legislation

*Articles of the constitution concerning youth explicitly*

There are no specific references to youth in the constitution.

*National legislation on youth*

Three statutes address children and youth directly: “The Child Welfare Act”, “The Children Act” and “The Education Act”.

#### **Act of 17 July 1992 No. 100 Relating to Child Welfare Services (The Child Welfare Act):**

This Act is concerned with children’s need for protection. The purpose of the Act is:

- to ensure that children and young people who live in conditions which may be detrimental to their health and development receive the necessary assistance and care at the right time,
- to help to ensure that children and young people are brought up in a secure environment.

The provisions of the Act concerning services and measures apply to all persons present in Norway. Measures provided for by the Act may be applied in respect of children below the age of 18. If the child consents, measures implemented before the child has reached the age of 18 may be maintained or replaced by other measures mentioned in this Act until the child has reached the age 23. You can find more information about this Act at:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/doc/Laws/Acts/The-Child-Welfare-Act.html?id=448398>

#### **Act No. 7 of 8 April 1981 relating to Children and Parents (The Children Act):**

This Act is concerned with the rights of children and youth under the age of 18 years and regulates parents’ duties and functions towards their children, and children’s rights in relation to their parents. You can find more information about The Children Act at:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/doc/Laws/Acts/The-Children-Act.html?id=448389>

#### **Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act):**

The Act concerns primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education in publicly maintained schools and training facilities, unless otherwise specifically stated.

For more information about this Act, see:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd/Documents/Legislation/reglement/2000/Act-relating-to-Primary-and-Secondary-Education-Education-Act.html?id=420511>

Norwegian legislation translated into English is available at:

<http://www.ub.uio.no/ujur/ulov/english.html>

*Regional and local legislation on youth*

There is no regional or local legislation concerning youth

*(Guidelines or Principles concerning youth policy if there is no special legislation on this field)*

Guidelines and principles on youth policy are outlined in the government's report to the Storting No. 39 (2001-2002). (Not available in English). The government also issues an annual report on how the government works to promote the interests of young people in all policy fields through the Fiscal Budget (not available in English).

## **4. National Programmes on youth**

*Name and describe the national programmes on youth*

See: Action plans, i.e. official strategies

### **Action plans, i.e. official strategies**

Plan of Action against Juvenile Delinquency (Handlingsplan mot barne – og ungdomskriminalitet). This action plan outlines the government strategy to prevent and combat crime committed by children and youth. It involves comprehensive inter-sectorial coordination, as well as cooperation between different levels of government.

For more information, see: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/jd/Documents-and-publications/Reports/Plans/2005/Handlingsplan---Sammen-mot-barne--og-ungdomskriminalitet.html?id=458002>

Government Action Plan against Female Genital Mutilation. The measures in the action plan are intended to prevent girls living in Norway from being subjected to genital mutilation and to help girls and women who have already undergone genital mutilation. The Government will cooperate closely with organisations and individuals, and participate in international efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation. For more information in English, see:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Documents/Guidelines-and-brochures/2001/Governmental-Action-Plan-against-Female-Genital-Mutilation.html?id=419327>

Renewed initiative against forced marriage. The Norwegian Government will continue its

efforts to work against forced marriage. The Government puts forward 30 new measures in this Renewed Initiative in a number of areas. For more information, see:

[http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/kilde/bfd/bro/2003/0016/ddd/pdfv/187208-q-1037\\_e.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/kilde/bfd/bro/2003/0016/ddd/pdfv/187208-q-1037_e.pdf)

Government Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination. The measures in this action plan address discrimination and racism: the target group is essentially the majority population and structures and processes.

[http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/AID/vedlegg/stmeld\\_9\\_2006\\_english.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/AID/vedlegg/stmeld_9_2006_english.pdf)

Plan of Action for Universal Design: The government action plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. While the Government's action plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities aims to enhance accessibility for all, it focuses especially on persons suffering from functional impairments. These include disabilities affecting vision, hearing, mobility, cognition and sensitivity to environmental factors (individuals with asthma/allergies). For more information in English, see:

[http://www.universell-utforming.miljo.no/artikkel\\_english.shtml?id=185](http://www.universell-utforming.miljo.no/artikkel_english.shtml?id=185)

### **Programmes and actions for specific target groups**

See: Action plans, i.e. official strategies

## **5. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth**

### **National level**

EUR 30,000,000

Footnote: This is the National Budget allocation to the Ministry of Children and Equality directly for children and youth policy purposes.

### **Regional level**

Financial support to youth organisations is provided from both regional and local government sources. It is not possible to specify the size of the support.

## **6. European Dimension of youth policy**

### **6.1 Council of Europe programmes or activities implemented in an important way for youth purposes (including funding schemes of the European Youth Foundation)**

Council of Europe youth campaign.all different- all equal

Coordinating Organisation:

The Norwegian Youth Council (LNU)

Campaign Website:

<http://www.alldifferent-allequal.no>

## 6.2 European Union programmes

The Youth in Action Programme (Aktiv Ungdom) is open to all young people. Special priority is given to the inclusion of young people lacking opportunities, defined by the National Agency (NA) for the Youth in Action programme in Norway as:

- Youth with disabilities
- School “drop-outs” and unemployed youth
- Youth at risk because of drug abuse, psychological problems, socio-economic deprivation etc.
- Youth with a minority background

Cultural diversity and the fight against racism and xenophobia is an important priority of the Programme. Other priorities include e.g. cooperation with selected countries or regions (new EU member states, geographically distant countries, the Barents region, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, South East Europe). For more information about the Youth in Action Programme (Aktiv Ungdom), see: [www.aktivungdom.eu](http://www.aktivungdom.eu)

The National Agency (NA) for the Youth in Action Programme in Norway is the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), in which the NA was placed as of 1 July 2004. The main objective of Bufdir is to provide services of high quality to children, young people and families in need of assistance and support. The National Authority for the Youth in Action Programme in Norway, the Ministry for Children and Equality, has appointed a national Selection Committee drawing representatives from four major national youth organisations: The National Youth Council (LNU), the National Association of Youth clubs, the National network of Youth Information Centres and the Norwegian Federation of Youth Organisations of Disabled People. The selection committee has an advisory role regarding the implementation of the Youth in Action programme (elaborating guidelines, setting priorities, etc.). The NA ensures that the European priorities of the Youth in Action Programme are published and made available to all potential users of the Programme. To complement the European priorities, the NA has also identified national priorities. There is, for example, a need to ensure better information to young people and youth workers/leaders about the possibilities offered by Youth in Action Programme. Recruiting more applicants and ensuring that they are trained to organise with high quality is a main target for the Norwegian NA. Raising the awareness of what quality is and how to improve the quality of projects are important aspects in the training of project promoters. Keywords are: preparation, partnership, active participation by young people, intercultural understanding, gender balance, gender awareness, risk assessment, crisis management and evaluation.

The Ministry of Children and Equality participates in several programmes, e.g.:

- "Safer use of the internet".
- "Daphne"
- "Pilot project for participation of Young People".
- "Support to European Bodies in the Youth field".

- "Support to European Bodies in the field of Education and Training"

Other programmes:

SOKRATES [www.siu.no/sokrates](http://www.siu.no/sokrates)

LEONARDO DA VINCI [www.teknologisk.no/leonardo](http://www.teknologisk.no/leonardo)

## **7 Forthcoming events/conferences**

### **7.1 Current developments/plans with regard to national legislation/guidelines**

1. In 2007 the government has carried out a process that will result in new and improved regulations governing the distribution of administrative grants to non-governmental children and youth organisations by the Ministry of Children and Equality. The NGOs have been consulted in the process, and the regulations will come into effect in 2008.
2. A government commission has been appointed by the Ministry of Finance to look into the system of tax exemption for voluntary organisations and will publish its report in autumn 2007.
3. A government commission has been appointed by the Ministry of Education with a mandate to find ways to improve the system of non-formal education through voluntary and non-governmental organisations. Its report will be submitted by the end of 2007.
4. The Ministry of Culture issued a Report to the Storting (stortingsmelding) on 8 August 2007, outlining measures on how the government will continue to promote the non-governmental voluntary sector.

### **7.2 Current developments/plans with regard to European youth policy priorities**

In autumn 2008 Nordic Youth Research Information Symposium (NYRIS) will be arranged by Norwegian Social Research and The Ministry of Children and Equality.