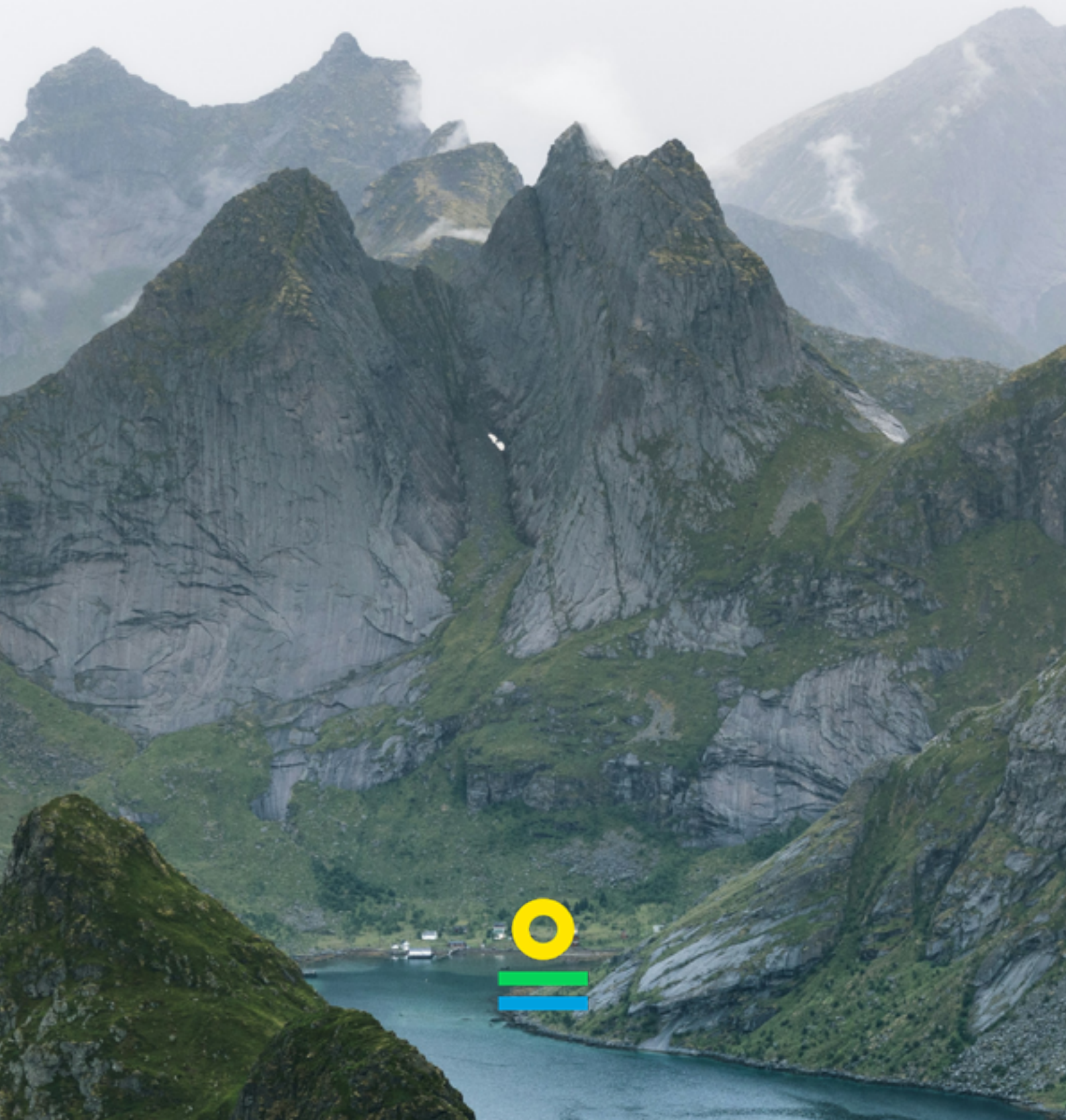


CIVIL SOCIETY'S ASSESSMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

TO NORWAY'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2026



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Organisations

ADRA Norway
Amathea
Amnesty International Norway
Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS)
Attac
Caritas Norway
Changemaker Norway
Collaborative Forum Against Poverty
Debt Justice Norway
Digni
FIAN Norway
FRI – The Norwegian Association for Sexual and Gender Diversity
Future in Our Hands (FIVH)
Grandparents Climate Action (BKA)
GRID-Arendal
Habitat Norway
Hardanger Academy – Nordic Center for Peace, Development and Environment
Legal Counselling for Women
LHLI
LO Norway – Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
MiRA Centre
National Union of Students in Norway
NOAH – For Animal Rights
Nordic Women's University
Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations
Norwegian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
Norwegian Association for Women's Rights (NKF)
Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted
Norwegian Association of the Disabled
Norwegian Azerbaijanis' Youth Organization (NAYO)
Norwegian Biodiversity Network (Sabima)
Norwegian Cancer Society
Norwegian Christian Council
Norwegian Council for Africa
Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM)
Norwegian Housing Association (LBF)
Norwegian Library Association
Norwegian Medical Students' Association
Norwegian Seafarers Union
Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature
Norwegian Trekking Association
Operation Day's Work (ODW)
Plan International Norway
Press – Save the Children Youth Norway
Rainforest Foundation Norway The Norwegian Union of School Employees
Right to Play Norway
SAIH – Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund
Salvation Army
Save the Children Norway
Secretariat for the Crisis Centre Movement in Norway
Sex og samfunn
SOS Children's Villages Norway
Strømme Foundation
Tax Justice Norway
The Atlas Alliance
The Development Fund
The Freight Transport Coalition of Norway (Godsalliansen)
The Royal Norwegian Society for Development
The National Union of School Emo
The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO)
The Norwegian Union of School Employees
The Norwegian Women's Lobby
The Women's Front of Norway
The United Nations Association of Norway
UNICEF Norway
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – Norway
WWF Norway

Foreword

Norway enters this review process with a solid foundation for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Norway has strong institutions, high levels of trust, a robust welfare state and substantial financial resources. Norway also continues to play an important international role through development cooperation, diplomacy and support for multilateral institutions.

Yet the assessments presented in this report reveal a troubling reality: across all 17 SDGs, civil society finds that progress is either stagnating or moving in the wrong direction. While important initiatives have been introduced in several areas, implementation remains insufficient, fragmented and too slow to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda.

Persistent inequalities, continued biodiversity loss, high resource consumption, insufficient climate action and weak policy coherence continue to undermine progress – both nationally and globally.

A recurring conclusion is that Norway's challenges are not primarily a question of capacity or resources. They are questions of political priorities, implementation and coherence.

As one of the world's wealthiest countries, Norway has both the means and the responsibility to demonstrate that sustainable development is achievable. This requires policies that address the interconnections between the goals, recognise Norway's global footprint and ensure that short-term interests do not come at the expense of long-term sustainability.

The assessments and recommendations from civil society are intended as constructive contributions to Norway's continued implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They reflect the collective knowledge and experience of a diverse civil society committed to sustainable development, human rights and social justice.

The window for achieving the SDGs is rapidly closing but it is not closed yet. This review should not be seen as the conclusion of a reporting exercise, but as a call to action.

Gina Ekholt
General Secretary, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM)

About this report

The 2030 Agenda provides a shared framework for addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time – including climate change, biodiversity loss, inequality, threats to human rights, peace and democracy.

Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are the United Nations' mechanism for countries to assess and report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), identify remaining challenges and strengthen accountability. They are an opportunity not only to highlight achievements, but also to examine where further action is needed.

This report presents Norwegian civil society's assessment of Norway's progress towards the SDGs as part of Norway's 2026 VNR. Norway will present its VNR, which includes this civil society assessment, at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2026.

Norwegian civil society benefits from a strong tradition of engagement of non-state actors in decision-making processes, which is crucial in the work towards achieving the SDGs. It also builds trust between government and civil society.

This civil society assessment has been coordinated by the Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM), a network of nearly 70 organisations working on sustainable development, environment, human rights, peace and global justice. More than 60 civil society actors have contributed to the assessment of the 17 goals. Together, they represent a broad range of perspectives and expertise from across Norwegian society.

This process has demonstrated how governments can actively engage non-state actors in reporting processes and has given us useful experiences on how we can further strengthen stakeholder engagement and build trust between different stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Aron Halfen
Coordinator for the civil society assessment
Senior Advisor, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM)





SDG 1: No Poverty

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in maintaining comparatively low poverty by international standards: extreme poverty is near zero and the national-poverty-line rate stood at ~12.2 percent (2023). This is underpinned by a universal welfare state, high employment, and redistributive taxes. Income inequality in 2023 was at its lowest since 2014, and the overall at-risk-of-poverty rate remained about 10.9 percent.

Internationally, Norway remains a top donor of Official development assistance (ODA) relative to GNI and prioritises poverty reduction, domestic resource mobilisation, and social protection through ODA. In 2024 Norway delivered ~1.02 percent of GNI in aid, even as global ODA fell.

Norway's challenges include stagnating or rising poverty risks since 2021. The share with persistent low income reached 9.5 percent (average 2022–2024). Vulnerability is concentrated among people with weak labour-market attachment, disability-benefit recipients, single adults, and immigrants. Material and social deprivation have increased during the cost-of-living crisis, underscored by a documented surge in charitable food distribution in 2023 – which is now stabilised at a high level, suggesting it has become a lasting supplement to the welfare system rather than a temporary crisis measure.

In a recent report from Q1 2026, 47 percent of households from the lowest income bracket report that their financial situation has worsened over the past six months, while only 15 percent report an improved financial situation. This confirms a consistent trend in the same study where a disproportionate number of low-income respondents report a worsening financial situation. In total, 8 percent of households surveyed in this report state that they do not have sufficient financial means to cover ordinary day-to-day living expenses, a proportion that has remained stable since 2023.

Among households reporting low income, one in four (26 percent) say they have skipped meals, and 14 percent say they have gone to bed hungry because they could not afford to eat enough. Among those whose financial situation has worsened, 65 percent report saving on electricity, 63 percent have bought less or less healthy food, 54 percent have avoided buying clothes, and 43 percent have refrained from or postponed seeking health services.

Internationally, although Norway continues to allocate a high share of GNI to ODA, total aid volumes declined in 2024 and a smaller share reached the poorest countries. Norad's official statistics show that support to least-developed/poorest countries declined in both amount and share in 2024 (country-allocated aid share to these countries dropped from ~40 percent to ~31 percent), while Europe—driven by Ukraine—became the largest recipient region. This mirrors a wider international shift and raises concerns for SDG 1 impact in low-income settings.

Norway must:

- Introduce improved poverty metrics and data systems that reflect actual needs rather than income alone, recognising that income levels do not fully capture the experience of poverty.
- Legally mandate price indexation of all benefits (disability benefits, social assistance, AAP, child benefits etc) to ensure that vulnerable groups' real incomes keep pace with living costs.
- Accelerate labour-market inclusion for groups with the highest poverty risk (young adults, immigrants/refugees, people with reduced work capacity).
- Expand access to affordable child-care and after-school activities for low-income families.
- Target high-risk households (single adults, minimum disability pensioners, immigrants) with tailored support and activation pathways.
- Expand affordable housing supply and reduce housing-cost burdens for low-income households.
- Reinforce child-poverty measures, especially for immigrant and single-parent families.
- Uphold high ODA levels and reverse the drop to the poorest countries by restoring/increasing the share and volume to LDCs/low-income countries, safeguarding humanitarian funding, and prioritising poverty-focused, country-owned programs.
- Maintain leadership on fair taxation and domestic resource mobilisation in partner countries to reduce structural drivers of poverty.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Salvation Army, Collaborative Forum Against Poverty, Press – Save the Children Youth Norway, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in achieving national food security. Hunger is effectively eradicated, and Norway maintains very low levels of food insecurity alongside high nutrition standards. The majority of the population has access to safe and nutritious food through well-functioning markets, high food safety standards, and universal welfare systems. Norway has also succeeded in establishing strong institutions supporting sustainable food systems.

The country benefits from solid regulatory frameworks, stable agricultural systems, and effective governance arrangements, which contribute to high-quality food production and sustainable management of key natural resources for food and agriculture. In 2024, Parliament commissioned a public inquiry to prepare a report expected in 2026 with recommendations for developing more sustainable food systems in Norway.

Norway has been an active advocate for global food security and has developed a comprehensive food-security strategy within its development cooperation, including support to smallholder farmers. It promotes farmers' rights to seeds worldwide to strengthen food security, build climate resilience, and conserve crop diversity, and it is home to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. Norway maintains close collaboration between civil society and government in multilateral food-security processes.

Norway's challenges include persistent malnutrition among vulnerable groups. Elderly and disabled patients in institutions remain undernourished or at risk of malnutrition due to insufficient nutrition competence, inadequate meals, and weak follow-up routines. This undermines the right to adequate food and quality care and is also relevant to SDG 3.8. Dietary patterns are unsustainable. Norwegians consume high levels of meat and low levels of fruits and vegetables, and adherence to national dietary guidelines remains low.

Overweight and obesity are rising (15–20 percent of children are overweight), and unhealthy diets increase the risk of non-communicable diseases and premature death. Food consumption patterns are also environmentally unsustainable. Food waste is high, and low self-sufficiency, particularly for vegetables and plant protein, creates vulnerability while shifting environmental pressures, including deforestation and emissions, abroad through global food supply chains.

Agricultural policy continues to prioritise productivity growth, weakening rural livelihoods and long-term resilience. Many farms close, and farmland remains fallow. Aquaculture, although economically important, continues to cause pollution and environmental pressures, including high mortality in farmed fish, as documented in the 2026 Risk Report on Norwegian Fish Farming. Market concentration in the grocery sector and contract-based production systems limit farmers' autonomy, weakening food system diversity and resilience. Rising food prices, aggressive marketing of unhealthy food, and insufficient social support contribute to increasing reliance on voluntary food assistance and rising nutritional inequalities.

Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture remain high, and land-use change, pollution, and erosion continue to undermine biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, threatening sustainable food production. Internationally, reduced prioritisation of long-term food security and climate adaptation in development cooperation amid shifting geopolitical priorities risks weakening Norway's contribution to global progress on SDG 2.

Norway must:

- Strengthen nutrition competence and staffing capacity in institutions and home-based care to prevent malnutrition among vulnerable groups.
- Promote healthier and more sustainable diets and substantially reduce food waste.
- Strengthen food literacy and practical cooking skills, particularly among children and young people, to promote healthy diets and reduce food waste.
- Increase domestic resilience by reducing dependency on imported livestock feed, while strengthening production of plant-based foods.
- Significantly tighten regulation of aquaculture to reduce environmental damage and improve animal welfare.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture and food systems and ensure alignment with climate and nature commitments.
- Strengthen conservation of agricultural biodiversity relevant to food systems, including seed security and genetic diversity.
- Increase and safeguard development assistance to food and nutrition security and agriculture, including support to smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Caritas Norway, FIAN Norway, Future in Our Hands (FIVH), Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), The Royal Norwegian Society for Development, Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, The Development Fund, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in building a well-functioning universal healthcare system, and there is strong financial protection against medical expenses, except for dental health. Vaccine preventable diseases are low, with a high coverage of the Childhood Immunisation Programme. Norway has developed new strategies, i.e. for women's health, reducing social health inequalities, mental health and antimicrobial resistance. CRPD is included in Norwegian law. Norway has played a central role in the development of the Lusaka Agenda. Sexual and reproductive health rights remain a priority in Official development assistance (ODA).

Norway's challenge is social inequalities in health. The population with the lowest household income has significantly shorter life expectancy, and the proportion of children living in persistent poverty has tripled over the past 20 years. Access to health services is challenging for some population groups such as people living in very remote areas, people with disabilities and undocumented migrants.

Racism and discrimination in health care services among both patients and health workers are documented. Infectious diseases like gonorrhoea, HIV, viral hepatitis and drug resistant tuberculosis have been in an upward trend. There is insufficient access to timely rehabilitation for persons with disabilities. Care for the elderly remains a challenge, with reports of involuntary treatment, violence and undernutrition.

Inpatient beds for mental health care and substance use treatment have been reduced, and the mortality among these groups has increased between 2019 to 2024. This hinders the progressive realisation of the right to health as stipulated in the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Norway has failed to demonstrate global health leadership. The grant to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria has remained nominally constant over a decade, and the funding to GAVI and UNAIDS is reduced. Eye health care is not a priority. Armed conflict has become a fundamental determinant of health.

Despite Norway's condemnations of attacks and the disruption of health facilities, ODA to global health remains unchanged. It is a concern that increased focus on global health security might skew resources from other global health priorities.

Norway must:

- Improve preventive health by addressing antimicrobial resistance and the commercial drivers of health (tobacco and nicotine products, alcohol, sugar-sweetened beverages, ultra processed food, etc.).
- Fully finance and implement its strategy to reduce social health inequalities (White Paper, Meld. St. 15 (2022–2023) on Public Health – National Strategy to Reduce Social Health Inequalities) and strengthen policies to reduce persistent poverty.

- Put in place systems to improve access to basic health services, including for reproductive and mental health, for refugees, immigrants and undocumented migrants.
- Ensure inclusive and universal design of health services and improve health care for people with disabilities; establish more national health registers, including a national register for visually impaired.
- Combat/eliminate racism and discrimination in health- and social services and develop systems to expose and tackle it.
- Strengthen sexuality education in schools and increase availability of low-cost, low threshold testing for sexually transmitted diseases.
- Prevent violence and abuse of older persons and take immediate action to address acute malnutrition among older persons in health and care institutions.
- Make urgent and significant efforts to improve prevention and care for people with mental health and substance use disorders.
- Prioritise and increase funding for global health to strengthen health systems, in line with the Lusaka Agenda, while ensuring the health rights and needs of vulnerable populations are protected and with meaningful community engagement.
- Increase funding for universal health coverage, ensure equal access to prevention (i.e. vaccines) and treatment against HIV and TB, as well as prioritise global eye health care.

Organisations participating in this assessment: LHLL, The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted, the Norwegian Cancer Society, FIAN Norway, Norwegian Medical Students' Association, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 4: Quality Education

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in building a strong and inclusive education system. Primary and secondary schooling is free and compulsory, and lower kindergarten fees have made early childhood education more accessible. Upper-secondary completion has increased by 10 percentage points since 2015 and now stands at 82 percent. However, completion rates remain lower among Technical and Vocational Education and Training students, and fewer pupils transition directly from lower to upper secondary school compared to ten years ago (96.8 percent in 2025 vs. 98.3 percent in 2014).

Internationally, Norway's financial support for education has declined significantly. Official development assistance (ODA) to education fell by 33 percent between 2021 and 2024, and tuition fees were introduced for international students. On the positive side, the 2024 humanitarian strategy recognises education as life-saving, and Norway continues its strong commitment to the Safe Schools Declaration.

Norway's challenge is, despite its strengths, that the Norwegian education system faces several persistent issues. There is a substantial shortage of teachers and support staff. Bullying remains widespread, and many school facilities and materials are not universally designed, limiting inclusion for children with disabilities.

Norway is experiencing a pronounced decline in reading proficiency. PISA 2022 shows Norwegian 15-year-olds scoring 477 points in reading—Norway's lowest score ever and 22 points below 2018. National data confirm a 23-point decline from 2018 to 2022 and a rise in low performers, with students below proficiency level 2 increasing from 19 percent to 27 percent. These developments exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities, and uneven access to quality school libraries weakens support for struggling readers.

Progress on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is also uneven. Findings show that the interdisciplinary topic of sustainable development is inconsistently implemented across schools. Many teachers lack the time, resources and pedagogical tools to translate curriculum intentions into practice. Whole-school approaches are only partly realised, and key ESD values—critical thinking, democratic participation, ethical reflection and systems thinking—are not systematically embedded. As a result, pupils have unequal opportunities to develop the competencies needed to understand and address complex societal and global challenges.

Norway must:

- Ensure equal access to information and strengthen pupils' critical thinking and reading skills.
- Identify reading difficulties earlier, with special attention to ethnic minority pupils.
- Increase funding for school libraries and ensure they are staffed with qualified personnel to support equitable access to information and literacy development.
- Strengthen adult education and lifelong learning through accessible, flexible, high-quality opportunities for adults with low basic skills in reading, writing, numeracy and digital competence.

- Integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and global citizenship education throughout the education system, enabling pupils to develop the competencies needed for sustainability, peace, human rights, and democratic participation.
- Improve teacher training and professional development in ESD, ensuring educators are equipped to teach sustainability, interdisciplinarity, critical thinking, and systems thinking.
- Facilitate cooperation between kindergartens and public libraries to foster children's joy of reading from an early age.
- Use legislation, regulations and targeted funding to ensure full inclusion of children with disabilities at all educational levels.
- Strengthen efforts to combat bullying, especially cyberbullying.
- Abolish tuition fees for international students.
- Allocate 15 percent of development aid to education and increase support to education funds, UN organisations, and civil society partners.
- Prioritise free, inclusive, quality public education in development aid, in line with human rights and SDG 4.
- Continue supporting the Safe Schools Declaration.
- Champion the right to quality education globally by systematically promoting equality and accessibility.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted, Norwegian Library Association, The United Nations Association of Norway, ADRA Norway, The Atlas Alliance, Digni, Norwegian Association of the Disabled, Operation Day's Work (ODW), Plan International Norway, Save the Children Norway, Right to Play Norway, SAIH – The Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund, Norwegian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, The Norwegian Union of School Employees, SOS Children's Villages Norway, Strømme Foundation, UNICEF Norway, The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), National Union of Students in Norway, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 5: Gender Equality

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in initiating action plans and committees to promote gender equality, notably the permanent Commission for Intimate Partner Homicides, the Committee on Sexual Assault (“Voldtekstutvalget”), and the Commission on Women’s Occupational Health. Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act have increased the use of reverse personal security alarms, shifting accountability to offenders and providing greater freedom to victims. The implementation of a new Abortion Law and consent-based rape legislation strengthens the protection of women’s rights.

Norway is an international advocate for gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Universal welfare schemes promoting equality are strong, and around 60 percent of fathers take full parental leave.

Norway’s challenges are persistent gendered social and economic inequalities, disparities in women’s health and occupational health, and high rates of gender-based violence. Despite numerous action plans, committees, and legislative reforms, these efforts have yet to yield lasting systemic change in practice.

Gender-based violence remains a widespread challenge. Women experience domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual violence more often than men. One in five Norwegian women has experienced rape, and 85 percent of victims of intimate partner murders are women. Sámi women experience domestic violence more often than non-Sámi women, and minorities face barriers accessing help-services. Violent pornography and oversexualised representations of women and LGBTQIA+ persons are easily accessible online, and digital violence and sexual extortion are increasing. Women and LGBTQIA+ persons are often targeted by hate crime and hate speech. Civil society organisations and crisis centres report constraints and insufficient financial and political prioritisation.

As of 2025, the gender pay gap is increasing. The labour market and educational system remain gender-segregated. Women are more often part-time employed, overrepresented in low-paid care sectors, and underrepresented in leadership positions. Discrimination related to parental leave is prevalent. These patterns intersect with ethnicity, migration status, disability, and socioeconomic background. Gender-neutral language in policies and legislation may hinder substantive equality. The decline in female representatives in Parliament challenges democratic inclusivity. Detention systems do not adequately safeguard gender-sensitive conditions. Imprisoned women and trans persons report discrimination, inadequate healthcare, and heightened vulnerability to violence.

At a global level, we observe a backlash against gender equality, women’s rights, and bodily autonomy. Geopolitical and financial uncertainties particularly affect women, and violence against women remains a pervasive barrier to gender equality.

Norway must:

- Eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination, ensuring legal reforms and action plans are supported by financial prioritisation and preventive efforts.

- Follow up on the review of the Crisis Centre Act of 2010 and the financing model for crisis centres.
- Incorporate the Istanbul Convention into domestic law.
- Implement large-scale awareness campaigns on gender-based violence, digital violence and pornography, and help-services for victims and perpetrators.
- Expand the use of reverse personal security alarms.
- Ensure relevant actors are trained to recognise and investigate violence against women, including women with disabilities.
- Retain gender-specific language recognising women’s structural disadvantages in policies and legislation on violence and in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.
- Strengthen research on women’s health and follow up on the Commission on Women’s Occupational Health.
- Challenge gender stereotypes in education and occupation, and reduce the gender pay gap, including implementing the EU Pay Transparency Directive.
- Ensure safe, gender-sensitive, and non-discriminatory prison conditions for women, trans, and non-binary individuals.
- Adopt intersectional approaches to gender equality and policies beyond a binary model of gender.
- Ensure and protect bodily autonomy and access to healthcare for marginalised groups.
- Counter global trends undermining women’s rights and advocate for gender equality and SRHR.
- Strengthen gender-sensitive asylum and migration policies, including protection for LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers and women at risk.
- Integrate gender perspectives into climate reports, action plans, and initiatives, including those on technology and just transitions.

Organisations participating in this assessment: The Norwegian Women’s Lobby, The Development Fund, The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), Legal Counselling for Women, Secretariat for the Crisis Centre Movement in Norway, MiRA Centre, Nordic Women’s University, FRI – the Norwegian Association for Sexual and Gender Diversity, Sex og samfunn, Amatheia, The Women’s Front of Norway, Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights (NKF), LO Norway – the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in achieving near-universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation services. Approximately 99 percent of the population is connected to regulated drinking water supplies, and sanitation coverage is similarly high. Drinking water quality is generally stable and monitored through national regulatory frameworks. Norway withdraws only around 2 percent of its renewable freshwater resources, indicating low national water stress. Integrated water resources management is implemented through river basin planning aligned with the EU Water Framework Directive.

Concerning SDG 6 on public participation, regional differences remain in how well the administration accommodates participation, but more regions now have local and regional forums for interest groups. Norway has strong public institutions and financial capacity that provide a solid foundation for achieving SDG 6 domestically and supporting global water and sanitation efforts.

Norway's challenges lie in achieving the environmental targets of SDG 6. While institutional frameworks for water management are established, progress in improving the ecological status of water bodies, as well as formally protecting valuable wetlands and restoring freshwater ecosystems, remains slow. Implementation gaps in the EU Water Framework Directive, combined with increasing climate pressures and an upgrading backlog of the water and wastewater infrastructure, risk delaying SDG 6 fulfilment beyond 2030. One in four Norwegian water bodies still do not reach good ecological status, mainly due to hydropower, aquaculture, pollution and land-use changes. Hydropower accounts for more than 90 percent of Norway's electricity generation and has significantly altered many freshwater ecosystems. About 13 percent of Norway's surface water bodies are heavily modified, mostly due to hydropower. Modifications include dams/regulations, the transfer of rivers to other valleys/fjords, and river stretches that are dry.

Municipal water infrastructure requires significant upgrades. Leakage from distribution networks remains around 30 percent of produced drinking water, which in Norway means more than 100 L per person per day. Despite the awareness, the renovation rate of the water and wastewater system is only about 0,6 percent per year. Sewage treatment is expected to improve as the Government aims to implement the revised EU urban wastewater treatment directive. As 90 percent of Norwegian drinking water comes from surface sources, groundwater has received less attention, mainly focusing on quantity and hydrology. Data on its chemical status is fragmented.

The Government Pension Fund Global has investments in water-intensive sectors, and Norway has the financial capacity to contribute more strongly to global progress on SDG 6. Strengthening expectations related to sustainable water management and water stewardship in investment portfolios remains an important opportunity.

Norway must:

- Accelerate renewal of water and wastewater infrastructure, including national targets to reduce leakage and stronger financial support to municipalities.
- Strengthen implementation of the Water Framework Directive by reducing reliance on exemptions and ensuring that environmental objectives for water bodies are met.
- Scale up restoration of freshwater ecosystems, including rivers, wetlands and lakes affected by hydropower regulation and land-use change.
- Upgrade wastewater treatment standards, particularly in smaller municipalities and decentralised systems.
- Strengthen climate resilience in water management, including river restoration and nature-based solutions when assessing stormwater systems and flood protection.
- Increase international leadership on water and sanitation, including stronger support for WASH programmes and enhanced water stewardship requirements in sovereign wealth fund investments.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), FIAN Norway, The Norwegian Biodiversity Network (Sabima), WWF Norway, The Norwegian Trekking Association, Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, Norwegian Association for Outdoor Organisations, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has achieved high consumption of electricity coming from renewable resources, even though almost half of its energy consumption still comes from fossil fuels. Hydropower provides over 90 percent of electricity production, making almost all power generation renewable. This has created strong technical and institutional expertise in renewable energy, electrification, and grid management. An exception is the electricity used in the oil and gas sectors. Fossil fuels have been phased out in buildings and are being phased out in transport. The country has universal access to modern, reliable and affordable energy, with virtually no energy poverty.

Norway has doubled its climate finance since 2021, increasing support for renewable energy in low-income countries. Loans and guarantees for private investments, particularly through Norfund, have been central. The Government's annual contribution of NOK 1 billion to Norfund's Climate Investment Fund over the past three years has provided 7 million households with renewable electricity and reduced or avoided 15 million tons of CO₂ emissions per year, while also generating financial returns. The potential remains far greater.

Norway's challenges above all that the use of energy in Norway is per capita amongst the highest in the world and around 3 times the average for the EU. The ongoing expansion of infrastructure – roads and airports, shopping centres, recreational houses, marinas and datacentres will demand ever more energy for construction, operation and use. If unabated it could in combination with further electrification to phase out fossil fuel use in Norway increase the need for electricity with figures up to 30–90 percent in 2050. An expansion of renewable energy production to electrify society, if not carefully planned, will increase conflicts and lead to further loss of nature.

Yet a wide range of measures with large untapped potential, such as energy efficiency, waste-heat utilisation, rooftop solar, fjord-water heat pumps, geothermal solutions and industrial surplus heat, along with a less energy-intensive development path, remain weakly prioritised in Norwegian policy. This stands in contrast to the strong emphasis placed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) on efficiency and reduced energy use in wealthy countries, as well as the requirements of the EU Energy Efficiency. Financial support for energy efficiency in Norway remains relatively weak compared to its potential and to stated policy goals, with existing funding mechanisms not delivering the scale of energy savings needed. Norway's exploitation of oil and gas conflicts with the Paris agreement, advised by IPCC and IEA as well as Norway's global climate policy.

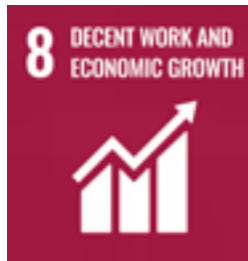
Financial contribution to renewable energy in poor countries remains below 1 percent of Norway's combined waste revenues from fossil fuels and the Norwegian Oil Fund. Lack of access to capital for poor countries is a main obstacle to the development of renewable fuel. Renewable energy expansion can create environmental and social conflicts if projects are poorly designed or implemented. Large infrastructure projects may affect ecosystems, Indigenous livelihoods and land rights. Ensuring that Norwegian-supported energy projects abroad respect Indigenous rights, local participation and strong social safeguards remains an important challenge.

At the same time, international energy transition scenarios emphasise that expanding renewable energy alone is not sufficient. The IEA and the IPCC highlight energy efficiency and reduced energy demand as central pillars of sustainable energy systems and net-zero pathways (IEA Net Zero by 2050; IPCC AR6). Norway's very high energy consumption per capita therefore represents a structural challenge for achieving SDG 7.

Norway must:

- Develop plans, measures and instruments for lower use of energy and natural resources in Norway, including the loss of natural areas.
- Identify and utilise the potential for increased energy efficiency, -saving and use of heat in fjord water, soil and rocks as well as surplus energy from industry. Central elements should be research, financial incentives, regulations and information.
- Increase financial support to poor countries, especially the poorest to enable development with renewable instead of fossil energy. Strengthen international cooperation to mobilise other countries and institutions to scale up renewable energy investments and policies globally.
- Contribute to a global roadmap for phasing out fossil fuels and making a plan for a fair and organised transition from fossil to renewable energy in Norway.
- Use Norwegian expertise in renewable energy systems to support sustainable energy development and reconstruction of energy infrastructure in post-conflict regions.
- Ensure that Norwegian-supported renewable energy projects abroad respect Indigenous rights, including free prior and informed consent (FPIC), comply with international human rights standards, and prevent forced displacement of local communities.
- Strengthen policies that prioritise energy efficiency and reduce energy demand, in line with international recommendations from the IEA and IPCC for achieving sustainable and climate-compatible energy systems.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Grandparents Climate Action (BKA), Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Changemaker Norway, Debt Justice Norway, Norwegian Azerbaijanis' Youth Organization (NAYO), The Development Fund, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in turning the Transparency Act into force. In 2022 the “Act relating to enterprises’ transparency and work on fundamental human rights and decent working conditions” became part of Norwegian law. This due diligence law requires all larger companies resident in Norway or larger foreign enterprises liable to tax to Norway to disclose information about their due diligence assessments to prevent, mitigate and remediate negative impacts on human and workers’ rights. In addition, the Act states that upon written request, any person has the right to information from an enterprise regarding how the enterprise addresses actual and potential adverse impacts pursuant to their due diligence assessments. This includes both general information and information relating to a specific product or service offered by the enterprise.

The Act is a hallmark for human rights in global supply chains and a recent evaluation by KPMG (initiated by the Ministry of Children and Families) shows that the act has strengthened corporate governance regarding human rights and working conditions, that companies are achieving better oversight and more responsible purchasing practices, resulting in concrete actions like improved employment terms, and that businesses highly value the ability to focus efforts on areas with the highest risk of negative consequences. Norway has also incorporated article 27 in the CRPD and started initiatives to increase youth employment.

Norway’s challenge is still a lack of coherence between different policies related to SDG 8. For instance, there is a great concern that human rights, workers’ rights and environmental rights repeatedly lose out to trade interests when Norway negotiates trade agreements with countries where these rights are at serious risk. Nationally, there are vulnerable groups in Norwegian society who face exploitation in the job market. Government agencies have still limited resources to supervise businesses or regulate the market, creating opportunities for rogue actors to violate workers’ rights in order to maximise profits.

One of the most important challenges Norway is facing is how to increase labour market participation. At the end of 2024, 700,000 people of working age were outside employment and education. 114,000 young adults between the ages of 20 and 29 were outside employment and education. The employment rate is lower for people with disabilities than for the rest of the population. The proportion of young people in Norway receiving work assessment allowance and disability benefits is also higher than in other OECD countries. The absence of universal design in ICT can constitute a barrier to participation in the labour market. Universal design of ICT can contribute to increased employment among persons with disabilities.

Norway must:

- Protect and enact ambitious corporate responsibility legislation with due diligence in mandatory and gender-responsive human rights. Due diligence legislation should also include environmental risks, and the duty to inform consumers and any other enquirers on value chains and production sites. The current wave of de-regulation of human rights and environmental standards in EU must not undermine legislation in the same areas in Norway.
- Enact appropriate requirements for employers to ensure that all employees, including foreign workers, enjoy Norwegian standards of workers’ rights.
- Increase funding of governmental agencies, such as the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, to ensure that workers’ rights are respected and prevent worker exploitation.
- Implement stricter sustainability requirements for the Government Pension Fund Global’s investment policy, ensuring that companies breaching core ILO conventions are excluded from the fund.
- Include environmental sustainability standards and adherence to ILO core conventions in trade treaties.
- Ensure equality in the labour force for persons with special needs/disabilities and ensure that the resources and time allocated to accommodations are tailored to individual needs.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Future in Our Hands (FIVH), The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted, Caritas Norway, Amnesty International Norway, Norwegian Christian Council, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded with initiatives for a rapid electrification of the carpool to reduce emissions from the transport sector and building digital infrastructure. Norway signed the Global Digital Compact in 2024 recognising the digital divide and the importance of digitalisation in societal development. Grant schemes facilitating business engagement in innovation and development projects have been a positive initiative for engaging businesses in the 2030 Agenda.

Norway's challenge is that the long-term transportation plan proposed by the Government, National Transportation plan (NTP), in this period has not been efficient in building a sustainable transportation sector – both when it comes to building the infrastructure and how the new infrastructure affects the transport patterns in Norway. To reduce climate change and the destruction of nature, it is vitally important to make a modal shift from road to sea or railway in freight transport in Norway. Investment in already existing harbours could make sea freight more efficient and reduce the need to build new roads. By improving railways and terminals, it would be possible to increase freight transport capacity on the rail system without building new tracks.

It remains to be seen if the latest NTP from 2025–2036 will make sufficient improvements regarding these challenges. Norway is dependent on importing medical specialists. Many newly approved specialists in Norway have received their specialty training in other Nordic countries or the EU. This is not sustainable in the long run and Norway should take a greater responsibility in educating the medical specialists we need. Norway is highly dependent on foreign medical companies for import of essential medical supplies in emergencies and lacks adequate production capacity to take a role in the current need for increased production of vaccines. There is also a need for more attention in medical research, innovation, and investment into addressing women's health.

Internationally, Norway has been moving against regulations facilitating technology transfer in the e-commerce negotiations taking place in the WTO. Depriving countries in the global south the opportunity to transfer knowledge and technology from the multinational technology companies operating in these countries impedes the development of poor countries' own digital industry.

Grant schemes financing innovation projects for sustainable development should not be used as a tool for promoting Norwegian business abroad but rather place emphasis on promoting innovation and transfer of competence to developing countries. Strict commercial requirements for Norwegian businesses in these schemes are a barrier for engaging companies in projects with considerable socio-economic benefits in developing countries.

Norway must:

- Change mode of freight transport from road to sea or rail by investing in the existing rail infrastructure and existing harbours to increase the capacity for freight transport and make it more efficient.
- Increase support to programs developing new ships that are all electric, hybrid or have hydrogen propulsion with strongly reduced climate emissions.
- Ensure better framework conditions for medical research and professional development, to ensure better quality and safety in health services provided.
- Build competence and domestic production capacity of critical medicines, infection control equipment and medical equipment, as well as strengthen Nordic and international cooperation to ensure better access.
- Focus on exporting the infrastructure and expertise we can offer to help the world's poorest countries to benefit from new technology, such as broadband, cloud storage and server capacity, as well as supporting regional data centres.
- Support regulations in international trade agreements facilitating technology transfers to developing countries. Countries should have access to demand local storage of data collected domestically and leeway for regulation of their digital development.
- Adjust grant schemes for innovation and development projects to facilitate businesses' engagement in sustainable development projects in partnership with NGOs.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Norwegian Seafarers Union, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), The Freight Transport Coalition of Norway (Godsalliansen), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in maintaining a low level of economic inequality compared to many other countries. Norwegian society is characterised by high social trust, strong redistributive mechanisms, and universal access to essential welfare services. High employment rates, broad inclusion in the labour market, and robust social safety nets help prevent poverty and promote economic and social security. The Norwegian welfare state and tax system play a crucial role in reducing disparities through universal benefits and progressive taxation.

Internationally, Norway has contributed to strengthening other countries' capacity to mobilise domestic resources by supporting fair taxation, combating tax havens, and advancing initiatives for sustainable development financing.

Norway's challenges include several growing forms of inequality. Economic disparities in the housing market make it increasingly difficult for young people and low-income households to enter or remain securely in the market. Labour-market exclusion persists, particularly among young adults, immigrants, and people with health-related barriers. Rising prices and inflation affect low-income groups disproportionately, while wealth and capital continue to concentrate at the top. At the same time, the tax system has become less progressive for high-income and high-wealth groups, and social mobility appears to be stagnating. Additionally, the number of people living with persistently low income increased from 2023 to 2024, according to Statistics Norway.

Norway must:

- Take a leading role in the development and future implementation of the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, ensuring that the perspectives and needs of developing countries are strongly prioritised.
- Implement a strong and comprehensive framework for country-by-country reporting, including reporting from all jurisdictions, to address aggressive tax planning and reduce profit shifting to tax havens.
- Ensure more progressive taxation at the top of the income and wealth distribution in Norway.
- Strengthen measures to reduce labour-market exclusion, particularly targeting young people, immigrants, and individuals with health-related barriers to employment.
- Pursue policies that counter widening housing inequalities and increase access to affordable and secure housing.

- Intensify efforts to reduce social health inequalities, including through preventive measures, accessible services, and strong universal welfare schemes.
- Ensure that social policies and welfare benefits adequately compensate low-income households for rising living costs.
- Continue and strengthen international efforts to reduce global inequality, especially through fair taxation, debt sustainability initiatives, and development financing.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Tax Justice Norway, Debt Justice Norway, Norwegian Library Association, Press – Save the Children Youth Norway, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in local leadership and innovation. Larger cities such as Oslo, Trondheim, Stavanger, and Bergen have strengthened climate budgeting, expanded cycling infrastructure, piloted circular economy initiatives, and digital participation tools. These examples demonstrate the potential for transformative urban policy when political will and local capacity align. Research projects and other international planning initiatives are going in the right direction. Cities are engaged in larger projects, for example the EU-funded New European Bauhaus Stavanger and ReHousIn, which examines housing inequalities in Norway through case studies in three distinct types of areas. This research provides insights into housing challenges, policy responses, and the impact of economic, social, and environmental factors.

Public awareness on climate adaptation and the debate on nature loss and public participation has intensified. Some municipalities have improved ecological mapping, climate adaptation planning, and accessibility audits. Improved participation tools such as digital and hybrid participation platforms have expanded, enabling broader engagement from youth and minority residents who previously faced barriers to participation. Some cities have worked consistently with SDG localisation in recent years. These advances, however, remain isolated and dependent on local initiatives rather than national policy.

Norway's challenges are many and civil society organisations observe that Norway has not made sufficient progress toward SDG 11 since 2021. The Nordic Sustainable Development Report (NSDR) 2025 presents Norway as a high overall SDG performer where SDG 11 is largely on track, but the CSO perspectives foregrounded here identify implementation gaps, governance incoherence, and the urban context of vulnerable groups in Norwegian cities, rather than the average national performance. While several municipalities continue to innovate, national policy remains fragmented, underfunded, and insufficiently aligned with the SDGs. Responsibilities are increasingly delegated to municipalities without adequate financial or technical support, undermining their ability to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and climate resilient urban development.

Urbanisation is accelerating globally, yet Norway's domestic and international policies do not reflect the scale or urgency of urban challenges. While the Government published a national strategy on architecture in 2025, the lack of an equivalent or combined urban (and social housing) strategy continues to hinder coordinated action of the built environment and ensuring inclusion. Norway's plan for the development of transport infrastructure (NTP – the National Transport Plan) is not sustainable. According to a report by The Norwegian Institute of Transport Economics, where the transition to a low-emission society requires a changed approach, the NTP process tends to deliver “more of the same”.

Norway must:

- Enhance support to international organisations advancing SDG 11, while promoting the global visibility and uptake of Norwegian best practices in sustainable urban development.

- Strengthen the capacity to absorb and apply international best practices in local planning.
- Ensure predictable and adequate municipal financing to address structural inequalities and strengthen participatory mechanisms.
- Close implementation gaps in climate and urban development policy, ensuring stronger alignment between targets and delivery.
- Align transport investments with climate and equity goals, and base transport planning on backcasting principles consistent with a low-emission society.
- Improve and integrate fragmented data systems across nature, housing, and accessibility to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Address the housing crisis through structural reforms, including affordability measures, a non-profit third housing sector, and a stronger focus on adaptation and reuse in urban areas as well as measures to combat homelessness.
- Strengthen multilevel governance and policy coherence, promoting integrated, cross-sectoral urban planning across land use, transport, housing, and climate.
- Advance inclusive, resilient, and nature-positive urban development, including participatory governance and scaled-up nature-based solutions.
- Leverage digitalisation, data systems, and knowledge exchange, alongside expanding sustainable and innovative financing mechanisms and circular economy approaches in cities.
- Deepen cooperation with cities in the Global South through partnerships, knowledge exchange, and joint urban innovation.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Habitat Norway (part of the Norwegian Housing and Planning Association), The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), The Freight Transport Coalition of Norway (Godsalliansen), GRID-Arendal, Norwegian Housing Association (LBF), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in strengthening its policy framework for the circular economy. Following the national strategy of 2021, the Government launched a Circular Economy Action Plan in 2024 and a national circularity mission in 2025, creating a more coherent foundation for systemic change. An expert group for the circular economy was also established in 2025 and has made several recommendations for circular measures that are now under consideration. Norway continues to maintain stable systems for hazardous-waste management and reporting, fulfilling international obligations under multilateral agreements. Updated national data show hazardous waste generation at 303 kg per capita in 2023, indicating consistent monitoring across sectors.

The national recycling rate reached 40.9 percent in 2023, supported by well-functioning systems for glass and metal recycling and high collection rates through the deposit-return scheme for single-use beverage containers. These remain strong pillars in Norway's waste system. Circularity analyses also indicate early signs of reduced fossil-fuel use and increased use of secondary materials in parts of the economy, although these improvements have not yet substantially increased the country's overall circularity rate.

Norway's challenge is that Norway continues to have one of the world's highest levels of resource consumption. The national material footprint increased by 6 percent between 2018 and 2022, reaching 208 million tonnes, of which 77 percent is imported. This shifts environmental burdens abroad and increases exposure to geopolitical and supply-chain instability. The country remains among Europe's least circular economies. Norway is 2 percent circular according to the 2025 Circularity Gap Report, while earlier assessments showed 2.4 percent, both significantly below European averages.

A growing majority of Norway's consumption-based emissions now occur outside its borders. According to the latest figures, 71 percent of emissions from goods and services consumed in Norway take place abroad, up from 66 percent in 2018, demonstrating the limitations of territorial-based climate accounting. Municipal waste generation remains high. Since 2016, municipal solid waste has exceeded 700 kg per capita, far above the EU average of 513 kg in 2022. Changes in reporting practices partly explain this increase, but the underlying trend still reflects a high-consumption society.

Food waste remains substantial. In 2021, total food waste was estimated at around 450,000 tonnes, with the grocery sector alone responsible for more than 60,000 tonnes and significant untapped potential for feed and biogas conversion. Nordic-level assessments show stagnation. The Nordic Sustainable Development Report (2025) identifies persistent challenges under SDG 12 across the region, and international benchmarking through the 2025 SDG Index highlights Norway's notably high environmental spillover impacts.

Norway must:

- Prepare and implement binding measures under the 2024 Circular Economy Action Plan, ensuring strong incentives for reuse, repair, sharing and extended product lifetimes.
- Integrate consumption-based emissions into national planning and indicator systems, given that most emissions now occur abroad.
- Develop national reduction targets for the consumption- and material footprint indicators that Norway is reporting on to EU.
- Move from voluntary to legally binding targets to reduce food waste, while scaling infrastructure for feed and biogas conversion.
- Strengthen consumer rights and circular markets by ensuring access to spare parts, the right to repair and minimum requirements for product durability.
- Reform the tax system to incentivise circular consumption models such as leasing, reuse and sharing, while discouraging resource-intensive consumption.
- Use public procurement strategically to accelerate the transition to circular and non-toxic material cycles.
- Restore and expand publicly accessible chemical-information systems to support safe consumer choices.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Changemaker Norway, Debt Justice Norway, Norwegian Azerbaijanis' Youth Organization (NAYO), Future in Our Hands (FIVH), WWF Norway, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 13: Climate action

Trend: Stagnant

Norway has succeeded in continued strengthening of climate policy instruments, including raising CO₂ taxes and maintaining incentives for zero-emission vehicles, which remain supported by tax exemptions and reduced road tolls. Climate targets have been revised and anchored in the Climate Change Act, which now specifies at least 55 percent emission reduction by 2030, 70–75 percent reduction by 2035, and 90–95 percent reduction by 2050. These binding targets were formally incorporated through legislative amendments adopted in 2025. Norway has also proposed a 70–75 percent reduction for the Nationally Determined Contribution to be included in the Climate Change Act, ensuring long-term alignment with the Paris Agreement. Norway has strengthened its national preparedness through the adoption of the Total Preparedness Report.

Norway's challenges are struggles to establish coherent climate policies. While some sectoral climate measures are strong, Norway remains a major producer and exporter of oil and gas. Fossil fuel exports generate downstream emissions more than ten times Norway's domestic emissions, actively contributing to climate change and undermining domestic efforts. Progress on domestic emission reductions has been slow. In 2024, Norway emitted 44.6 Mt CO₂-eq, representing only a 12.8 percent reduction relative to 1990.

Emissions remain far above the trajectory required to reach the 2030 target of a 55 percent reduction and 2035 target. Reaching this target therefore means purchasing more international carbon credits, instead of transformative emissions cuts across sectors such as oil and gas, transport, and industry. Norway has not yet met its COP26 pledge to triple climate adaptation finance by 2026. An independent evaluation by the National Audit Office of Norway in late 2025 found that, although adaptation finance had increased, Norway still lacked both a complete overview of results and evidence that adaptation funding was being scaled sufficiently to meet the tripling commitment.

At the same time, Norway has exceeded its 2023 pledge to double total climate finance, reaching NOK 16.5 billion in 2023, surpassing the COP26 doubling target of NOK 14 billion by 2026. However, the distribution of funds remains uneven: Mitigation receives a disproportionately large share, while adaptation and loss-and-damage finance lag behind, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Environment Agency.

Yet the Total Preparedness Report does not explicitly mention vulnerable groups. This creates a risk that people in vulnerable situations will not be sufficiently protected.

Norway must:

- Develop a national plan for phasing out oil and gas in Norway and support a global roadmap on phasing out fossil fuels.
- Achieve the 2030 target through real domestic emissions reductions, not international offsets, while contributing its fair share of climate finance.
- Increase climate finance, particularly for adaptation, in line with Norway's historical responsibility and its Baku-climate goal of tripling adaptation finance by 2035.
- Increase climate finance to low-income countries to a level which meets Norway's fair share of support to climate action based on its historical contribution to global warming, and meet its commitment to a 50/50 split between finance to adaptation and mitigation.
- Redirect investments from oil and gas extraction toward renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable industry development.
- Cease new oil and gas exploration and reform the petroleum tax system, phasing out subsidies and tax benefits that promote unprofitable or emissions-intensive fossil-fuel projects.
- Transform food production and consumption, reducing agricultural emissions and environmental impacts both domestically and globally.
- Integrate a clear human rights and gender equality perspective into all climate and preparedness work, with explicit measures for vulnerable groups.

Organisations participating in this assessment: The Development Fund, WWF Norway, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), Save the Children Norway, Changemaker Norway, Debt Justice Norway, Norwegian Azerbaijanis' Youth Organization (NAYO), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 14: Life Below Water

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in integrated ocean management plans for the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea, and the North Sea, with generally good environmental status in large areas, supported by monitoring and regulation. Biodiversity integration in sea-use planning is supported by new tools and data, including national ecosystem accounts from 2026 and a pilot on marine ecosystem accounting around the Lofoten archipelago. Norway contributes to global ocean governance and fisheries management through multilateral processes and conventions.

Biodiversity mainstreaming in sectoral ocean policies includes regular reporting to Parliament on fisheries agreements. Marine litter reduction efforts indicate declining plastic pollution in parts of the coast. Water management plans have been adopted for coastal waters in line with the EU Water Framework Directive, supporting more systematic protection of coastal ecosystems. The opening of deep-seabed mining on the Norwegian continental shelf has been temporarily halted due to public concern and major knowledge gaps regarding environmental consequences. Area-based fisheries measures protect vulnerable marine habitats, including closures to bottom trawling in coral areas and three large non-fishing areas in the Oslofjord.

Norway's challenges include significant pressures on marine biodiversity and ecosystems. Climate change and ocean warming are increasing stress on marine ecosystems and complicating the management of living marine resources. Nutrient pollution from agriculture and municipal wastewater remains a challenge in many coastal areas. Government reporting indicates that nutrient loads to the sea have increased since 1990, largely driven by aquaculture, with high nitrogen and phosphorus emissions from fish farming. Discharges of chemicals and oil from activities on the Norwegian continental shelf continue. Marine protection remains limited. Only around 4.2 percent of sea areas under Norwegian jurisdiction are formally protected, and progress has been slow due to competing interests. Fisheries and aquaculture continue to create pressures.

Ghost gear from the fishing industry remains a major problem, and stronger prevention, retrieval, and reporting systems are needed. Fish stocks are under pressure due to overfishing, climate change, and insufficient ecosystem-based management. Aquaculture remains a major source of pollution and ecological pressure, associated with disease, salmon lice affecting wild salmonids, genetic interactions with wild stocks, and animal welfare concerns. Protection of marine wildlife remains a challenge. Seabirds are affected by habitat degradation, overfishing, disturbance, and disease, and current measures remain insufficient.

Marine mammals face multiple pressures, including climate change and pollution; seals are hunted despite their red-listed status for several populations, and commercial sealing remains subsidised. Whaling continues despite the International Whaling Commission's moratorium, raising concerns regarding policy coherence and biodiversity commitments. Despite the current pause, plans for deep-seabed mining remain controversial given major knowledge gaps. Across marine and coastal governance, knowledge gaps remain, including insufficient data and tools to track ecosystem condition and cumulative impacts over time.

Norway must:

- Implement a national marine protection plan to meet the 30 percent target by 2030, and ensure MPAs are representative, well managed, and enforced.
- Strengthen prevention and retrieval of abandoned or lost fishing gear (ALDFG/ghost gear) and reduce marine litter and microplastics.
- Reduce nutrient pollution from agriculture and municipal wastewater.
- Strengthen regulation of aquaculture to reduce environmental impacts, protect wild salmonids, and improve fish welfare.
- Ensure ecosystem-based management across fisheries, aquaculture, and coastal planning based on independent science.
- Phase out subsidies and practices harmful to marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Strengthen protection of seabirds and vulnerable marine mammals, including ending hunting or culling of red-listed populations.
- Maintain the halt on deep seabed mining and refrain from reopening it until robust scientific knowledge and precautionary safeguards are in place.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, NOAH – For animal rights, Rainforest Foundation Norway, The Development Fund, WWF Norway, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 15: Life on Land

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in establishing a strong legal and governance framework for nature management, including the Nature Diversity Act and a planning system that supports biodiversity across sectors. These frameworks are complemented by updated national planning guidelines for land use and mobility, adopted in 2025, that strengthen biodiversity and climate considerations. Terrestrial protected areas have expanded. Around 25.7 percent of the country's total land area (including Svalbard and Jan Mayen) is protected, corresponding to around 17.8 percent of mainland Norway, including recent voluntary forest-protection expansion. Targeted measures for species and genetic resources are in place. Legal and administrative frameworks for access and benefit-sharing have been established under the Nagoya Protocol and the International Plant Treaty (ITPGRFA).

Efforts to conserve genetic resources include the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and national support schemes, and several native livestock breeds are no longer critically endangered. Internationally, support for tropical forest conservation and Indigenous Peoples' rights is provided through the International Climate and Forest Initiative and annual contributions to the Benefit Sharing Fund under the ITPGRFA. Finally, selected invasive alien species have been controlled in specific areas through eradication and containment, while the knowledge base for nature management has been strengthened through monitoring. Targeted conservation measures have supported Arctic fox recovery through captive breeding, releases, supplementary feeding, and monitoring.

Norway's challenges include continued biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, primarily driven by land-use change. Government reporting notes that land-use change affects around 90 percent of threatened species, and 21 percent of assessed species appear on the Norwegian Red List (2021). Habitat loss, fragmentation, and pressures from forestry and land development remain central drivers. The Nature Index 2025 shows declining trends in wetlands, cultural landscapes, and open lowlands, and highlights that cumulative impacts are decisive for ecosystem vulnerability, aggravated by climate change. Protection gaps remain.

While overall protection levels are high due to extensive protection on Svalbard, lowland ecosystems and forests remain poorly protected. Government reporting indicates that only 5–6 percent of productive forests are protected, and management of protected areas is increasingly demanding due to vegetation encroachment, invasive species, and rising visitor pressure. Forest and land management practices are not sufficiently aligned with biodiversity and climate resilience.

Civil society is concerned about intensive forestry practices, including large-scale clear-cutting and monocultures, continued declining carbon stocks, and nature-negative incentives. Semi-natural habitats face particularly serious pressures; all types are endangered or critically endangered. Semi-natural meadows are among the most threatened, facing pressures from agricultural intensification, land development, abandonment, and vegetation encroachment. Invasive alien species remain a major and growing pressure. Once established, they are expensive and difficult to remove, and preventive measures and regulations remain uneven.

Pressures on threatened wildlife remain significant. Some red-listed species are subject to hunting or population-control measures. Concern persists about management of large carnivores—wolves, lynx, bears, and wolverines—where population targets are often interpreted as upper limits rather than recovery goals. This has contributed to their endangered status and raised concerns regarding Norway's implementation of the Bern Convention. Knowledge and data gaps persist in land and nature governance. Mapping key biodiversity areas remains incomplete, and biodiversity considerations are uneven in municipal planning.

Norway must:

- Reduce land-use change and fragmentation through stronger biodiversity requirements in planning and licensing, including improved mapping, cumulative-impact assessments, and area-neutrality.
- Ensure representative, effective protection by expanding protected areas and OECMs, particularly in forests and lowlands.
- Tighten forestry regulation and eliminate harmful subsidies to safeguard biodiversity, carbon stocks, and ecosystem health.
- Strengthen prevention and control of invasive alien species, including management plans for high-risk species and ending planting of invasive tree species.
- Strengthen recovery of red-listed and threatened species through wider use of the “prioritised species” mechanism, improved action plans and monitoring, and Bern-Convention-aligned carnivore management.
- Strengthen international leadership on nature and forests through increased support to tropical forest protection and Indigenous Peoples, with rights-based approaches and sustained financing.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, NOAH – For animal rights, Rainforest Foundation Norway, The Development Fund, WWF Norway, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development (ForUM).



SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in building a strong, egalitarian democracy with a diverse civil society and has recently introduced national action plans against racism and discrimination, incorporated CRPD into law, strengthened anti-corruption efforts, supported watchdogs and journalists, invested in tax-capacity building, and increased corporate transparency through a new beneficial ownership registry. Internationally, Norway is active in combating corruption, money laundering, and tax evasion.

Norway's challenges are many and reporting lacks clear assessments of how growing militarisation, arms exports, and investments in arms production – including through the Oil Fund – as well as participation in wars and military exercises, undermine SDG implementation. This trajectory of accelerated militarisation poses a serious threat to humanity's future by diverting critical resources from sustainable development and peace-building initiatives.

Norway lacks clear safeguards to prevent contributing to the development or spread of AI-driven weapon systems, to ensure that Norwegian-produced weapon components are not misused by end-users, and to avoid granting AI systems any form of legal personhood. People with higher incomes receive significantly lighter sentences than low-income offenders for otherwise comparable crimes. People with disabilities have limited access to legal aid, face long waits at the discrimination board, and receive decisions that set no precedent – leaving many without their rights effectively upheld.

Norway has no comprehensive anti-corruption strategy and data is lacking on the volume of illicit financial flows. Capacity within oversight institutions is lacking, as is the political will to delegate resources to control- and enforcement, allowing for low detection rates. Transparency around ownership of real estate is defective. Recent allegations of corruption involving Norwegian diplomats and politicians have seriously damaged Norway's reputation as a peace-building nation.

Norwegian-born children of immigrants report more discrimination and lower acceptance, while voter turnout among first- and second-generation immigrants remains significantly lower. A small group of long-term, "non-returnable" asylum seekers are denied identity documents and thus legal work. Norway's practice of revoking citizenship many years after they were granted undermines legal security and disproportionately harms children.

Limited transparency and restricted access to investigation reports that directly affect people's rights and livelihoods, such as the NAV social-security report, undermine public trust, hinder accountability, and make it difficult for those affected to understand or challenge decisions that impact their lives.

Norway must:

- Withdraw the Government Pension Fund Global from companies violating international law.
- Establish a Ministry of Peace with a national strategy for peace-building and education.

- Ensure that Norway does not contribute to the development of AI-weapon systems, and works to reduce the implementation of such weapons through international agreements.
- Implement End-user Certificate (EUC) for Norwegian produced weapon components.
- Prohibit legal personhood for AI.
- Initiate an independent review of sentencing practices in the courts.
- Increase staffing in the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal to reduce case-processing times.
- Promote justice and equality before the law internationally.
- Take a leading role in the negotiations of the UN framework convention on tax cooperation, to ensure a globally inclusive and comprehensive cooperation against tax abuse and financial secrecy.
- Increase the interoperability of public registers with information on ownership, including beneficial ownership.
- Ensure more consistent enforcement of discrimination legislation, so that more cases are actually followed up and sanctioned.
- Establish a coherent system for identifying stateless and non-returnable individuals, in line with UNHCR recommendations, including incorporating a legal definition of statelessness into national legislation.
- Introduce stricter safeguards in revocation cases, including a mandatory proportionality assessment, clear limits on how long after arrival a case can be reopened, and stronger legal protection for children.
- Secure stable funding for all libraries, enabling them to provide and offer free public access to information.

Organisations participating in this assessment: The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO), Norwegian Library Association, Press – Save the Children Youth Norway, Tax Justice Norway, The United Nations Association of Norway, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – Norway, Association for International Water Studies (FIVAS), Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).



SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals

Trend: Negative

Norway has succeeded in maintaining a high level of development aid and in prioritising the initiative for a global tax convention, as well as measures against illegal capital transfers, tax evasion and corruption. Norway has demonstrated strength in advancing the development financing agenda, particularly through the process leading up to FfD4, where it served as one of the conference facilitators. Norway has shown strong support for bringing the process of developing a global consensus on principles for responsible sovereign lending and borrowing, as well as debt transparency, forward in recent years.

Norway's challenges: The Government has to some extent improved the coordination between ministries and other stakeholders since the last report, but there is still a need to better integrate policies across sectors to achieve policy coherence for sustainable development. Norway also lacks systematic assessment of whether its contributions to SDG 17 actually support or hinder progress in partner countries, including through impacts on technology transfer, trade rules, tax capacity, and local economic development. The Government assigned more than 25 percent of the aid budget to Ukraine in 2026, cutting in projects providing food security, humanitarian aid, education, health and climate measures in the least developed countries, as well as core funding to the UN.

Norway is too cautious within the UN. For Norway to lead the important discussions, and actually shift international positions, it is necessary for the country to take clearer and more principled stances on issues such as gender equality and other rights- and distribution-related questions. Norway supports important digital development initiatives, yet its trade policy pulls in the opposite direction.

By backing WTO's e-commerce moratorium that keeps digital trade tariff-free and unrestricted cross-border data flows, Norway reinforces the power of dominant tech companies, limits developing countries' ability to regulate and tax the digital economy, and risks deepening global inequalities. This fragmented approach means that while Norway funds digital capacity-building, it simultaneously promotes trade rules that restrict developing countries policy space and undermine fair value distribution in the global digital economy.

Norway has a negative spillover-effect on other countries' abilities to achieve the SDGs. Norway's trade agreements often lack strong, enforceable sustainability rules, while provisions on equal treatment, ISDS, and limits on public procurement restrict developing countries' policy space. Combined with Norway's support for plurilateral WTO initiatives (JSIs) that weaken the consensus principle, this contributes to global trade rules that risk reinforcing power imbalances.

Norway must:

- Ensure that 0,7 percent of GDP is spent on poverty reduction and aid.
- Consistently monitor, assess and align how much Norwegian contributions towards SDG17 accelerate or slow SDG progress in recipient countries.
- Continue to work to ensure strong follow-up on debt sustainability commitments stated in the Financing for Development Compromiso de Sevilla.
- Develop and adopt an updated strategy for digitalisation in development policy, which addresses the connection between technology, trade, regulation and development policy.
- Make the most of the institutional mechanisms in the sustainability chapters to ensure real participation from relevant stakeholders, especially civil society, and to strengthen the follow-up and enforcement of environmental and human rights obligations in trade agreements.
- Use its position in the WTO to strengthen the organisation's democratic legitimacy and ensure that multilateral trade rules are developed in a way that safeguards justice, democracy and development concerns funding for all libraries, enabling them to provide and offer free public access to information.

Organisations participating in this assessment: Attac, Changemaker Norway, Debt Justice Norway, Hardanger Academy – Nordic Center for Peace, Development and Environment, Norwegian Council for Africa, UNICEF Norway, The United Nations Association of Norway, Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment (ForUM).

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