

TYPICALLY ATYPICAL: UNDERSTANDING MODERN NORWAY

REPORT FROM THE
FULBRIGHT-HAYS SEMINARS
NORWAY SUMMER 2022



FULBRIGHT
Norway



Photos for this guide are from Canva, Unsplash, Wikimedia Commons, Fulbright-Hays presenters, Fulbright Norway staff & alumni, and Fulbright-Hays participants Rebekah Anaya, Shannon Gleason, and Cindy Watson

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TYPICALLY ATYPICAL: UNDERSTANDING MODERN NORWAY

A REPORT ON THE FULBRIGHT HAYS SUMMER SEMINAR IN NORWAY JUNE 19-JULY 17, 2022

Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminars Abroad are short term study and travel programs for U.S. educators in the social sciences and humanities. The purpose of the seminars is to increase participants' knowledge and understanding of the peoples and cultures of other countries, in order that they may develop and strengthen curricula at their respective institutions.

The U.S. Department of Education has been sponsoring seminars every summer in countries all over the world since 1961, but this was the first such seminar to be hosted in Norway.

Our ambition was to put together a program that would examine some features that define and distinguish Norway as a nation, both for Norwegians and Americans, and to take a closer look at the very concepts of nationhood, nationalism and internationalism, using this particular nation as an example. The seminar was also an exercise in comparative politics, and an opportunity to reflect on and learn from the political institutions, organizations, and processes and behavior of Norway and the United States respectively.



Photo by Shannon Gleason

Finally, our seminar sought to highlight some of those issues that spark public debate in contemporary Norway: both enduring issues of contention such as questions of national sovereignty, immigration, and the balance of public and private sectors, but also more topical issues such as the government's handling of the Covid pandemic, Norway's relationship with Russia and Russians in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine, and Norway's selfish (or legitimately self-interested?) management of its gas and hydroelectric power.

Participants for the 2022 seminar in Norway were selected by the U.S. Department of Education after a rigorous nation-wide competition, which brought together a group of 16 American post-secondary educators with a variety of academic backgrounds and representing a range of institutions and regions in the United States.

Once returned to their home institutions, summer seminar participants are required to submit a report and a curriculum development project relevant to their teaching or administrative responsibilities. Their curriculum projects provide a synopsis of what the participants felt were the key academic takeaways of this seminar in Norway.

The Commission would like to thank the Fulbright Hays team at the Department of Education for giving us this summer seminar opportunity to share a bit of Norway. Thanks also to the many presenters for contributing to our understanding of so many aspects of Norwegian society and culture, and gamely answering the many questions they were asked. We are grateful to Andy Meyer and the University of Washington for the pre-departure orientation which gave participants an inspiring taste of what was to come. Our biggest thanks however are reserved for the seminar participants themselves, for being such engaged, enthusiastic and gracious guests, and for enduring lost luggage, an airline strike, Covid—and rain that was excessive even for Bergen—with unfailing good cheer.

*Petter Næss, Executive Director
U.S.- Norway Fulbright Foundation for Educational Exchange*



THE INITIAL CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

FULBRIGHT-HAYS SEMINARS ABROAD PROGRAM DESCRIPTION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATORS

Norway

- Seminar Title:** Typically Atypical: Understanding Modern Norway
- Dates:** Four Weeks, June 12 – July 10, 2022
- Participants:** U.S. faculty, curriculum specialists, librarians, media resource specialists, and administrators at the postsecondary level

Program Content:

“It’s typically Norwegian to be good” (“Det er typisk norsk å være god”). When Norway’s Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland included this slogan in her annual new year’s speech in 1992, she sought to instill in her listeners the self-confidence a small nation like Norway would need to compete in an increasingly globalized world. Yet, culturally, this was a very *atypical* thing for a Norwegian to say, completely at odds with the supposedly egalitarian Norwegian national character, which generally disapproves of expressions of individuality or personal achievement. Though Brundtland was promoting self-confidence and not self-satisfaction, her slogan—and the public reaction to it—provides the bigger question this seminar will consider: What, if anything, is ‘typically Norwegian’?

To explore this core question, this seminar will provide a broad introduction to the basics of Norwegian history, culture, art and literature, politics and governance, as well as its educational system, traditions and values, and the recurring passions and preoccupations that animate its national public debate. Participants will examine some of the hallmark qualities of modern Norwegian society - its “cradle to grave” welfare state, strong interventionist government, large public sector, and high degree of civic trust in its institutions - and how these features might withstand the forces of ruthless global market liberalism, the increasing privatization of public services, and the growing power, even over national sovereignty, of multinational corporations.

Moreover, the seminar will examine how Norway addresses mass immigration and an influx of “new Norwegians” of unprecedented cultural and ethnic diversity. By using Norway as a case study, participants will explore the larger issues of nations, national identities, and nationalism. Does nationalism and a strong sense of national identity inevitably equate with the resurgence of intolerance, chauvinism, and xenophobia, or can it be an inclusive and emancipatory force within nations, and perhaps even promote solidarity between them? Participants will also examine the role of this small nation beyond its borders: What role does prosperous little Norway play, as a peacekeeper, mediator, and international humanitarian force, among the great powers on the global stage?

In addition to gaining a general understanding of Norwegian society and culture, participants will travel to more remote parts of the country to experience its spectacular geography and scenic beauty, both of which are important components of national identity. Site discussions will also include how Norwegians reconcile their traditional love of pristine nature and orientation to the outdoors with its petroleum-driven economy, an industry that is a major contributor to global climate change.

Educators and curriculum designers will return to the U.S. with a solid knowledge of Norway, its cultures and its resources. Participants will have a nuanced understanding of nationalism and globalization, and the relationships between them, which play a key role in comparative studies.

** The final list of places may vary.*

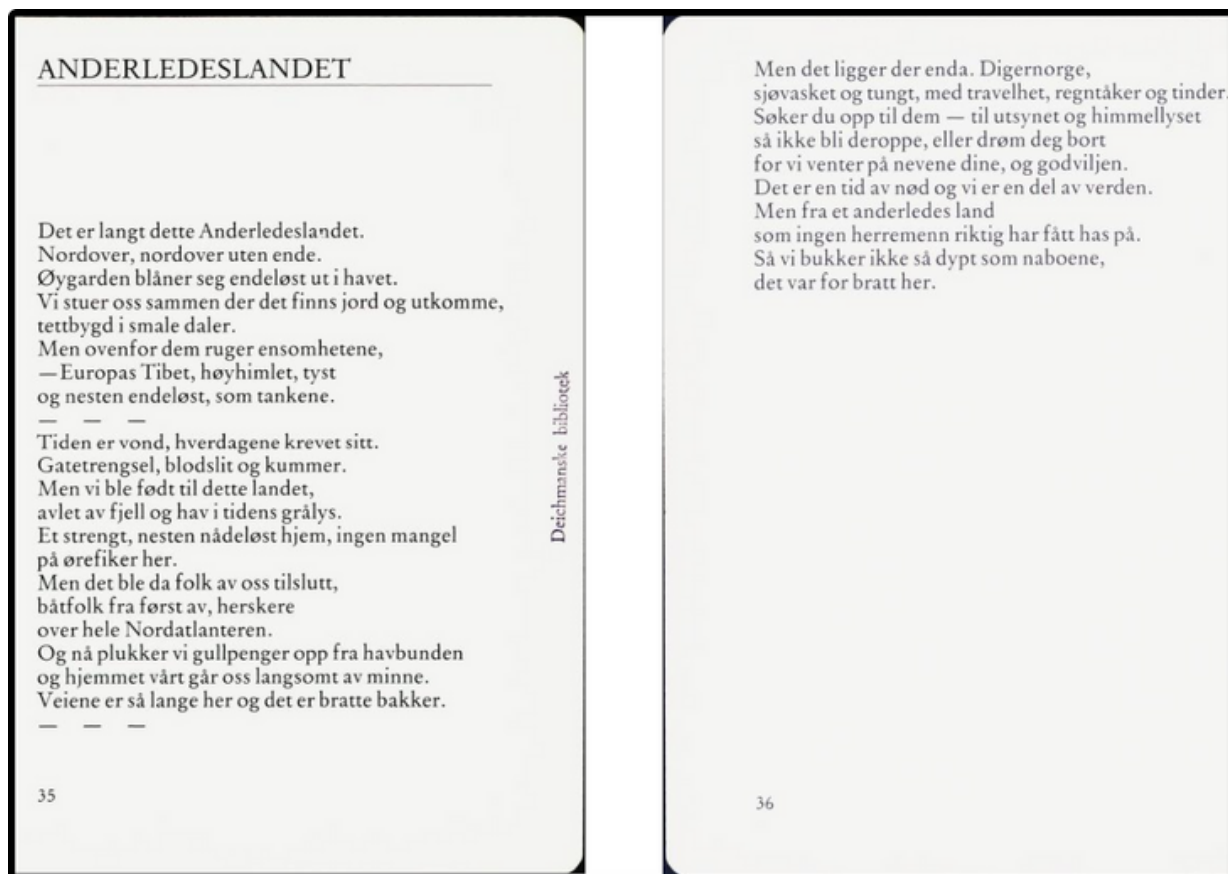
We are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process; nonetheless, Seminar is contingent upon many factors, such as the availability of funds, the number or the quality of applications, and travel alerts. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final Congressional action. The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

ANDERLEDESLANDET

The newly-selected Fulbright Hays Summer Seminar participants first met each other on a Slack workspace created for the seminar named "Anderledeslandet" (literally "the otherness land"), a reference to a poem by Rolf Jacobsen.

Published in Jacobsen's "Night Open" collection of 1985, the poem describes Norway's rugged and inhospitable landscape, an egalitarian Norwegian spirit borne of shared hardship, and the indomitable character of its people (the final lines read "So we don't bow as deeply as our neighbors, it was too steep for that here.") The poem also addresses the transition from a relatively insular and meagre existence to sudden petroleum wealth ("And now we pluck gold coins from the ocean floor"), and a more prominent role in the international community.

Jacobsen suggests that an ingrained sense of exceptionalism shapes the Norwegian self-identity and national character, which is one of the notions this seminar set out to explore. His poem spawned the neologism "annerledeslandet," adopted as a catch phrase by Norway's agrarian Centre Party before the 1994 referendum on EU membership, to remind people of the country's otherness and to fuel resistance to becoming part of the Union. The poem was also included in an anthology published by the advocacy group "Nei til EU" (No to the EU) in 1994. To this day the term "annerledeslandet" is sometimes invoked to explain or excuse Norway's outlier position in the European community, but perhaps more often—by more globally oriented Norwegians—to ridicule this self-image of uniqueness as merely an expression of the country's parochial backwardness. In an interview in 1993, just a few months before his death and a year before the 1994 referendum, Jacobsen insisted he was pushing neither for nor against membership, and was happy to see the poem used by either side.



PROGRAM REFLECTIONS

PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

The 2022 Summer Seminar in Norway got underway with a virtual pre-departure orientation hosted by the Scandinavian Department at the University of Washington, Seattle. The PDO was organized by Assistant Teaching Professor Andy Meyer, who spent a full year in 2015-16 as a Fulbright Roving Scholar, travelling all over Norway as a guest lecturer at Norwegian upper secondary schools.

Meyer introduced participants to some of the issues and places they would have a chance to explore in greater depth in Norway, and gave a crash course on geography, government, language and the school system, along with a preview of some currently contested issues:



Norway's troubled history with its indigenous populations, the challenge of integrating diversity and "otherness" into a homogenous society (a society which, as Jacobsen reminds us, has built its own identity on a sense of "otherness"), and the blessings and perils of the oil economy.

Meyer's colleague Professor Olivia Gunn elaborated on the "new Norwegians" theme—and the challenges a transitional society faces in confronting its systemic prejudices—by sharing perspectives from her work with Norwegian-Ghanaian dramatist Camara Lundestad Joof, now Playwright in Residence at Norway's National Theater.

Norwegian Consul General in San Francisco, Gry Rabe Henriksen, welcomed the group on behalf of the Norwegian government, and shared some key points about Norway that the Norwegian government feels Americans should understand; her presentation "Capitalism with a Heart" underscored that Norway, like the U.S., has an open and market driven economy, but with an extensive safety net for individuals and families financed by progressive taxation. Takeaways from her presentation included Norway's world leading density of electric vehicles (and vessels), the high proportion of women in the Norwegian labor force, and some key emerging industries such as off-shore windfarms and CO2 sequestration.

HEALTH & WELFARE

A cradle to grave welfare system is for many Americans the primary distinguishing feature of the Nordic countries, and this was also an aspect of Norway seminar participants were eager to learn more about. Haakon Hertzberg, Deputy Director and Head of Politics and International Relations at the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration (NAV), provided the group with an outline of the services and benefits Norwegian citizens are entitled to through their life cycles, and how these services—accounting for 1/3 of the national budget—are provided.

University of Oslo professor of medicine Anne Helene Kveim Lie addressed the group via Zoom from Lofoten, where she temps as a physician during summer months. She explained some of the basics of the Norwegian healthcare system, including the cardinal principle of providing healthcare at the nearest effective level—particularly important in a country as expansive and sparsely populated as Norway—and the challenges of meeting the healthcare needs of an aging population. Lie is also a medical historian, and in the wake of the Covid pandemic’s exposure of glaring inequalities in access to health services, both within and between nations, she will be pursuing a project, as a Fulbright scholar, with American colleagues to revitalize much needed attention to the field of “social medicine.”



Anne Helene Kveim Lie



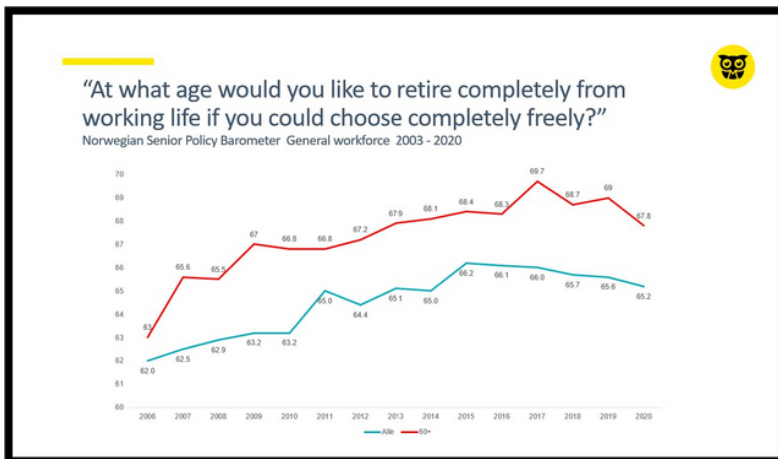
Kari Leibowitz

Norway’s consistently high rankings on world happiness indexes came up in a number of contexts during the seminar. Among factors contributing to happiness are most obviously the security provided by a generous welfare system, free health services, and regulated labor conditions and a high degree of job security, but health psychologist Kari Leibowitz also stressed the importance of mindset; in a Zoom presentation she shared insights from her research project at the University of Tromsø as a Fulbright student in 2014-15.

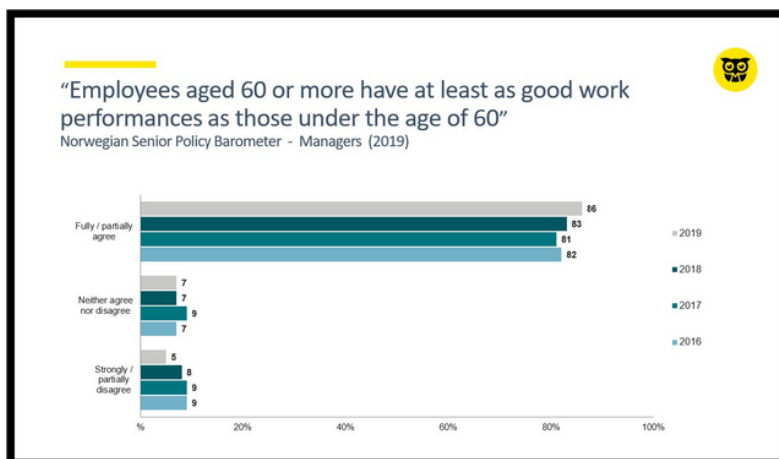
HEALTH & WELFARE, CONTINUED

From the end of November to the end of January, Tromsø residents get no more than a few hours of sunlight each day, yet they have low rates of seasonal depression. All of Norway is dark, relatively speaking, during the winter months, and Leibowitz’s research attributed the low level of depression and seasonal affective disorder to a positive winter mindset, to the beneficial effects of “friluftsliv” (outdoor life) which nearly all Norwegians enjoy, and that feeling of coziness, conviviality and contentment captured in the Nordic concepts of “koselig” and “hygge.”

According to data published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Norway has the highest proportion of young politicians in the world; the average age of elected representatives in the parliament (Stortinget) is 45.7 years, the youngest representative being just 20. The average age of the current government’s cabinet is 46 years, and the Minister of Justice is only 29.



Age that Norwegians aged 60 or more would like to retire vs. the general public



Perception of work done by employees aged 60 or more

At the same time, Norway’s retirement age is among the highest in the world at 67 years, and the population is relatively old and ageing. Olav Eikemo from the Norwegian Centre for Senior Policy explained to the group how the Centre works to counteract a growing age discrepancy between legislators and the general population, by combating marginalization, promoting increased participation of workers over the age of 50 in the labor force, and advancing senior policy awareness and competence in the workplace and in society at large.

HEALTH & WELFARE, CONTINUED

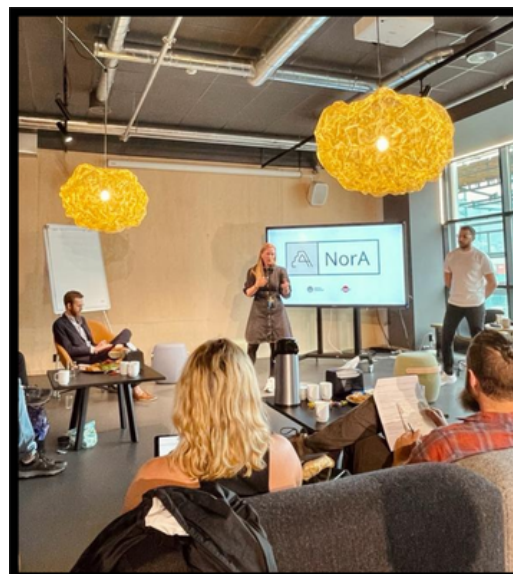
A criticism sometimes leveled against the welfare state's cradle to grave safety net is that it breeds complacency and stifles competitiveness and private initiative. Norway's famous tradition of "dugnad" (voluntary work) would seem to undermine that notion, and our visits to three "grassroots" organizations in Bergen proved beyond a doubt that idealism and community service can flourish even in a welfare state. And idealism and community service are sorely needed, even in Norway; while extreme poverty is nearly non-existent, the percentage of people living in relative poverty—defined as having an income less than 60% of the national median—is increasing, as is the gap between rich and poor. Relative poverty is concentrated in the major cities, and 43% of those defined as poor in Norway are immigrants, even though they comprise only about 16% of the population.



The [Miks Resource Center](#) for Integration and Cooperation in Bergen is an ideal NGO working to promote integration and access to the labor market, and to combat poverty and social exclusion. We were warmly welcomed by an idealistic and enthusiastic staff who told us about their work, gave us a tour of their "Makerspace," and showed us a short film they had put together especially for our visit.

HEALTH & WELFARE, CONTINUED

In Bergen we also had an opportunity to meet with NorA, an initiative sponsored by the Labor and Welfare Administration. Solfrid Hernes and her team welcomed us and described the work they are doing to assist immigrants and refugees with overcoming common obstacles to gaining access to the Norwegian labor market, e.g not being called in to an interview because of a strange sounding name or an unrecognized educational background. NorA also works to promote understanding among employers about the benefits of diversifying their workforce.



Following up on NorA's recommendation, we then paid an impromptu and unannounced visit to the Robin Hood House, where director Marcos Amano graciously took time to tell us about this drug- and alcohol-free and religiously neutral sanctuary, which provides free meals, newspapers, a library, office facilities, and other kinds of assistance for people with financial troubles, or who anyone who is simply looking for a place to be and to meet others.

NATIONALISM AND IDENTITY

University of Oslo Professor Øivind Østerud is one of Norway's leading political scientists and an expert on issues of nationalism and sovereignty. His lecture on Norway, nationalism and national character addressed some questions which our seminar hoped to explore. Østerud was at pains to clarify that nationalism itself is neither good nor bad, but merely a sense of community defined by national boundaries. It can be passed down or imagined, or deliberately constructed, and invested with liberal or illiberal values according to political circumstances. Against a current backdrop of growing xenophobic, racist, and autocratic developments, both in Europe and the United States, this was a useful reminder; the thrust of Fulbright's "nations into people" idea is after all to cultivate the rich diversity of national cultures and identities, not to homogenize them through a process of globalization (which would render the program obsolete). The modus operandi of resurgent illiberal nationalism now appearing in many countries is just the opposite, i.e., dehumanizing relations and fostering distrust and chauvinism by "turning people into nations."

NATIONALISM AND IDENTITY, CONTINUED

Tore Li, a political historian and former science attaché at the Norwegian embassy in Washington, shared his perspectives on how science policy has served Norway's national interests, particularly by promoting scientific and technological innovation in areas in which the nation enjoys natural advantages, e.g. in energy production (hydropower, oil, gas, wind), fishing/aquaculture, geosciences, especially in the polar North, and medical and health sciences, where Norway has uniquely comprehensive health data in population-based and disease-specific clinical biobanks. Achievements in science and technology, as in sports, literature, and the arts, are also an important component in nation building, and Li's presentation demonstrated how accomplished scientists like Fridtjof Nansen, Vilhelm Bjerknes, and more recently Nobel laureates Edvard and May-Britt Moser, contribute to a sense of national pride.



Tore Li's book about "Research and Development for the Fatherland" examines the role of science and technology in boosting national prestige.

The question about how to serve the national interest while also reaping the benefits of international collaboration within higher education and research, resurfaced in Norway in the fall of 2022, when the coalition government proposed that Norway's publicly owned universities should no longer be tuition-free to students from outside the EU/EEC region (the conservative government had introduced a comparable proposal in 2014, which was shot down). While the government argued that Norway would merely be following the example of all the other Nordic countries, which had introduced tuition years ago, the academic community pointed out that not only does a wealthy nation have an obligation to help students from less prosperous parts of the world, but the brainpower and cultural diversity foreign students bring to the Norwegian research and higher ed community far outweigh the modest value of such tuition.

Norway's government has a firm "hand on the wheel" not only in managing the country's tertiary education system—as the "owner" of Norway's predominantly public universities—but also through the Research Council of Norway, which awards nearly 12 billion NOK in funds annually for research and innovation projects.

THE WELFARE STATE

While there is appreciation across the political spectrum in Norway about the benefits of the welfare state, there is disagreement about how and to what extent it should be sustained. “For Velferdsstaten (“For the Welfare State”) is an alliance of several organizations established more than 20 years to advocate for a strong public sector Norway and to strengthen and further develop the welfare state.

The challenges it identified in its mission statement in 1999 are no less relevant today:

«We have experienced that neoliberal politics have gained ground nationally as well as internationally. Through deregulation, privatization and competitive tendering, public services and democratic governance and control are being weakened. Internationally, financial speculation has made national economies tremble. Market forces have gained ground at the expense of public governance. This has caused the development of increased inequalities in society, attacks on welfare and public services and ruthless exploitation of resources and the environment».

Special adviser Helene Bank gave the group a disturbing account of how the provision of welfare services has become a lucrative industry for investors, both within Norway and internationally, and enormous fortunes are siphoned out of government coffers and salted away in tax havens. While Consul Gry Rabe Henriksen accurately described the Norwegian system as “capitalism with a heart,” we were reminded that those two are uneasy bedfellows, and that preserving the welfare state in a market economy requires constant vigilance and advocacy.



Helene Bank

Helene Bank emphasized that worker-friendly conditions of employment and a strong labor movement are crucial for the vitality of the welfare state, and her point was echoed forcefully by other seminar presenters; clearly the Nordic “tripartite model,” a cooperation between employers, unions and government, is essential to an understanding of the welfare state.

THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Magnus Marsdal is a journalist, writer, and co-founder and director of the left-leaning think tank Manifest. In 2018 he published the book Frihetens Mødre (Mothers of Freedom), chronicling the lives of his great-grandmother Sanna, and her sister Lina, who emigrated to the United States. Through their parallel lives Marsdal compares ideas about freedom, and the freedom to pursue one's dreams, in the land of the free and the Norwegian welfare state respectively.



Magnus Marsdal

In a presentation for our Fulbright Hays seminar entitled “The Freedom Machine” Marsdal challenged the accepted belief—at least among many Americans—that in social democratic Norway the collective security afforded by the welfare state comes at the expense of “individual freedom.” Marsdal argued that on the contrary, the safety net provided by high taxes and “big government” in fact increases individual freedom, and drew comparisons with the plight of some typical Americans he had met while on parental leave when his wife was pursuing a PhD at Stanford. Like Helene Bank, Marsdal attributed a great deal of the success of the welfare state to the robustness of the labor movement and the tripartite model, tracing its development back to 19th century labor leader and activist Marcus Thrane.

Ole Martin Ihle, an anthropologist and author of the book and television series “Sånn er Norge” (This is Norway) sought to explain the secret of “Norway’s success”, as defined by UN, OECD and World Bank top rankings on metrics such as per capita GDP, happiness, human development, gender equality, trust, and “best place to live.” Like many of our speakers, Ihle underscored the importance of centralized wage negotiations and the tripartite model, and highlighted some surprising figures and interesting paradoxes, e.g., the low number of hours worked annually by Norwegians and its world leading sick-leave levels. International surveys place Norway near the bottom in attitudes about the importance of teaching children core Protestant values such as hard work and thrift, yet surprisingly enough Norway has one of the world’s most productive workforces.

THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, CONTINUED



Trine Østereng

Trine Østereng from the think tank Agenda shared a center-left perspective on some key issues of the current political debate in Norway, including growing income disparity and inequality, privatization of the welfare state and monetization of public services, threats to employee security posed by emerging platform economies, energy preparedness and climate change, and racism and integration.

Some of the same issues were also addressed by Eirik Løkke from the Civita think tank, but with a somewhat different perspective. While Civita defines itself as “The Liberal Think Tank,” the concept of “liberalism” in Norway is more comparable to what many Americans think of as “conservative,” with a particular focus on individual freedom.



Eirik Løkke

Løkke is a political junkie (especially U.S. politics, an interest he shares with many Norwegians on both ends of the political spectrum), and has been a campaign advisor for Norway’s Conservative party. Among Civita’s key agenda items are sustainability of the welfare state, climate change, tax reform, the need for cuts in public budgets, the importance of the private sector’s role in solving the challenges of the welfare system, inequality, privacy, the rise of populism and nationalism in Europe and the USA and the need for a more rational aid and development policy.

While Agenda is largely funded by the labor movement and promotes a social democratic agenda, Civita is privately funded and more oriented toward the private sector; according to its mission statement it promotes “freedom, personal responsibility, and a free market economy.”

Both Civita and Agenda have ambitious public outreach programs, pursuing their goals through a wide range of platforms including blogs, newsletters, op-eds and media appearances, as well as public seminars and meetings. Both think-tanks contribute significantly to enlightening the public debate in Norway, and to keeping it relatively civil and amicable.

HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

Little Norway is sometimes referred to as a “humanitarian superpower”, an “honest broker”, and a country that “punches above its weight” in the international arena. The “honest broker” reputation stems from Norway’s longstanding efforts as a mediator, without agenda, in conflicts all over the globe, perhaps most famously in the Oslo peace accords. Norway is also recognized for its contributions in development aid and relief work, and our group was privileged to be invited to the Norwegian Refugee Council to hear director Jan Egeland talk about the Council’s work. Egeland is a diplomat, political scientist, former politician, and internationally known for his more than four decades of humanitarian work in various capacities, both as State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief, and since 2013 as Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Egeland talked about the impact the NRC and its more than 16,500 staff members in 32 countries make in providing humanitarian aid and emergency relief during conflicts and natural disasters.



Norway’s “humanitarian superpower” ambitions are however not without its critics; in his book [Foreign Aid, Foreign Policy and Power: The Norwegian model](#), historian Terje Tvedt examined the close collaboration between the Norwegian government, NGOs and research institutes in shaping what Tvedt termed “a regime of goodness,” an unquestioned and self-affirming apparatus perpetuating an image of Norway as an nation of peace and international good works.

THE U.S. - NORWAY BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

Senior Adviser Torbjørn S. Larssen at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs received the group at Victoria Terrasse, an impressive historic building which has housed the Ministry since the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905, except for during the five years of the German occupation from 1940-45 when it was used as Nazi headquarters. Larssen provided a thorough overview of the very strong relationship between Norway and the United States since WWII, not only on defense and security through the NATO alliance, but also through close collaboration between the two nations on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues.

Art and culture are also an important part of the Foreign Ministry's efforts to cultivate Norway's relationships with countries all over the world, and the Ministry has an ambitious "art in embassies" program to showcase outstanding Norwegian art and architecture in its diplomatic missions abroad. In her talk on "the art of diplomacy," Senior Art Adviser Fredrikke Schrupf shared insights about how the Ministry uses the artistic expression of painters, weavers, ceramists and architects to accentuate the varied and rapidly changing nature of "Norwegianness" in its embassies abroad.

The closeness of the bilateral relationship goes back to the American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution, whose democratic ideals were a model for Norway's own constitution of 1814. The closeness of the relationship was reinforced by the large scale emigration from Norway to the United States between 1825 and 1940, during which some 850,000 Norwegian-Americans found new homes in the United States and contributed to forging bonds between the U.S. and the "old country."



The group also had an opportunity to visit the Norwegian Emigrant Museum in Hamar, two hours north of Oslo, where director Terje Joranger elaborated on the 200 years of Norwegian emigration to the U.S. Joranger is also heading the organizing committee for the upcoming commemoration of the bicentennial anniversary of the sloop Restauration's departure from Stavanger to New York City in 1825 (on July 4!), which inaugurated the emigration to the U.S.

THE U.S. - NORWAY BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, CONTINUED

In addition to ties forged by heritage, the past 100 years has seen a flourishing two-way exchange of students and scholars between the United States and Norway. In addition to the Fulbright program, the Norway America Association, the American College of Norway, and the Oslo International Summer School have had an enormous impact in reinforcing the bilateral relationship and contributing to collaboration in research and higher education between the two nations. The group visited the Norway America Association offices overlooking Akershus fortress, where Secretary General Hanne Aaberg and Stipend Program Director Kristina Haarberg talked about their exchange programs.



In connection with the 100th anniversary of the Norway America Association, the Association commissioned Ketil Flatin to write [A journey in our educational history: Norwegian-American academic exchange 1919-2019](#), a handsome “coffee table book” chronicling this important aspect of the history of Norwegian-American relations.

Pictured here is Fulbright-Hays participant Cindy Watson using the book as part of her project upon returning home to Texas.

RELIGION

Near Hamar the group visited Våler church, where pastor Einar Vannebø gave the group an overview of the history of the church and religion in Norway, as well as an introduction to Våler church in particular; the spectacular building, which is one of the largest wooden churches in Europe, was built after a fire destroyed the old church in 2009. After the visit the group had a chance to join Pastor Vannebø for coffee and cake at the parsonage.



NORWAY & THE EU

In referendums of 1972 and 1994, Norwegians have twice by narrow margins elected not to join the European Union. The basic question, of whether a degree of sovereignty should be sacrificed in exchange for greater access to markets and the advantages of a stronger union with other European nations, is complicated by other factors concerning both national interest and national identity. The “otherness” of Rolf Jacobsen’s poem invokes the country’s rugged geography and the challenge of eking out an existence in such a barren country; clearly Norway’s farmers would have reason to fear unregulated competition from more bountiful nations, and Norwegians would also be reluctant to yield sovereignty over those resources that are plentiful, e.g., hydropower and fisheries. But “otherness” concerns not only national interest but also national identity, and EU proponents would insist that xenophobia and racism were also significant factors in Norway’s rejection of membership in 1972 and 1994. Today, because EU skepticism is firmly established on the extreme right, not just in Norway but also in several EU membership countries, the Norwegian advocacy organization “No to EU” emphasizes its commitment to international solidarity and hostility to all forms of xenophobia and racism.

While the Agrarian Center Party is opposed and the Conservative party in favor of EU membership, the issue does not align neatly with party affiliations; the President of the European Movement Norway is Heidi Nordby Lunde, a Conservative parliamentarian, and its Secretary General is Fredrik Mellem, a Labor Party politician. Adviser Stian Michalsen, also from the Labor Party, visited the Fulbright office and explained why EM Norway seeks to enhance relations between peoples and states in Europe, by promoting the values of freedom, peace, democracy, solidarity and equality for all. Both EU advocates and opponents are careful to distinguish between opposition to the EU from the right and left, as the slides here show.

Opposition to the EU, as understood by the pro-EU European Movement Norway

Opposition to the EU, as understood by No to EU

NORWAY & THE EU, CONTINUED

While there are no imminent plans for a third referendum, the EU debate is still very much alive. A new government white paper on the pros and cons of membership is expected in 2023, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the related energy crisis, have brought renewed focus on the issue; the Pro side argues that only a united EU can provide security in times of crisis, while the No side points out that the energy crisis is actually an energy price crisis, resulting from the commodification and integration with the EU market of a natural resource that should belong to the Norwegian people.

EDUCATION

Education of its citizens is a vital concern for any nation, and in a highly regulated, centralized welfare state like Norway, government involvement in education is strong at both the primary and secondary level. The central government defines curriculum goals and framework, while local governments administrate the schools (an OECD survey shows that while schools' autonomy over resource allocation, such as hiring and dismissal of teachers, is around the OECD average, autonomy over curriculum and assessment is below average).

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills was kind enough to organize a full day seminar for the Fulbright Hays group in Bergen, and highlighted the values underlying Norwegian primary and secondary education, as well as the work done by the Directorate in managing and promoting internationalization of Norwegian education at the tertiary level.

Head of Section Hilde Elin Haaland-Kramer and Adviser Christian Kronen provided a thorough introduction to the whats, whys and hows of the Directorate, and to its many programs and initiatives promoting international cooperation in higher education and research, including the Panorama Strategy and the INTPART and UTFORSK programs.

The Panorama strategy (2021-2027)



- Norway's strategy for bilateral cooperation on higher education and research with nine countries of strategic importance to the knowledge sector outside of the EU/EEA area
- Brazil, Canada, India, Japan, China, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, and USA
- The purpose is increased quality and relevance in higher education, research and innovation in Norway through internationalisation and cooperation with the business sector.

H.K. Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills


INTPART



- Overall aim: develop world-class research and higher education in Norway through long-term international cooperation
- The geographical scope of the programme is with institutions in Brazil, Canada, India, Japan, China, Russia, South Africa and the USA, in recent years extended to France and Germany
- The programme is developed and co-managed by the Research Council of Norway and the Directorate

H.K. Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills

**UTFORSK
-the 2021 call**



- Open for projects with partners in all the selected countries, Norwegian applicant institution
- Projects may be awarded up to 3 MNOK for 4-year projects
- A minimum of 100 MNOK is made available
- Application deadline was 20. April 2022
- More information: diku.no/en/programmes/utforsk

H.K. Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills

EDUCATION, CONTINUED

In her presentation of the history of primary school education in Norway, Assistant Professor Solveig Borgund from Western Norway University of Applied Sciences demonstrated how the core values and principles of inclusiveness and cultivating the good citizen have evolved, from its beginnings within a Christian tradition in the 18th century through the “social equalization school” of the post-war period, with a growing emphasis on ecological and international co-responsibility and values of tolerance, intellectual freedom and equality.



In the current phase, which she designated “The global school of knowledge” (since app. 2000), the neoliberal trend in the public sector toward more measurement, accountability, and emphasis on economic outcome, is making its presence felt also within education. The question of whether Norway’s traditional “soft values” must eventually yield to keep pace in a more competitive environment is a hotly debated topic, with reference (for example) to Norway’s sub-OECD average on some of the PISA tests.

Graphic artist Lisa Aisato’s illustration “Our teacher” adorns the cover of the Norwegian curriculum plan (2020), and nicely captures the “soft values” of the Norwegian primary school tradition: the sentence written on the blackboard reads “Thank you for seeing us!!!”

The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) is situated in a 500 acre neoclassical park and arboretum at Ås, 20 miles south of Oslo, and is surely the most beautiful university campus in Norway. Associate professor and Fubright alumni Shai André Divon had organized a full day visit for the group, and University President Curt Rice welcomed us in the university’s magnificently renovated auditorium.



EDUCATION, CONTINUED

NMBU includes the spectacular new national Veterinary Institute, opened in late 2021 in Norway's largest public building, as well as NORAGRIC, the Department of International Environment and Developmental Studies. The day's program included lectures on development aid, Norway's challenging paradox of being at once an aspiring environmental leader and a major oil exporter, a presentation of the Eik Lab and Center for Student Innovation, and the university's role in developing institutional collaboration agreements with many partners in Africa, Asia and South East Europe, on issues as various as food security and police reform. These collaborations not only offer NMBU students the opportunity to pursue studies abroad, but also for NMBU to welcome students and researchers to Ås, making NMBU Norway's most international university. President Rice has been outspoken in his resistance to the government-announced (but not yet implemented) plans to impose tuition on foreign students from outside the EU, emphasizing the significant value students from the global south bring to Norway's higher education community. The day concluded with a guided tour in beautiful weather of the campus and buildings with Professor Dietze-Schirdewahn of the Faculty of Landscape and Society and Chief Architect Kristin Kreul.

UiT The Arctic University of Tromsø is the world's northernmost university and has a particular focus on polar issues and Arctic Norway, not only in the natural sciences but also in the social sciences and humanities. Climate change, exploitation of Arctic resources, environmental concerns, indigenous health, culture and languages, peace and conflict studies, telemedicine, fishery sciences and space physics are among the fields this research university specializes in, and are all topics which have special relevance in the High North. UiT is also a highly international university, with more than 20% of academic staff and 10% of its students coming from abroad. Summer means holidays and deserted campuses all over Norway, but nowhere more so than in Tromsø where the sun makes up for its long winter absence. Our friends in the international office were nonetheless gracious enough to invite us to lunch and offer a tour of the campus in peak holiday season. Unfortunately, Covid got around to our group on the coastal steamer between Bergen and Tromsø, and we had to save this treat for a return visit.

CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT

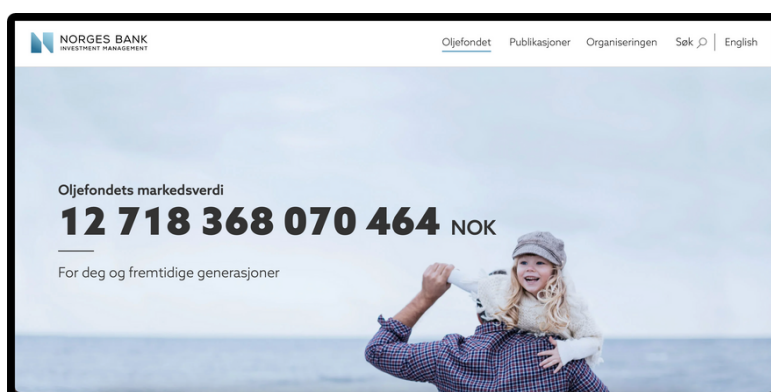
Our visit to the Bjerknes Centre for Climate Change research in Bergen was some consolation (for the Norwegian among us) for the awkward reality of Norway's petroleum revenues being an essential component of its admirable welfare state. The Centre, comprising 260 scientists from 39 nations, is an object lesson in the value of international research in addressing global challenges, and Senior Researcher Helene Langehaug told us about the Centre's work to "understand climate for the benefit of society" and to develop better models for climate prediction. The Centre has been a significant contributor to the IPCC assessment reports and is internationally renowned for its work to contribute to a low emission and resilient society.

Øyvind Paasche is Head of the Climate Dynamics Department at NORCE and director of Climate Futures. His deep dive into the climate risks we're facing was not uplifting, and whatever comfort we take from the excellence of research being done at Bjerknes is quickly undermined by its findings. Paasche feels one cause for optimism, however, is the gratifying engagement and commitment demonstrated by the many partners Bjerknes works with in the business community.

The embarrassment of Norway's generous and much admired welfare state being bolstered by ill-gotten gains (at least environmentally speaking), has been softened somewhat by the nation's frugal administration of its windfall riches. While an ostentatious demonstration of wealth would tarnish the country's reputation even further, prudently salting the money away in a pension fund for future generations is virtuous and sensible and in keeping with the national character (Janteloven), and, perhaps inadvertently, a stroke of public relations genius.

Camilla Bakken Øvald is a writer and economist, and in 2018 published a book about the pension fund called *The Dreamfund*. Øvald is currently pursuing a PhD on the fund, and talked to the group about the administration, ethics, and responsible

investment of the mind- boggling sums you can see increasing in real time on the ticker of the Bank of Norway's website.



CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT, CONTINUED



The voyage along the Norwegian coast from Bergen to Tromsø brought to mind that first line of Jacobsen’s poem: “Det er langt, dette annerledeslandet” (It is long, this land of otherness). As we sailed passed one solitary farm after another, some of them seemingly connected only to the sea when the small dirt roads—which must have been there somewhere—were invisible from the ship, one couldn’t help understand how this landscape would impact the national character... as well as pose formidable practical challenges to providing for the needs of its inhabitants.

In Tromsø, Geir Gotaas, leader of the Ny Ålesund program at the Norwegian Polar Institute, gave the group a thorough introduction to the work and purpose of the Institute. As an agency under the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Institute is the foremost provider to the Norwegian government of science based knowledge about the polar regions, including expertise on climate change and monitoring, contaminants and toxins, biodiversity, marine ecosystems, glaciers and sea ice, biogeochemistry, and the deep knowledge a premier polar nation like Norway needs to manage resources and to coordinate international research in the Arctic, which has been dubbed a “canary in a coal mine” region for global climate understanding.

RUSSIA & RUSSIANS

While Norwegians have a reputation for being somewhat reserved, and hospitality is not often mentioned as a hallmark of Norwegian culture (at least not in urban areas), Northern Norway seems to be an exception; there is a well-established concept of “nordnorsk gjestfrihet” (North-Norwegian hospitality), and one of its manifestations is the warm cross-border relationship in the Barents region between Norwegians and Russians, even during the iciest years of the Cold War. While that is partially due to the Soviet liberation of Kirkenes and Finnmark in 1944-45, the work of organizations such as the Barents Secretariat and the arts collective “Pikene på Broen” (Girls on the Bridge) have contributed significantly to forging an inclusive, cross-border identity for the Barents Region.

We asked Thomas Nilsen, editor of the regional “Barents Observer” newspaper in Kirkenes, to come to Tromsø and talk to the group about the plight of Norwegian-Russian public diplomacy in the wake of Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine. Nilsen’s report was not encouraging, with the Russian government doing its best to freeze the extensive cross-border people-to-people collaboration in many areas which has been typical for this region. Nilsen’s newspaper has sought to offset this development, and prevent the demonization of Russian people, by proposing that the region become a haven for Russian intellectuals, artists, and others fleeing Putin’s Russia. The proposal will receive funding from the Finnmark/Troms country government, private sponsors, and the Fritt Ord Foundation (which we visited in Oslo), and would initially seek to employ three or four journalists from Northern Russia who no longer enjoy freedom of the press in Russia.

Promoting people-to-people diplomacy to prevent conflict—but hanging on to the “nations into people” ideal after conflict has erupted—is the highest goal of the Fulbright program. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine gives occasion to quote, to those who would seek to disrupt people-to-people diplomacy, the following from J.W. Fulbright’s book The Arrogance of Power:

Under normal circumstances, most people would say immediately and instinctively “no” if asked whether they were proud of their country’s ability to kill and destroy. But in a war all that changes, and in the course of dehumanizing an enemy—and this is the ultimate fallout from any war—a man dehumanizes himself. It is not just the naturally bellicose, the thwarted or the twisted personalities that become dehumanized in a war. It is everyman: the good and decent citizen who looks after his children, who is considerate of his neighbors and kind to animals. It is he who ultimately prays the obscene “War Prayer” of Mark Twain.

RUSSIANS & RUSSIA, CONTINUED

He goes on to quote Twain's prose poem, in which an aged "stranger" turns up among a congregation of patriots praying for success in an imminent war. The stranger says he has come to clarify what it is they are actually praying for, and then provides a grisly account of the suffering and destruction they are in fact wishing upon their enemies. The poem concludes, "It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said."

THE SÁMI IN NORWAY

In Tromsø Ánde Somby, an artist, traditional Sámi joik performer, and associate professor of law, tested positive for Covid the evening before we were to meet him at the University of Tromsø. He was nonetheless gracious enough to share via Zoom his presentation on the Who, Where, What, When, How and Why of the indigenous Sámi people in Norway.

In addition to an overview of the culture, history, religion, legal battles, and challenges the Sámi people have suffered through a process of Norwegianization imposed by the Norwegian government (for which King Harald formally apologized in 1997) Somby visited some existential questions that apply to all cultures; the tension between tradition and modernity, the flattening of culture and the loss of language—which is a cognitive system—caused by globalism, and the challenge to everyone of exercising cross cultural empathy and combatting racism. Somby was even kind enough to flout throat soreness and grace us with a "Tromsø joik."



Self-portrait. Courtesy of Ánde Somby

NORWAY DURING THE OCCUPATION

Publisher Ottar Samuelsen was scheduled to give us a lecture about some of the events and places described in his book It Happened Here about Oslo during the occupation, but an airline strike prevented us from getting back to Oslo from Tromsø in time. Instead, Ottar proposed to film (with his iPhone) a guided tour of some sites in Oslo where key events unfolded during the occupation; the tour begins on the night of April 9, 1940, when the invading forces call on Foreign Minister Koht at the Foreign Ministry, demanding the Norwegian cabinet's capitulation, and being turned down. Among the sites Samuelsen visits are Oscarsborg fortress, about 20 kilometers down the Oslofjord where the German warship Blucher was sunk by Norwegian cannons as it sailed toward Oslo, Quisling's headquarters and residence at Villa Grande which has now fittingly been converted into the Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies, and Nordseter farm east of Oslo where Samuel Steinmann was living when he was arrested; when he died in 2015, Steinmann was the last living survivor of the 529 Norwegian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz during the occupation.

CULTURE

Writer Robert Ferguson has written biographies of Henrik Ibsen and Knut Hamsun, a history of the Vikings, and Scandinavians: in Search of the Soul of the North. He has translated numerous books and poems by Norwegian writers into English, and is the author of "Nikolai Astrup and the Creation of Norwegian National Identity" which appeared in the Clark Art Institute exhibition catalogue "Nikolai Astrup: Visions of Norway."

In his presentation for our group Ferguson traced the development of a Norwegian national romantic tradition, grounded in an idealization of nature and rural life, as it found expression in the works of prominent Norwegian writers, painters and composers like Bjørnson, Ibsen, Astrup, J.C. Dahl, Kittelsen, and Grieg. In Bergen, the group visited Grieg's beautiful home at Troldhaugen, and enjoyed a piano recital of Grieg's music by the pianist Stefan Ibsen Zlatanov.



*Theodor Kittelsen's painting "Far, far away
Soria Moria Palace shimmered like Gold"*

CULTURE, CONTINUED

In the Norwegian welfare state's "social engineering" project of cultivating the good citizen, Norway's excellent system of public libraries plays a vital role. In accordance with the library law of 1985, every municipality is obligated to provide its citizens with a professionally staffed library; a survey conducted in 2018 showed that more than half the country's population had visited a public library during the past year, and libraries play an increasingly important role as independent arenas for meetings and debate, stimulating public discourse and enlightenment.



Deichman Library in Oslo

In Tromsø librarian Synnøve Baustad gave us a tour of the Tromsø public library and offered perspectives on the important work being done there, and a farewell dinner for the participants was hosted at the spectacular new Oslo Public Library's restaurant Centropa, after a lecture on Norwegian foodways by food writer Andreas Liebe Delsett.

Statistics Norway (SSB) is the national statistical institute of Norway and the main producer of official statistics. The institute is responsible for collecting, producing and communicating statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. Statistics Norway also conducts extensive research and analysis activities, and is one of the few statistical agencies in the world that has its own research department. According to SSB's website, "Official statistics are the nation's common factual basis and are essential for a living democracy. The statistics aim to reflect society and show trends for the population, living conditions, the economy, the environment and employment. Individuals, businesses, the authorities, the media, educational institutions and researchers alike can all enjoy and benefit from Norwegian official statistics." Relying on a rich trove of historical statistics, Senior Adviser Espen Sørbye provided the group with an overview of Norwegian population movement from 1735-2020.

OSLO

JUNE 19 - JULY 2, 2022



OSLO

THE CAPITAL

POPULATION OF OSLO: OVER 650,000

POPULATION OF OSLO + SURROUNDING AREA: 1.2 MILLION

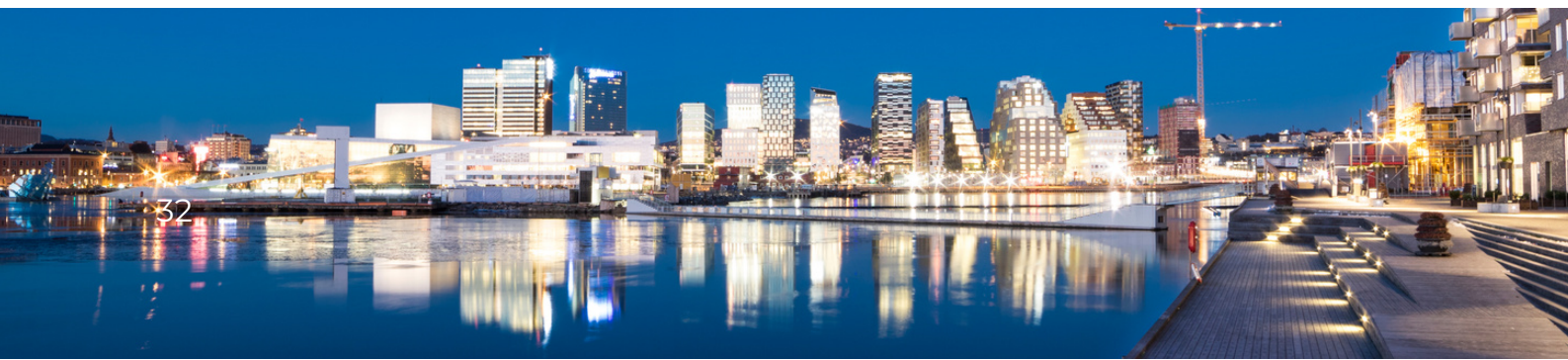
FOUNDED BY KING HARALD HARDRADA AROUND 1050

Oslo is Norway's capital and largest city. The meaning of "Oslo" is disputed, but the popular notion that it refers to the estuary ("os") of the river Lo is almost certainly incorrect. Historian Peder Claussøn Friis launched that theory in 1613, speculating that the lower reaches of the Alna river were once referred to as the "Lo River"—speculation which fit nicely with his theory, but was in fact baseless, and also implausible since "os" would in that event have come after the name of the river, i.e. "Loos"

More interesting is the history of the name, which reflects some of the currents and tensions in the development of Norwegian national identity. King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway decided to change the name from "Oslo" to "Christiania", after himself, in 1624, after a fire destroyed the original medieval settlement, and in 1877, 53 years after Norwegian independence from Denmark, the spelling became Norwegianized as "Kristiania." But the indignity of Norway's capital being named after a former King of Denmark was not lost on some, who in 1924 proposed that the name be changed back to Oslo. A heated debate ensued between the privileged urban classes who still regarded Norway as a primitive outpost of more sophisticated Denmark, and more rural populations who felt distancing themselves from Denmark was essential for developing Norwegian identity (Ivar Aasen, the father of "new Norwegian", was among them).



Moreover, "Oslo" was already the designation (after the original settlement) of one of the least affluent districts of Kristiania, making the name even less palatable to the upper classes, and to them even the sound of "Oslo" was folksy and vulgar, "like the sound of two beams of wood being knocked together," as *Riksmålsbladet* (a magazine promoting conservative Dano-Norwegian language) wrote in 1923. The Storting (parliament) however, swayed by the nationalist arguments, determined that Oslo would be the new name as of January 1, 1925.



MONDAY, JUNE 20

Lunch of typical Norwegian fare at the Fulbright Office

Welcome & Introductions

Optional: Group dinner at [Oslo Street Food](#)

TUESDAY, JUNE 21

Nationalism and Norway with [Øyvind Østerud](#), political scientist.

How Has Science Policy Served Norway's National Interest? [Tore Li](#), political scientist and historian.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22

The Fritt Ord ("Free Word") Foundation with Joakim Lie, project manager

Lunch at [Litteraturhuset](#) with director Susanne Kaluza

Social Medicine and Health Services with Anne Helene Kveim Lie, physician and professor of medical history, and Fulbright alumna

Emotional & Psychological Wellbeing in Norway with Kari Leibowitz, health psychologist, speaker & writer, and U.S. alumna of the Fulbright Norway program

THURSDAY, JUNE 23

Foreign Ministry and the Bilateral Relationship with the United States with Torbjørn Strømsnes Larssen, Coordinator for U.S. Affairs

The Art of Diplomacy, Fredrikke Schrupf, Senior Advisor, Art

Academic and Cultural Exchange Between Norway and the US with Hanne Aaberg, Secretary General of the Norway America Association, and Christa Lauritzen, Director of the American College of Norway, Representative from the Oslo University International Summer School

Dinner at Signalen Sjøbad

FRIDAY, JUNE 24

Sånn er Norge (This is Norway) with [Ole Martin Ihle](#), anthropologist, journalist and author

Pursuing Dreams in Norway and America: Varieties of Freedom with [Magnus Marsdal](#), journalist, writer, and co-founder and director of the left-leaning think tank Manifest

SATURDAY, JUNE 25

[Norwegian Emigrant Museum](#): Emigration and the Norwegian Diaspora with director Terje Joranger

[Våler Church](#) with pastor Einar Vannebo

SUNDAY, JUNE 26

Day for exploring Oslo

MONDAY, JUNE 27

Aging and Ageism in the Welfare State with Olav Eikemo, Senior Advisor, and Kari Østerud, Director, [Senter for Seniorpolitikk](#) (Center for Senior Policy)

Little Norway on the International Stage: A Humanitarian Superpower? with [Jan Egeland](#), Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council

Norway & the EU with Stian Michalsen, advisor at [Europabevegelsen](#)

TUESDAY, JUNE 28

Perspectives on the Norwegian Agenda with Trine Østereng, adviser at the center left think tank Agenda

Services and Benefits: the Norwegian Welfare State in Action Haakon Hertzberg, Deputy Director and Head of Politics and International Relations at [NAV](#), the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration

Music, Literature and the Arts and the Creation of a Norwegian Identity with [Robert Ferguson](#), novelist, playwright and biographer

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29

Day at the [Norwegian University of Life Sciences](#)

Welcome by the Rector, [Professor Curt Rice](#)

Food Security and Norwegian Aid with [Professor Ruth Haug](#), Faculty of Landscape and Society International Environment and Development Studies

Presentation from the [EIK Lab](#)—Center for Student Innovation

Presentation by the [Urban Lab](#)

[Center for Community-Based Policing and Post-Conflict Police Reform](#) with [Associate Professor Ingrid Nyborg](#), Faculty of Landscape and Society

Norway and Climate Change with [Associate Professor Guri Bang](#), Faculty of Landscape and Society

Presentation by [Dr. Jennifer West](#), Head of Department [Noragric](#)

Closing Remarks with [Dean Eva Falleth](#), Faculty for Landscape and Society

Lunch at [Vitenparken](#)

Tour of Campus with [Professor Annegreth Dietze-Schirdewahn](#), Faculty of Landscape and Society

Tour of Campus Buildings with [Kristin Kreul](#), Chief Architect at NMBU

THURSDAY, JUNE 30

[Statistics Norway](#): A demographic history of Norway's population 1735-2014 with senior adviser Espen Søybye

Fourth of July Celebration hosted by the American Embassy

FRIDAY, JULY 1

Liberalism and Individual Freedom in Norway with Eirik Løkke, advisor at [Civita](#) Think Tank

BERGEN

JULY 2 - JULY 7, 2022



BERGEN

THE HEART OF THE FJORDS

POPULATION OF BERGEN: 265, 470

FOUNDED BY KING OLAF III HARALDSSON IN 1070

The second-largest city in Norway is famous for its UNESCO World Heritage site Bryggen, “The Hanseatic Wharf.” The wharf is a testament to Bergen’s storied history as the former the hub of trade between Norway and Europe. Fish and furs were the city’s main exports for many years; it was even the nation’s capital in the 12th and 13th centuries. Today, Bergen’s economy is based on fishing, shipbuilding, food processing, and other industries. Although there are over 200 days of rain a year, tourism is another thriving industry in the city. Bergen boasts stunning mountains and fjords. It also is the birthplace of violinist Ole Bull, composer Edvard Grieg, and other artists.



SATURDAY, JULY 2

Train to Bergen: Scenic journey to the western coast of Norway

SUNDAY, JULY 3

Tour of the [Edvard Grieg Museum Troldhaugen](#)

MONDAY, JULY 4

[Bjerknes Center for Climate Research](#) with Helene Langehaug (Bjerknes) and Øyvind Paasche ([Climate Futures](#))

TUESDAY, JULY 5

Full day seminar on higher education and internationalization [Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education & Skills](#)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 6

NorA - initiatives for integrating adult immigrants into the labor market with Solfrid Hernes

Robin Hood Stiftelsen with Marcos XYZ

[Miks-Norway](#) (MIKS stands for Mangfold, Integrering, Kommunikasjon, Samarbeid, i.e. Diversity, Integration, Communication, Collaboration)

[Hyssingen Produksjonsskole](#) with Rudi Bakken

Dinner at Spisekroken

THURSDAY, JULY 7

[Board Hurtigruten](#)

HURTIGRUTEN

JULY 7 - JULY 11



HURTIGRUTEN

A JOURNEY ALONG THE NORWEGIAN COASTLINE

DAYS ABOARD THE SHIP: FIVE

FOUNDED 1893 AS LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

The five-day journey along Norway's west coast is filled with stunning natural sights, and, of course, the midnight sun. Along the way, you'll travel into Geirangerfjord, a UNESCO-listed site with 800-meter-high cliffs and numerous waterfalls. You'll stop briefly in Trondheim, Norway's third-largest city and home to the northernmost cathedral in the world: Nidarosdomen. The cathedral is built over the tomb of St. Olav, the patron saint of Norway. Once you cross the Arctic Circle, you'll experience 24-hour daylight. In the Lofoten Islands, you'll see traditional fishing houses on stilts and maybe even fish drying on racks. The journey ends in Tromsø, the capital of arctic exploration.



FRIDAY, JULY 8

Journey to Geirangerfjord

SATURDAY, JULY 9

Tour of Trondheim

Lecture on the Vikings

SUNDAY, JULY 10 & MONDAY, JULY 11

On-board lectures and sightseeing activities

TROMSØ

JULY 11 - JULY 13



TROMSØ

THE ARCTIC CAPITAL

POPULATION: 70,000

FOUNDED IN ABOUT 1250

The arctic city of Tromsø spans two islands, Troms and Kval. It has been home to Sámi and Norse people since at least the middle ages. In the 19th century it became a hub for both arctic trade and exploration. The city's food and culture earned it the nickname "The Paris of the North." Briefly during WWII, Tromsø became the seat of the Norwegian government. Today, Tromsø is home to a number of national highlights, including the Arctic Cathedral and the Norwegian Polar Institute. Tromsø is also the world's northernmost university town. In the winter, residents and visitors alike can enjoy sites of nordlys, the Northern Lights, and in the summer, the Midnight Sun.



TUESDAY, JULY 12

Presentation of Tromsø public library with librarian Synnøve Baustad

Norwegians and Russians: People-to-people diplomacy in the High North with Thomas Nilsen, editor of Barents Observer

The Sami, Norway's Indigenous People with Ánde Somby, Associate Professor of Law

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13

Norwegian Polar Institute with director Geir Gotaas

University of Tromsø campus visit with Astrid Brokke, Senior International Adviser

THURSDAY, JULY 14

Exploration of Tromsø

Return to Oslo

FINAL DAYS IN OSLO

FRIDAY, JULY 15

Protecting the Welfare State: Privatization and monetization of welfare services with For Velferdsstaten special adviser Helene Bank

The ethics of managing ridiculous wealth: the Government pension fund with researcher and writer Camilla Bakken Øvald

Farewell Dinner at Centropa restaurant at the new Deichman Oslo public library & Discussion of Norwegian Food with writer Andreas Liebe Delsett

SATURDAY, JULY 16 & SUNDAY, JULY 17

Exploration of Oslo

Return to the United States

THE PARTICIPANTS



PARTICIPANTS



SARAH RIEGLE LEMELIN

ESL, Italian, and Global Studies Faculty
Oakland Community College
Auburn Hills, Michigan

Sarah teaches ESL, Italian, and Italian culture at OCC, where she also co-directs the Conversation Partner Program, helps mentor students pursuing the Global Literacy Endorsement, and advises the International Student Club. She is interested in learning more about Norway to serve as an interesting counterpoint to a variety of cross-cultural topics that her students explore.

SARAH'S REFLECTION

Having read a lot about Norway's cradle-to-grave social safety net, overall equality, and consistent ranking at or near the top of numerous global indices, not much of what I encountered surprised me, but Norway most certainly impressed me. It's not hyperbole to say that our seminar topics and our lived experiences confirmed the importance of well-being, equality, altruism, democratic processes, freedom, and love of nature. It's perhaps this love of nature, the primacy of the right to roam, and the daily embrace of "open-air living," friluftsliv, that most impressed me.

Norway gets a lot of things right, not the least of which is friluftsliv. Tusen takk, Petter and all at Fulbright Norway, for the many gifts of our time together in Norge. As the national anthem proclaims, "Ja, vi elsker dette landet" (yes, we love this land).



SHANNON GLEASON

Assistant Professor of Education
Westfield State University
Westfield, Massachusetts

Shannon Gleason is an Assistant Professor of Education at Westfield State University where she teaches philosophy of education and anti-racist pedagogy. In Norway, she hopes to cultivate fresh ideas and connections to support future educators in developing intercultural competencies and global perspectives, and to champion innovative visions for building a more just world.

SHANNON'S PROJECT PLANS

Through multiple projects, I will share with students and colleagues my observations of Norwegian history, culture, politics, traditions, and values, with particular attention to how the country handles diversity—especially as it relates to the educational system, so that our students and the future PK-12 students they serve will thrive in a multicultural world. As a teacher educator, it is important to me to engage our campus community in critical thinking and reflective practice toward anti-racist education and other emancipatory visions in line with state and national accreditation requirements. In each of these projects, I will especially highlight the insights provided by NorA, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education & Skills, and Solveig M. Borgund at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences.

PARTICIPANTS

AMY WAX

Associate Professor of Psychology
California State University
Long Beach, California

Amy Wax is an Associate Professor of Psychology at California State University, Long Beach. She plans to leverage her experiences during the Fulbright Norway program to create cross-cultural collaboration opportunities for her graduate students. In her free time, Amy enjoys tennis, yoga, knitting, and playing with her dog.



AMY'S PROJECT PLANS

The overarching goal for my Fulbright-Hays curriculum project is to develop an application-based project for my PYS 683 graduate students. This project is meant to improve student learning by challenging them to think through a multidimensional, cross-cultural lens, rather than defaulting to thinking about Organizational Development (OD) simply from an American cultural context, as is often the case. Specifically, students will be tasked with developing a knowledge base surrounding Norwegian culture, with the ultimate goal of effectively facilitating a fictitious Norwegian-American business merger.

The “essential” questions that will guide the curriculum project and focus of both the teaching and learning are: How does the interpretation of diagnostic information differ from culture to culture? How should one go about developing across-cultural OD intervention? What aspects need to be taken into consideration that are different from the American style of OD?

KAREN S. BARTON

Professor of Geography, GIS, and Sustainability
University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, Colorado

Karen Barton is a Professor of Geography, GIS, and Sustainability at the University of Northern Colorado. Her teaching and research focuses on global environmental change and community responses to natural disasters.

Barton is interested in leveraging the Norway Fulbright Hays seminar to lead a field studies course focused on polar geographies, climate change and the energy industry.



KAREN'S PROJECT PLANS

This 14 day, field-based course will emphasize climate change, natural hazards, human impacts, and challenges to human security in Scandinavia with a focus on Norway. The course will center broadly on: (1) the natural and cultural history of Norway, (2) the nation's unique setting for promoting hydropower; (3) national energy use and production, (4) development of renewable resources; and (5) renewable energy and its relationship to Norway's oil fund.

This course uses an experiential learning approach in order to expose students to the strengths of climate change mitigation in Norway as one example of a state that is “getting it right” in the face of global environmental change. We will also explore the contradictions of Norway's energy use model both through intensive readings, site visits, and lectures by Norwegian professionals and scholars.

PARTICIPANTS



CHERSTIN M. LYON

Professor of History and Director of Honors College
Southern Oregon University
Ashland, Oregon

Cherstin Lyon is a professor of immigration, citizenship law, ethnic American history, and public history at Southern Oregon University where she directs the Honors College. She is participating in the Norway Fulbright Seminar to develop a new curriculum for SOU's Democracy Project, and to plan a follow-up Democracy Project trip back to Norway with students and community members.

CHERSTIN'S PROJECT PLANS

I attended the Fulbright Hays Seminar in Norway to develop another segment of our university's Democracy Project focused on Democracy and Happiness in Scandinavia. I was excited to learn more about what makes Norwegian democracy strong and Norwegians among the happiest in the world and to dispel myths and common misunderstandings many Americans have about Norway. My project is designed to bring these lessons back to our community by taking students on a short trip to visit the Nordic countries of Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. We will study the various factors that make Nordic countries rank at the top of global indexes for both democracy and happiness. We will visit each of these four countries to see first-hand some of what students will learn in preparation for their travels. Then we will return home and share what we learn about democracy, the Nordic way with area high school students and the community at large.



MARK SWAILS

Copyright Librarian
Johnson County Community College
Overland Park, Kansas

Mark Swails is a librarian at Johnson County Community College (JCCC) in Kansas City. Before coming to JCCC Mark worked at the University of Kansas (KU), the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, and Emory University. He plans to curate a library collection focus related to Norway and Norwegian identity. Mark also intends to implement a faculty-led study abroad trip to Norway for JCCC students.

MARK'S PROJECT PLANS

Following directly on the themes of the leaders Fulbright-Hays seminar, this study abroad trip will provide a broad introduction to the basics of Norwegian history, culture, art and literature, politics and governance, as well as its educational system, traditions and values, and the recurring passions and preoccupations that animate national public debate. By using Norway as a case study, participants will explore the larger issues of nations, national identities, and nationalism. Does nationalism and a strong sense of national identity inevitably equate with the resurgence of intolerance, chauvinism, and xenophobia, or can it be an inclusive and emancipatory force within nations, and perhaps promote solidarity between them? Participants will also examine the role of this small nation beyond its borders: What role does this prosperous little nation play, as a peacekeeper, mediator, and international humanitarian force, among the great powers on the global stage?

PARTICIPANTS

SARAH MOORE

Assistant Professor of Social Work
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas

Dr. Sarah Moore is a global scholar whose research helps social workers understand how to provide better services to immigrants, and how to emphasize reciprocal relationships and cultural humility in social work practice across cultures. She is looking forward to learning about Norway's response to increasing immigration and unprecedented cultural and ethnic diversity.



SARAH'S PROJECT PLANS

The Fulbright-Hays Seminar 2022 in Norway offered an unparalleled opportunity to learn about the social welfare state in Norway, including the roles and definition of public values such as trust and freedom. The curriculum project that I have designed will enhance the Master of Social Work (MSW) program curriculum by creating a new module that examines comparative social welfare policy between the United States and Norway.

Students will be given a social work client case study example and asked to identify what resources, challenges, and decisions the client would be required to navigate in the United States welfare system. Then, after the instructor gives a lesson on the Norwegian welfare system, the students will be given the same case study and asked to analyze what the different challenges and opportunities would be. Students will be able to recognize the strengths and challenges of working with clients within the framework of the Nordic model vs. the United States model.

NICOLE ST. GERMAINE

Professor of English, Technical Writing
Angelo State University
San Angelo, Texas

Dr. Nicole St. Germaine is the Director of the Technical Writing program at Angelo State University. Her research involves intercultural and international healthcare information. She hopes to learn more about Norwegian government and culture so she can share this information with her students.



NICOLE'S PROJECT

Where Do I Go from Here? A Rhetorical Analysis of Norwegian and American Wayfinding Signs
This paper presents a rhetorical analysis of wayfinding markers found in public spaces in Norway and the United States. Over 200 wayfinding signs were collected from airports, public ferries, public buildings, and city streets in Bergen, Oslo, and Tromsø, Norway in the summer of 2022. When compared with their American counterparts, these signs are more likely to depict "realism" rather than symbolism. Norwegian wayfinding signs are less likely to use text and more likely to show a figure of a human, animal, mode of transportation, or building. These findings are a departure from the minimalism of Norwegian design, but match the Norwegian government's humanistic policies and commitment to globalization.

PARTICIPANTS



REBEKAH ANAYA

Manager of Short-Term Global Programs
Suffolk University
Boston, Massachusetts

In order to assist students in gaining global perspectives and growing personally, professionally, and academically, it is Rebekah's goal to promote the growth of international education programs. Her passion in life is global learning and exploration and encouraging others to seek out opportunities to discover new cultures, countries, and people.

REBEKAH'S REFLECTION

For my Fulbright-Hays curriculum project, I am developing an intercultural competency course for all of our study abroad students here at Suffolk University. This course will be using Norway as a case study and starting point to discuss cultural differences and similarities before turning to look at our own culture within the U.S. We will take a look at educational and political systems and consider the dynamics of family, government involvement, and climate actions to start. Other topics that we will look at will include conflict navigation, culture shock, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students will take an intercultural competency quiz, GPI (Global Perspective Index), at the beginning of the course, prior to travel, and then again once they have returned from their time abroad. We will discuss the quiz and what students have learned between their first and second time taking it. The ultimate objective for this course is for students to understand intercultural competency and the need for it in our globalized world.



ALEX BRIGGS

Assistant Professor of Communication Studies
Northampton Community College
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Alex is a Michigan native, avid sports fan, and mom to an energetic three-year-old. Alex loves to learn and is looking forward to this opportunity to learn about Norwegian culture. She is excited to take back what she learns to her students in her intercultural communication courses.

ALEX'S REFLECTION

My biggest takeaway from my time in Norway is how essential trust is to well-functioning institutions and groups. There are a few examples that come to mind for me on this: 1. Having trust in your government to spend your taxes appropriately and make moral decisions gives you the freedom to live comfortably with the belief that the government will work to your benefit when you need it to. 2. Having mutual trust between students, faculty, and administrators in a university-setting allows ideas to be supported from all levels and for creativity to flourish. 3. Governments trusting citizens allows public transportation to function without ridiculous lines or unnecessary guard rails. 4. Employers having trust in employees allows them to take sick days and time off for appointments without ridicule or loss of pay. Creating a real work-life balance. 5. Trust in education allows teachers and educators to creatively work in benefit of the children.

PARTICIPANTS

KARI DUDLEY

Senior Lecturer
University of New Hampshire
Durham, New Hampshire

As a licensed social worker and a social psychologist, Kari is passionate about mental health and the effects of the social environment on individual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. She is specifically interested in the many social, cultural, philosophical, and natural environmental factors that keep Norway among the happiest countries in the world.



KARI'S PROJECT PLANS

I developed a curriculum project that is suitable for an Introductory Psychology, sophomore-level Social Psychology or Abnormal Psychology, and upper-level course on Happiness or a social work course focused on culture (senior- or graduate level). I successfully implemented it with my Introductory Psychology and Abnormal Psychology courses this semester but developed additional project materials suitable for an upper-level course. The goal of this project is to help students identify the role of culture in Norwegian happiness rankings using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems perspective as a framework. For students in upper-level courses, students will use this lesson as a model for exploring another country using an ecological lens.

Essential course questions include: What is the influence of culture on happiness? How can we understand an individual through an Ecological Systems approach? How does mindset relate to symptoms of seasonal depression and one's outlook on winter?

STEVE LUND

Assistant Director of the European Studies Center
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Steve specializes in outreach and program development for the University Center for International Studies. His next project is the creation of an interdisciplinary studies certificate in Scandinavian Studies. He's looking forward to this trip and how it will inform his efforts to develop Scandinavia related coursework and curricular modules with faculty in departments across campus.



STEVE'S REFLECTION

Among the many topics that were covered I found Norway's robust social policies, and the public rhetoric associated with them, to be particularly thought provoking. It was interesting to hear how certain words and concepts – "freedom," "individualism," "security," – are defined and used by Norwegians and Europeans in ways that can differ greatly from how they are used by Americans. These differences will be an intriguing and useful starting point in my classroom for a comparative look at the history and scope of social programs and services in both countries, and the tone of the public conversations that relate to them. An important part of this trip was traveling with other American educators, many of whom will now be friends long after the trip. Each of them brought a unique disciplinary perspective to the group, and conversations about how to develop lesson plans based on what we were learning and experiencing together were often as valuable as the site visits themselves.

PARTICIPANTS



CHRIS PROPST

Professor of English
Western Wyoming Community College
Rock Springs, Wyoming

Chris has been an English teacher for over 22 years in the Mountain West. As an outdoors person, he's looking forward to experiencing the fjord life, but also hopes to be able to share what he learns about Norwegian culture, politics, education, and economy in comparing it to what his students experience in Wyoming, the Cowboy State.

CHRIS'S PROJECT PLANS

My curriculum project has already begun as I've given several presentations titled, "What I Learned from the Vikings: Exploring Happiness, Culture, and Politics." I've given my regular ENGL 1010 students a writing project that includes exploring what happiness is and how they define it. In the presentation, I synthesize Dr. Leibowitz' material on Mindset, and Marsdal and Ilhe about politics and Norway's unique "capitalistic" system with a heart that the United States might want to emulate. I also include a section about what made my mindset change, the surprises of travel that made me happy and learn something new in the "culture" part of the presentation. I'll give two formal presentations: one for our First Year Experience students and college community, and for local community members. Both are free and open to the public, one of which will be recorded and live streamed. All will have an opportunity for question and answer. Moreover, I'll continue the curriculum writing project in future semesters.



KARIN DONAHUE

Associate Professor of Psychology
Northampton Community College
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

In addition to teaching psychology, Karin also conducts behavior therapy with children on the autism spectrum. Karin looks forward to immersing herself in the Norwegian way of life, developing a study abroad course in Norway, and integrating Norwegian culture into her developmental psychology course.

KARIN'S PROJECT PLANS

The goal of this project is the design of a study abroad program for students at Northampton Community College. The program is entitled Norway Study Abroad: History, Society, and Culture. The goals are for students to spend one week in Norway to learn about its rich history, culture, people, and the social support system.

The program is based on an inquiry-based instruction model, where students will engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. Students will begin the trip by posing questions, then collect data on the trip to evaluate and interpret. They will then research further information to support their investigations. The instructor serves as a guide through this process. Discussions at the end of each day will support students in their exploration and interpretation.

PARTICIPANTS

CINDY WATSON

Senior Lecturer with Teach North Texas
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas

Dr. Watson focuses on effective teaching practices interwoven with inquiry. Her goal is to share how the educational system and the culture of Norway intersect with Teach North Texas regarding inquiry, culturally responsive teaching, and global competencies. She imagines a re-design of curriculum for clinical teachers integrating effective teaching practices from Norway.



CINDY'S PROJECT PLANS

The goal for this curriculum project is for future STEM educators to process how critical it is to incorporate an international perspective in their teaching practices by comparing two countries-Norway and the U.S. I plan to embed the Fulbright project into a semester long course with clinical teachers where effective teaching practices and classroom environment are the focus.

Course program objectives include: 1. Explore and choose global competencies to implement in public school settings. 2. Explore with students how a stereotypical view of a country can lead to inaccurate assumptions. 3. Facilitate activities and discussions that guide students to recognize their stereotypical views of the United States and Norway. 4. Discuss and analyze the stereotypes of people from the United States and Norway and connect that to stereotypes seen in the classroom. 5. Explore the work, lives, and contributions of individuals who were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

AFTON CLARKE-SATHER

Associate Professor of Geography
University of Minnesota Duluth
Duluth, Minnesota

Afton Clarke-Sather is a human-environment and political geographer who has explored connections between natural resource management, state power, and national identities in China. He hopes to learn more about contemporary Norwegian views of nature and national identity.



AFTON'S REFLECTION

Before coming to Norway, I had heard much of Norwegians' famous shyness. While I was in Oslo, I found this to largely be true. Yet, when I went to the mountains to hike, bike, or swim, I found Norwegians to be incredibly friendly and outgoing. This paradox Norwegians being reserved in urban formal settings while more at ease outside was an epiphany on my trip. The prevalent role of the outdoors in Norway's national identity was the thing about that proved to surprise me the most about Norway. Most Norwegian cities that we traveled to had adjacent forests and trails, many of which tied into the extensive DNT trail system which was well mapped and maintained. Equally importantly they were widely used. The forests were full of people, ranging in age from infants being breastfed by their mothers to the elderly. These people hiked and biked in pouring rain, showing that there is not bad weather just bad clothes.

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