

Norway



The Kingdom of Norway enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the world. Its prosperity is due in large part to the discovery in the late 1960s of off-shore oil and gas deposits. More than half of Norway's exports come from this sector.

NORWAY FACTS

Population: 4.5 million (UN, 2003)

Capital: Oslo

Major language: Norwegian

Major religion: Christianity

Life expectancy: 76 years (men), 82 years (women) (UN)

Monetary unit: 1 Norwegian krone = 100 ore

Main exports: Fuels and fuel products, machinery, metal products

Average annual income: US \$35,630 (World Bank, 2001)

Internet domain: .no

International dialing code: +47

Two centuries of Viking raids into Europe tapered off following the adoption of Christianity by King Olav TRYGGVASON in 994. Conversion of the Norwegian kingdom occurred over the next several decades. In 1397, Norway was absorbed into a union with Denmark that was to last for more than four centuries. In 1814, Norwegians resisted the cession of their country to Sweden and adopted a new constitution. Sweden then invaded Norway but agreed to let Norway keep its constitution in return for accepting the union under a Swedish king. Rising nationalism throughout the 19th century led to a 1905 referendum granting Norway independence. Norway remained neutral in World War I and proclaimed its neutrality at the outset of World War II.



Flag Description: red with a blue cross outlined in white that extends to the edges of the flag; the vertical part of the cross is shifted to the hoist side in the style of the Dannebrog (Danish flag). For a timeline of key events go to http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1023320.stm