

National Initiative

for **Senior Workers** in Norway



go ^{for a} senior



Norway is ageing

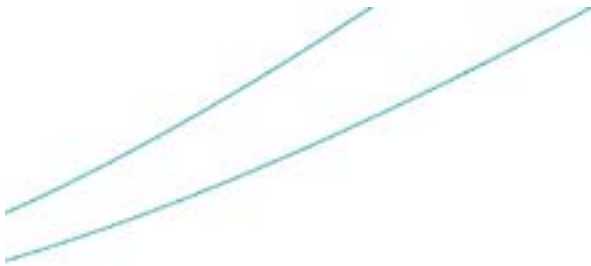
The population of senior citizens in all European countries is expected to increase, particularly the numbers of the very old. One key factor is the change from high to low fertility rate and also the decline in death rates.

Norway is of no exception to this trend. There have been some considerable changes in the nature of work and work exit. The trend to retire earlier than planned is widespread in Europe, driven mainly by economic pressure and backed by state and corporate policies.

In Norway the unemployment rate is low compared to the average of the European Union. Norway has one of the highest percentages in Europe of working people over the age of 60-66. The unemployment rate among the age group 55+ is very low. Many men and

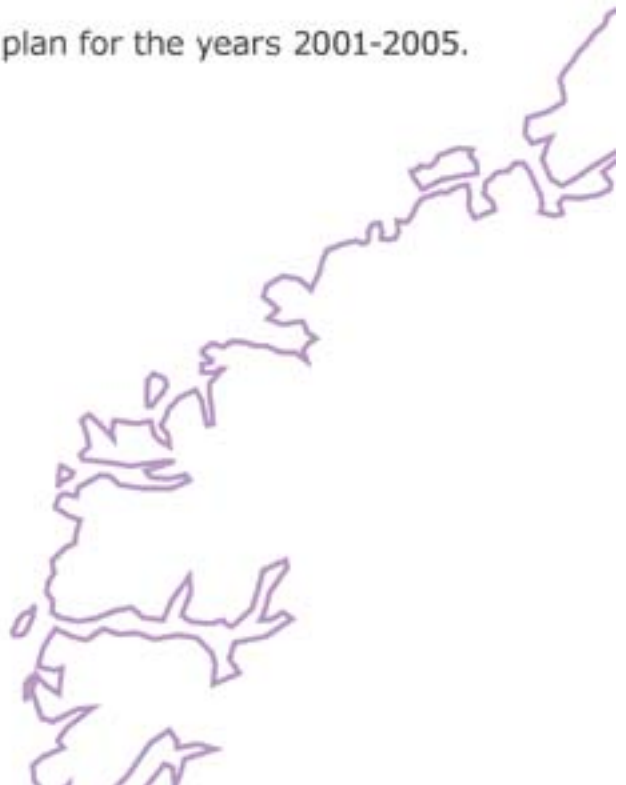
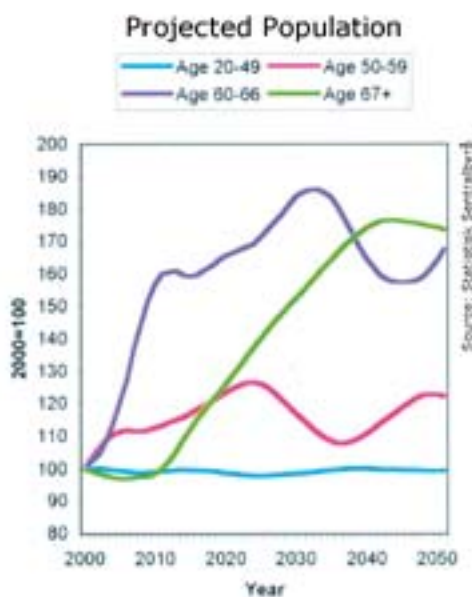
women receive either disability pensions, ordinary pensions or are part of an early retirement scheme. The result is that the average age of exit from the labour market is constantly decreasing. The state pension age in Norway is amongst the highest in Europe at 67, both for females and males. As a result, this has increasing pressure on other social benefits like health insurance, unemployment payments and disability pensions.

Up to the year 2010 the number of the age group between 45-66 will increase by 41 percent while the number of the age group between 20-34 will decrease by 13 percent. In the long run it places a heavy burden on the national economy and on the taxpayers. The Government is now in the process of formulating policies to meet these challenges. In Norway, seniors represent an important working resource upon which society will strongly depend in the future. This is what senior policy is about.



Senior Policy in Norway

In order to prevent the exclusion of older workers before retirement age the Government wishes to encourage employers to provide a better working environment for the older workers and to introduce age-related Human Resource Management. In practice, the Centre for Senior Policy (CSP) has been a central partner and co-ordinator for public and private enterprises. Valuable experience and competency have been gained through projects in the last 10 years which are useful now that CSP is responsible for coordinating the Government's *National Initiative for Senior Workers*. The Government will give annual financial support to this national plan for the years 2001-2005.



National Initiative for Senior Workers

is part of the strategy aimed at the top management of all the major unions and employers' associations and relevant government agencies. In brief, the Plan consists of the following:

1. The organisations have committed themselves to:

- Using their regional and local branches actively in spreading information, appropriate models, practical experience and research results in the area of senior personnel policy.
- Initiating networking projects between work places.
- Arranging conferences and training for respective target groups, i.e. top and middle management, union delegates, and senior workers.
- Providing union representatives with training in senior work environments.

2. An information campaign aimed at TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and other media. The purpose of this campaign is to emphasize seniors' competence and needs, reliable senior management and the necessity for changing attitudes. This campaign is aimed at public and private enterprises, but is also targeted to affect the opinion of the general public.

3. National organisational development projects and appropriate models

Initiating concrete trial and development projects in the work place is one of the most important points of the Plan. The goal of the projects and models is to change company management perceptions and to give older workers the natural place they should have in the work force. This takes place



in state, county and private sectors and involves training in the perception of personnel management, job environment, education and vocational training. CSP provides these in-depth projects.

4. Regional networks (6)

consist of Human Resource Management professionals, consultants and other professionals. These expanded regional networks will provide knowledge and experience to lay the groundwork for a better practice of senior policy and new development projects in the regions.

5. Educating professional HR managers, personnel officers, consultants and union representatives

Lifecycle studies at the College of Vestfold.

6. Produce handbooks and other material

as guides on how to build up a senior policy in a company.

The Centre for Senior Policy will be a partner in all the projects in the Plan. To obtain concrete results it will be necessary to have a long-range commitment. A major conference arranged by CSP, opened by the Prime Minister in November 2001, initiated the Plan with the slogan

go for a senior

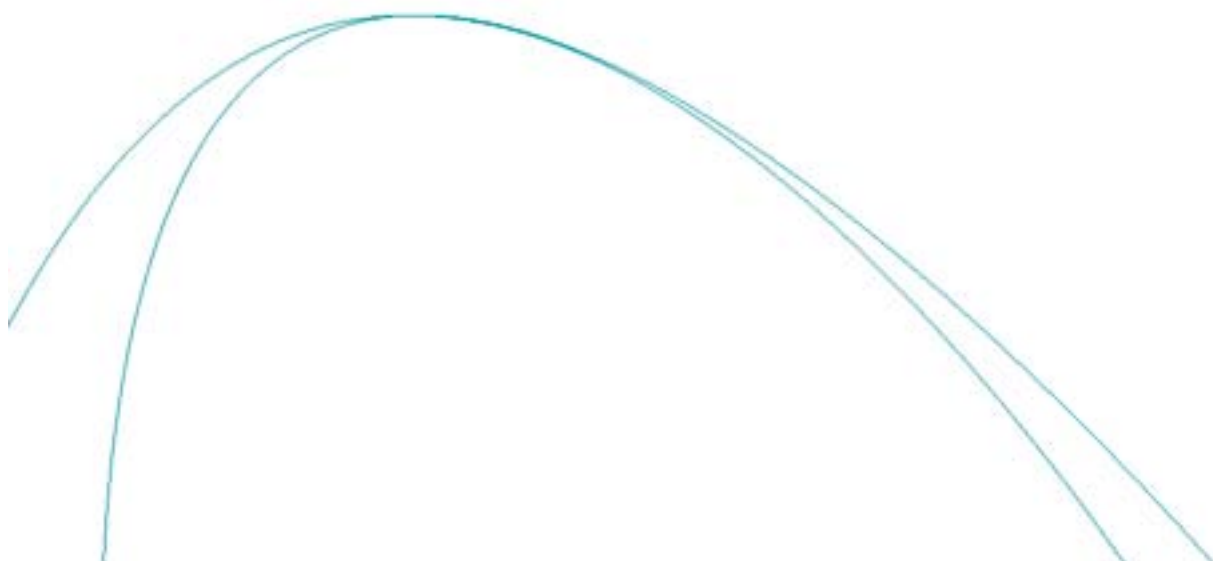


The Centre for Senior Policy

Since 1969 CSP has been engaged in running courses preparing workers for retirement. Now the efforts are directed towards a wider personnel policy area, including groups from age 45 and over, called "seniors".

The present purpose of CSP is to make individuals, companies and politicians aware of the benefits of accommodating workers over the age of 45, as they are an increasing proportion of the workforce. Through promoting research, awareness campaigns and by forging links between labour unions, employer associations and politicians, CSP encourages a wide range of activities whose aim is to reverse the growing trend towards early retirement.

Establishing "alliances" has been of the greatest importance. By stimulating activities, making people aware of personal and professional development, by encouraging training of seniors and of senior career planning, we hope to reduce their premature departure from the workforce, and to increase their ability to cope with change. Our aim is to build up an awareness of the potential of the senior workforce in the general personnel policy in Norway.

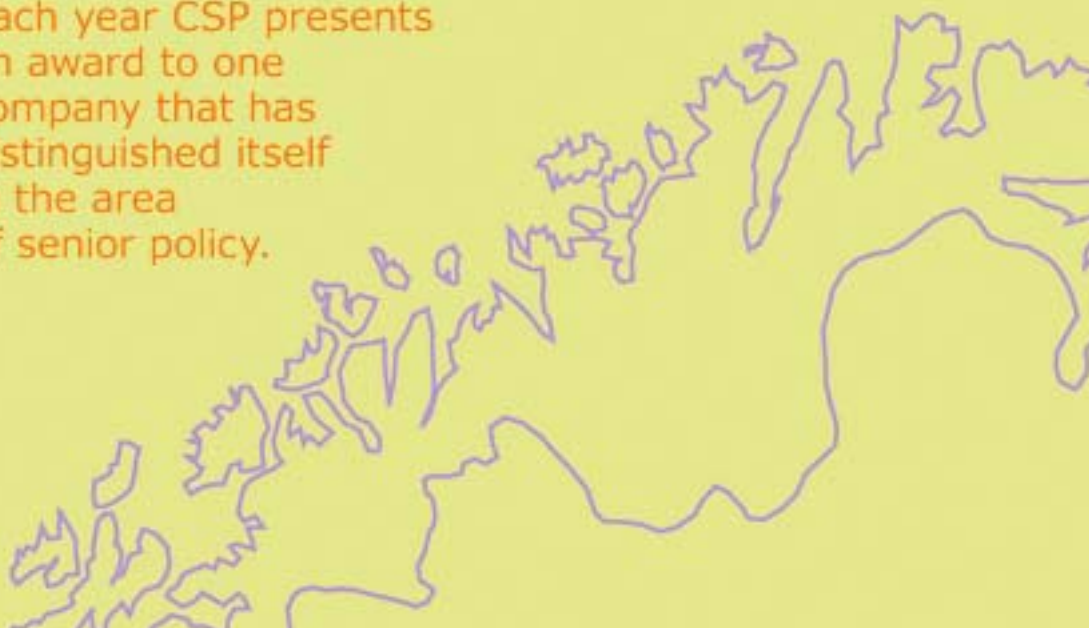


The principle aims of CSP are to

- promote awareness of the potentials and resources older employees have
- provide a better working environment for older workers
- develop age-related Human Resource Management and personnel policies
- create more cooperation concerning senior policy amongst labour, employer, government organisations and authorities



Each year CSP presents an award to one company that has distinguished itself in the area of senior policy.



The Norwegian Centre for Senior Policy (Senter for seniorpolitikk - SSP)
is a national centre situated in Oslo. The centre is financed by funds from the Norwegian
Government and through its own activities.



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