



Norway



Country Overview:

Location: Northern Europe, bordering the North Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, west of Sweden

Size: 323,802 sq km

Population: 4,722,701 (July 2013 est.)

Capital: Oslo

Exports-commodities: petroleum and petroleum products, machinery and equipment, metals, chemicals, ships, fish

Imports-commodities: machinery and equipment, chemicals, metals, foodstuffs

Currency: Norwegian Kroner (NOK)

Ethnic groups: Norwegian 94.4% (includes Sami, about 60,000), other European 3.6%, other 2%

Religion: Church of Norway (Evangelical Lutheran - official) 85.7%, Pentecostal 1%, Roman Catholic 1%, other Christian 2.4%, Muslim 1.8%, other 8.1% (2004)

Government type: constitutional monarchy

Chief of State: King HARALD V (since 17 January 1991)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Jens STOLTENBERG (since 17 October 2005)

Language: Bokmal Norwegian (official), Nynorsk Norwegian (official), small Sami- and Finnish-speaking minorities. Note: Sami is official in six municipalities



Kingdom of Norway / Kongeriket Norge

Meetings and Negotiations

-A firm but fairly brief handshake is the norm for both men and women.

-There is generally **no small talk** during business discussions, and Norwegians tend to dive right into the business discussions.

-Differences in rank and authority are much smaller in Norway than in many other European countries, so it may be more difficult to tell who the real decision makers are in an organization.

-Generally, decisions are very **consensus** driven, so it may take more time for one to be made.

- Being **overly friendly** at an initial meeting can be seen as a weakness.

-Send an agenda before the meeting so that your Norwegian colleagues can be prepared.

Business Attire

-**Men** will generally wear darker and more conservative suits with a tie.

-**Women** will also wear dark conservative business suits with few accessories.

-Norwegians highly value modesty, so overly flashy clothing is rarely seen.

- Having worn or unpolished shoes is very **frowned upon**.

Behavior

- **Punctuality** is extremely important, since it conveys trust and competence.

-Norwegians are not emotive speakers and their body language is **subtle**.

-Norwegians respect confident, self-assured businesspeople.

-Relationships **develop slowly** and depend upon the other person being professional and meeting all

agreed upon deadlines.

-They are conservative and deliberate speakers who do not appreciate being rushed.

Gift Giving

-Norway is **not** a gift-giving business culture, except for the occasional Christmas present or logo items.

-Make sure your gift is wrapped in **quality** paper.

-Gifts are generally opened when received.

-If giving flowers, make sure there is an **odd** number.

Appropriate Gifts:

- A bottle of cognac or whiskey after a successful negotiation

Gifts to Avoid:

- Lilies, carnations, wreaths (all used at funerals), and anything overly expensive which can be considered a bribe

Business Tips continued

Conversation

-Norwegians can be uncomfortably direct and honest.

-They do not need long-standing personal relationships in order to conduct business.

-Communication is straightforward and relies on facts.

-New concepts should be shown to be **high quality**, practical, and already market tested.

- It is considered extremely **rude** to interrupt someone while they are speaking.

- **Humility** is highly valued and talking about one's achievements is generally looked down upon.

-Gaps of **silence** are common

during conversation, it is best not to try to fill these gaps.

-Personal **space** is highly valued, and a little more than an arms length is appreciated.

Topics to Discuss: current events, famous Norwegians, the Nobel Prize

Topics to Avoid: money, talking too much about yourself

