The EU on the agenda in Norwegian municipalities and counties

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How do Norwegian municipalities and counties interact with the EU?

- They 1) execute and practice EU legislation; 2) they coordinate and align with EU policies on a more voluntary basis, and 3) participate in projects and activities that receive funding from the EU through EU programmes.

- «The agenda method»: A mapping of agenda points at county and municipal council meetings based on a representative selection of municipalities and regions.

- Enables an overview of how popularly elected representatives at the local and regional levels face the EU in their home environment.

- «Influence» = a link, a point of contact + resulting effects = a causal relationship.
Municipalities

- About half of the agenda points: no links
- About 48% of the agenda points are linked to EU policy, about 42% of the agenda points legally linked to EU legislation
- 10-11% of the agenda points have political links
Counties

- No links in about 52% of the agenda points. About 41% of the agenda points legally linked to the EU legislation.
- About 23% of the agenda points politically linked to the EU → more political links between the EU and the county councils, than at local level.
- Most affected policy areas are public aid, environment and climate, regional planning and transport.
Compared to Sweden and Denmark...

- Denmark: About 32% of the agenda points were legally connected, 18% politically connected.
- Sweden (2018): 22% of the agenda points had legal links to EU legislation while 25% had political links.
- Norway scores higher on legal links, lower on politically connected agenda points.
- Why the differences? Norway is not a member of the EU, which can explain the limited political connections. A possible explanation for legal differences: Variation between countries in agenda points and policy issues handled by the political level.
Which policy areas are connected?

Legal links by policy area

- Planning and building: 28
- Public aid: 20
- Public procurement, water, sanitation, waste management: 13
- Environment, climate, energy: 5
- Transport: 5
- Other issues: 20

NIBR
Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences
Torbjørn Klungland (Frp) forsøkte å stoppe at det interkommunale renovasjonsselskapet skulle bli åkjeselskap.

**Kritisk til søppel-AS**

**Av SVEN ØVLAND**

Siden daglig leder Kjetil Vaagen i IRS MIJa NS (P) er i en konflikt over regnskapet på selskapet, mener han at det er et farlig tilfelle. Han mener at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte. Dessuten mener han at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte. Dessuten mener han at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte. Dessuten mener han at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte. Dessuten mener han at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte.

**DELE OPP:** Klungland vil se om det er alternativer som kan være tilgangelige for hans kommuner.

**USYTE GJENOMFRØING:**

- Det er viktig å opprette et selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte.
- Et selskap som håndterer industrielle avfall kan være en løsning på problemet.
- Dessuten mener han at det er viktig å opprette et nytt selskap for å håndtere industrielle avfall på en sikrere måte.
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**Source:** Agder Avis

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**An example**

**Sirdal Municipal Council Meeting, 11.05.2017**

**Proposal to reorganize IRS Environment**

The agenda point contains a proposal to reorganize a renovation company from an inter-municipal company to a new, limited company, proposal for new statutes and shareholders’ agreement between the owner municipalities. According to the agenda point, it is regarded as a case of illegal state aid pursuant to the EEA Legal Act’s provisions, to have an inter-municipal company collect and manage industrial waste.
Example of a mixed agenda point

Bærum municipality, 31.05.2017

Urban planning and development of Sandvika city centre, east

An urban planning and development project of a part of a city centre.

- EIA and SEA-directives on environmental impact assessments and planning programs, consultation etc.
- The use of development agreements is regulated by public procurement.
- Environmental issues like noise and air quality linked to EU directives.

The municipality has adopted an environmental friendly zero-emission vision for the planning project and the rest of the city. Collaborates with FutureBult, a national strategy closely aligned to the climate objectives of the EU + the circular economy strategy,
Political connections between the EU and municipalities /regions

- The most involved policy areas: Financial management, regional and municipal planning, environment and climate, schooling and education and transport.

- But: environment and climate issues affect municipalities and counties/regions as a cross-cutting policy area, both for legal links and political links.

- Norway has not implemented the «LIFE» programme: Norwegian subnational authorities «lack» a governance instrument in EU policy implementation.

- Surprisingly few agenda points concerned participation in projects funded by EU programmes.

- The political links reveal that local and regional authorities look to the EU, apply EU policies and/or compare with EU objectives in their own case handling and policy development.
Troms County Council Meeting 14.03.2017

Adoption of “Strategy for maritime industrial and commercial development in the county of Troms:"

“Our perspective of Troms, the markets in Europe are interesting. The EU’s recently adopted “Arctic Strategy” indicates that the EU needs competence regarding the Arctic, as well as cooperation with actors in the region”

Among the priorities of the strategy:

- Request Northern Norway’s EU office in Brussels to be updated on the maritime industries in Northern Norway, and promote the industry in Europe, including identify possibilities and activities vis-a-vis the EU.
- Included in climate change adaptation is enhanced international cooperation, and to seek participation in international development projects supported by the EU, for instance Horizon 2020
Some final remarks:

- Many «work process provisions» (procurement, spatial planning and building) → the EU regulates how to organize the work process. Such process provisions affect:

- The governance process: A common perception is that EU legislation decides common objectives and regulates what, but leaves to the member states to decide how. This is gradually changing.

- The municipal – private relationship: provisions on consultations processes, environmental impact assessments, etc. that organize private contributions into the governance process. Provisions on public aid and procurement which regulate the relationship → development of tools like development agreements

- What do we need to know more about? How do local and regional authorities coordinate between multiple principals?