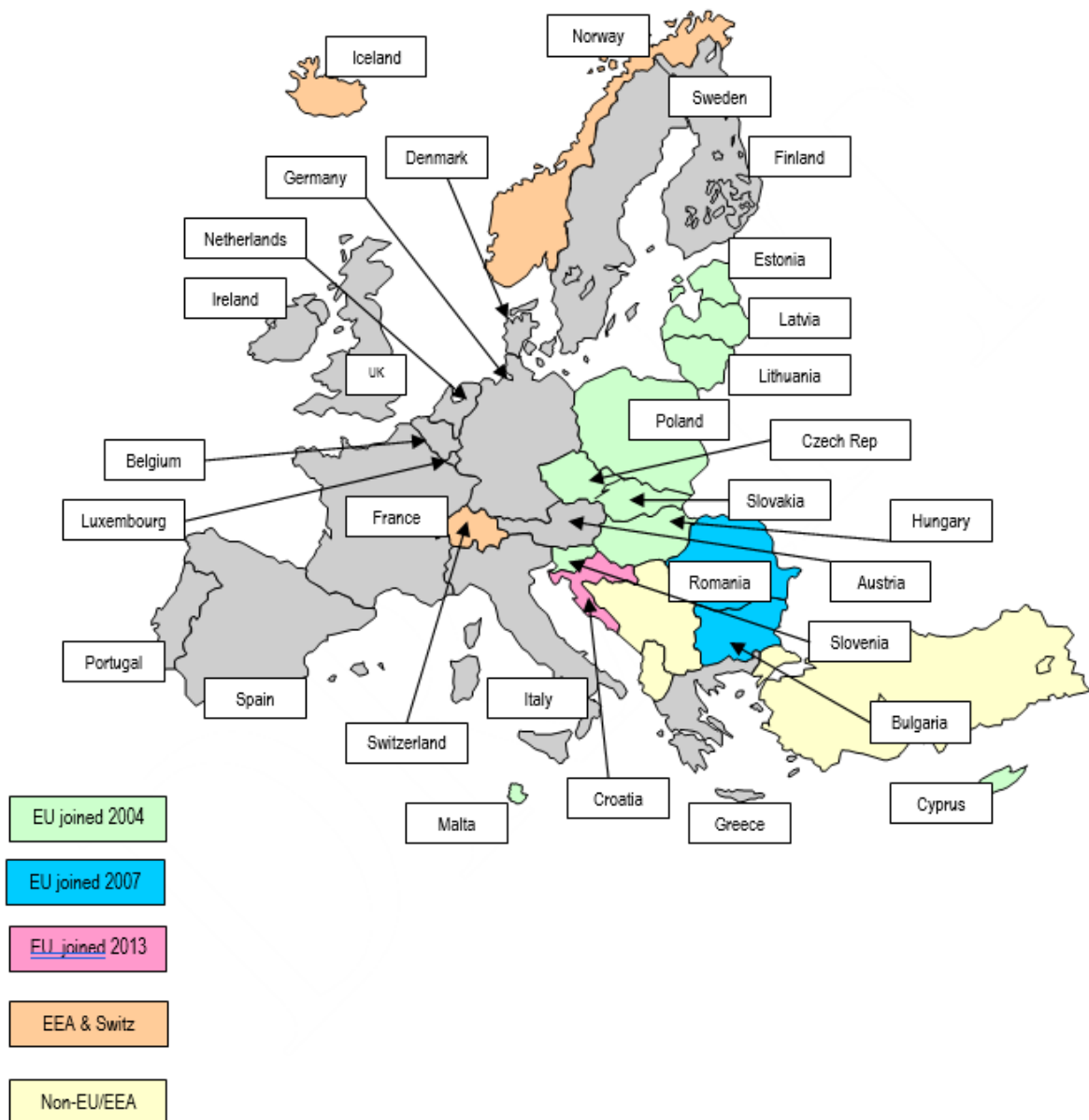


Council of European Dentists

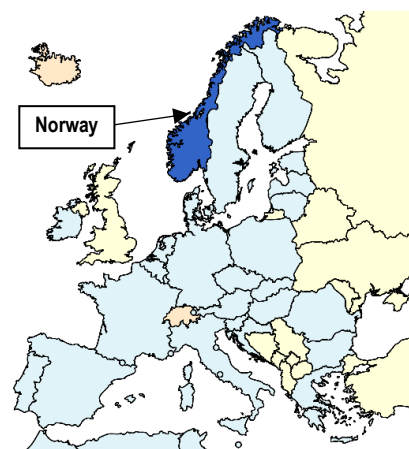
MANUAL OF DENTAL PRACTICE 2026

Norway





Norway



In the EEA since	1994
Population (January 2026)	5 627 400
GDP PPP per capita (2024)	932 583 NOK (or €86.614)
Currency	Norwegian Kroner (NOK) 10.80 NOK = €1 (2026)
Official language	Norwegian
The Norwegian health care system is semi-decentralised and follows Universal Health Care principles. Municipalities are responsible for primary, long-term care and social services, and four Regional Health Authorities for specialist care. The system is primarily funded through general taxation. Oral healthcare is partly or fully covered for a very limited number of targeted groups.	
Free dental care is provided by the Public Dental Health Service (PDHS) to children up to 18 and some other selected groups. For young adults up to 28 years, the PDHS render heavily subsidized oral healthcare (75 % discount). For the rest of the adult population, there is no subsidised oral care under the PDHS and only very limited reimbursement of private oral healthcare under the National Insurance Scheme (Helfo). For 15 listed diseases, conditions and injuries, the treatment cost will be partly reimbursed to a varying extent from Helfo.	
Number of active dentists (<i>data only for NDA members</i>)	5 133
(Active) dentist to population ratio (per 100 000)	91,2
Members of Dental Association (including retired dentists and students)	6 646
Practising dental specialists and dental auxiliaries are widespread in Norway, with 8 recognised specialities and 3 recognised dental auxiliaries. CPD is not a legal requirement but is mandatory for all members of the Norwegian Dental Association.	

Date of last revision: 08 June 2026

Government and healthcare in Norway

Norway is a parliamentary representative democratic constitutional monarchy. The country is divided into 15 administrative regions and 357 municipalities. The national parliament, the Storting, consists of 169 elected members.

The general healthcare system in Norway is based on universal healthcare principles. All citizens and legal residents (with a minimum 12 months' stay) are entitled to a broad package of state-funded general health services. Oral healthcare is mostly excluded for the adult population from the package of services, with dental care delivered through a separate system.

		Year	Source
% GDP spent on all healthcare	9.7	2025	OECD
% of this spent by public funding	86	2025	SSB Norway
% GDP spent on dental care	0,4	2025	SSB Norway

A total of 4 741 105 000 NOK was spent on dental healthcare in 2024 (= €440 331 549).

Oral healthcare in Norway is divided between the public and the private sectors. The Public Dental Health Service (PDHS) provides dental care to priority groups, while the majority of the adult population access oral healthcare through private practitioners, typically paid out of pocket, and less commonly supported by private voluntary health insurance. In restricted cases of specific diseases, conditions, and injuries, part of the cost may be covered by the National Insurance Scheme (Helfo).

Over an estimated 70% of the total oral healthcare expenditure is financed directly by the patients.

Public Dental Health Service (PDHS, *Den Offentlige Tannhelsetjenesten*)

Regional counties are responsible for the delivery of the Public Dental Health Service (PDHS). Each county has a Chief Dental Officer who oversees the PDHS in the county. The PDHS offers free dental examinations or subsidised treatments to targeted priority groups.

Other groups, including the general adult population, may also access oral healthcare under the PDHS, conditional to available capacity, and with all costs borne by patients.

The six groups entitled to oral healthcare under the PDHS are:

- Children 0-18 years old (free dental care, excluding orthodontics. Orthodontic treatment is mainly carried out by specialists in private clinics on referral from a dentist or a dental hygienist in the PDHS. Part of the orthodontic treatment is covered by the National Insurance Scheme).
- People with mental disabilities
- Elderly people or people with long term illness or disabilities, who receive domiciliary care for more than 3 months or live in a care institution.
- Young adults aged 19-28 (with a 75% discount on dental examinations and treatments under the PDHS)
- Drug addicts who receive certain services from the authorities

- Prison inmates

The PDHS in each county may also give rights to dental health care to other defined groups. In addition, the PDHS is also obliged to give some level of limited oral health care to refugees and asylum seekers, victims of torture and abuse, and in some cases, people with odontophobia.

The eligibility of each person is determined case by case, including the need to consult a psychologist and carry-out diagnostic screening.

In 2024, approximately 29% of the Norwegian population, or approximately 1,6 million people, accessed oral healthcare services under the PDHS, including 100 000 non-priority patients who paid fully for received treatments.

National Insurance Scheme (Helfo)

In general, there is no reimbursement for dental treatments under the **National Insurance Scheme** (Helfo).

However, there are a number of exemptions to the general rule. People affected by one of the following 15 diseases, conditions and injuries are entitled to some level of reimbursement for oral healthcare under Helfo:

1. Rare medical condition (listed by the health authorities)
2. Cleft of the lip, jaw or palate
3. Oral cancer
4. Immune system depression
5. Diseases/anomalies in the mouth and jaw
6. Treatment and rehabilitation of marginal periodontitis
7. Tooth development disorders
8. Orthodontic treatment
9. Severe pathological attrition
10. Hyposalivation
11. Allergic reactions to dental restorative materials
12. Approved occupational injury/trauma
13. Dental injury/trauma due to accident (not approved occupational injury/trauma)
14. Severely reduced capacity for self-care for individuals who have a permanent illness or functional impairment
15. Total or partial tooth loss and no original teeth in the lower jaw

The respective dentist or dental hygienist carrying out the treatment is responsible for assessing whether the patient falls under the eligibility criteria and thus is entitled to reimbursement under the scheme. If so, the dentists/dental hygienists deduct the reimbursement amount when charging the patient and then claim the amount directly from Helfo.

Additionally, for some treatments set out in the list above, a high-cost protection scheme also defines a maximum amount that can be paid for a determined list of health services, including diseases and anomalies in the mouth and jaw, examinations prior to jaw orthopaedic treatment, treatment and rehabilitation of marginal periodontitis and examinations prior to orthodontic treatment. For 2026, the established maximum amount was NOK 3 278 (€ 304). Helfo will cover the rest of the treatment cost for expenses exceeding this set amount.

There is also a family reduction, for families with more than one child in need of orthodontic treatment.

In some cases, municipalities also help cover dental fees for low-income individuals, on a case-by-case basis through state social insurance.

Education, Training and Registration

Undergraduate Education and Training

To enter dental school in Norway, applicants must have a general matriculation standard – in other terms they have to fulfil the minimum admission requirements, including completing higher secondary school, with advanced courses in mathematics, physics and chemistry.

The undergraduate dental course is entitled “Master’s degree in Dentistry” and is taught in Norwegian.

Depending on the school, the 8th semester of study may be partly taught in English, with classes open to Erasmus students.

Year of data	2025
Number of schools	3
Student intake (2025)	169
Number of graduates a year	152
% of incoming female students	76%
% of female graduates	82%
Duration of studies	5

Undergraduate students study for 5 years in one of 3 dental schools at the University of Oslo (UiO), the University of Bergen (UiB) and the Arctic University of Norway (UiT) in Tromsø.

Studies are divided between preclinical and clinical training semesters. The first 2–2.5 semesters are jointly taught with medical and clinical nutrition students from the Faculty of Medicine and focus on basic medical sciences, social sciences, and methodology, as well as an initial introduction to practical and laboratory work. The end of the 3rd semester introduces dentistry topics, and the 5th and 6th semesters focus on practical training in pre-clinical simulation centres and some clinical training on patients.

From semesters 7 to 10, teaching mainly focuses on clinical subjects. Clinical training on patients in university clinics or external clinics in the public or private sector forms a substantial and integrated part of the activities. During this period, students are also required to write their master’s thesis.

There are no private dental schools. There were an estimated 773 undergraduates in total for the 5-year undergraduate course in 2025.

The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) is an independent body under the Ministry of Education.

Registration

Graduates must register with the Norwegian Directorate of Health to get their licence to practice as a dentist. After the age of 80 a dentist’s registration can only be renewed if the practitioner is considered fit to continue practising.

The applicant must provide a doctor’s certificate confirming fitness to practise in order for their registration to be renewed.

Such renewals are also administered by the Directorate of Health. Registration can be suspended for other reasons such as serious mental illness, being away from practice for a long period of time, or for “unworthy behaviour”.

Cost of registration		
-	Graduates from Norway, EU/EEA	NOK 2 500 (€ 231,5)
-	Graduates from outside EU/EEA	NOK 3 500 (€ 324,1)

Norway is part of the EEA Agreement. EEA or EU qualified dentists may therefore practice in Norway after registering with and having received their formal licence from the Directorate of Health. As part of the registration and automatic recognition process, applicants must attach a certificate of conformity of the diploma from the home country’s competent authority as well as a certificate of current professional status (right to the profession). This certificate must be issued by the competent authority in the national’s home country or in a country where the professional has practiced, be in English and not be older than three months.

Non-EEA dentists must apply to the Directorate of Health for recognition. They must submit the required documentation mentioned above, as well as their dental school’s curriculum, and subject content. Applicants whose qualifications are considered equivalent, or otherwise have proven to possess the necessary skills, will receive confirmation that they can proceed with their application and will be notified of which additional requirements have to be fulfilled within a three-year period. The requirements include passing an approved language test at B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), a proficiency test for dentists, and a course on Norwegian health services, health legislation, and society, including the safe handling of medicines.

Vocational Training (VT)

Vocational training is integrated into pre-qualification requirements under undergraduate dental studies. In Tromsø, Bergen and Oslo, clinical training is carried out either at the university clinics or in external public or private clinics.

Language requirements

Although there are no formal language requirements or examinations, dentists must be proficient in Norwegian or another Scandinavian language in order to comply with the statutory requirement to maintain patient records in a Scandinavian language.

Dentists with qualifications from non-EU/EEA countries must pass a CEFR language test, with a minimum of a B2 level in Norwegian.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Norway does not have official legal requirements for dentists to carry-out mandatory CPD. In order to maintain a certain level of professional standards, the Norwegian Dental Association

(NDA) requires a mandatory 20 hours of CPD to be completed every year for all working NDA members.

Specialist Training Requirements

Graduates may apply for full-time post-graduate training in 8 different specialities. Training is delivered by all three universities. Norway also recognises Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery as a medical speciality. Dental specialist training takes place in universities, faculty clinical hospitals and at public Regional Dental Competence Centres, without remuneration.

- Oral surgery – 5 years
- Orthodontics – 3 years
- Endodontics – 3 years
- Paediatric dentistry – 3 years
- Periodontology – 3 years
- Prosthodontics – 3 years
- Maxillofacial radiology – 3 years
- Multidisciplinary Odontology - 3 years

The Norwegian Directorate of Health approves the admission of specialists and is the competent authority issuing licences to practice to specialist dentists.

Workforce

Dentists

The number of dental graduates from Norwegian universities has remained stable over the past few years.

However, according to the Norwegian Dental Association, recent shifts are observed in the number of dentists in the private sector transitioning to dental chains. The numbers consist of both individual practitioners who have sold their practice to a chain and self-employed dentists who have entered into a contract to work for a dental chain. Very few dentists in the private sector are employed.

The overall workforce in the private dental sector has therefore been increasingly divided between small and medium practices, and dental chains. The most prominent chains are owned by international investment funds.

Currently it is estimated that approximately 20-25% of dentists in the private sector are working in dental chains. Furthermore, it is estimated that dental chains serve approximately 25-30% of the dental market in Norway.

Year of data	2025
Total Registered (including retired dentists and students)	≈ 6646
In active practice (2025) *	5 133
In the private sector	≈ 3 500
Dentist to population ratio (per 100 000 inhab) *	91.2
Percentage female	63%
<i>The data above only reflects members of the Norwegian Dental Association</i>	
<i>* Active dentists only</i>	

Movement of dentists across borders

Approximately 21% of dentists, members of the Norwegian Dental Association, are foreign-trained.

Quality assurance is provided by the Regional County Governors (Statsforvalter) and the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision (Helsefagssynet). These institutions carry out random spot checks on dental clinics and process patient complaints.

Specialists

In Norway, eight dental specialities are recognised.

Multidisciplinary Odontology is the latest recognised speciality by the Norwegian Health Authorities in May 2022.

This is an interdisciplinary speciality dedicated to providing integrated oral and dental care to adults with extensive oral care needs, including further complex and other health co-morbidities (such as, for example, further medical or psychiatric conditions, as well as reduced functional ability, behavioural issues or geriatric dependency).

Oral surgeons work either in public hospitals, universities or in private practices. Most orthodontists work in private practices. Very few are employed in the Public Dental Health Service (PDHS). Paediatric dentists and dental maxillofacial radiologists work mostly in the PDHS while endodontists, periodontists and

prosthodontists primarily work in private practices and either part- or full-time in universities.

There are no major geographical disparities observed in the availability of dental specialists across the country, apart from an existing urban-rural divide.

The data below represents the number of "active" specialists, and only members of the Norwegian Dental Association.

All specialist groups, except for multidisciplinary odontologists, have their own associations under the Norwegian Dental Association umbrella.

Year of data	2025
Oral Surgeons	99
Orthodontists	205
Endodontists	94
Paediatric Dentists	37
Periodontologists	99
Prosthodontists	87
Maxillofacial Radiologists	18
Multidisciplinary Odontology specialists	5
<i>The data above only reflects members of the Norwegian Dental Association</i>	

Patients do not generally need referral to consult a specialist. It may however be required in certain cases in order to get subsidized dental care from the National Insurance Scheme (Helfo).

Auxiliaries

There are 3 types of dental auxiliary:

- Dental hygienists
- Dental technicians
- Chairside assistants (or dental secretaries)

All dental auxiliaries have to be registered with the Norwegian Directorate of Health.

Year of data	2024
Technicians	633
Chairside assistants	5 093 *
Hygienists	1803
<i>*not including non-authorised dental chairside assistants</i>	

Dental Technicians

Technicians undertake 3 years of training at the University of Oslo. They fabricate fixed and removable prosthetic appliances that are then placed by dentists.

Technicians normally work in commercial laboratories and charge dentists for their services. Some work as employees in dental clinics. They do not deal directly with the public but take legal responsibility for their own work within the scope of their licence.

Dental Chairside Assistants

Dental assistants have to undertake 3 years of education and training in high school in order to obtain a licence.

Dental Hygienists

To be admitted to training as a hygienist, the applicant must have completed higher secondary school. Dental hygienists undertake 3 years of education and training at Hygienist Schools, which are located at the Universities of Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø or Innlandet (Elverum).

Dental hygienists normally work together with dentists, as salaried employees or are self-employed through a contract with a dental clinic. They work both in private and public clinics. They may also work alone in their own private practice. They are authorised to diagnose as well as treat conditions covered by their undergraduate curriculum (mostly prophylaxis, public health and may diagnose periodontal or caries disease). Hygienists can undertake local infiltration anaesthesia, if they have carried out special training.

Other Useful Information

Main national associations

National dental associations and professional journal	
Norwegian Dental Association	The Norwegian Dental Journal (<i>Den norske tannlegeforenings Tidende</i>)
PO Box 2073 Vika N-0125 Oslo Norway Phone: +47 22 54 74 00 Email: post@tannlegeforeningen.no Website: www.tannlegeforeningen.no Contact details for each respective specialist dental association (with the exception of the specialty of Multidisciplinary Odontology) can be obtained from the Norwegian Dental Association.	PO Box 2073 Vika N – 0125 OSLO Norway Phone: +44 22 54 74 00 Email: tidende@tannlegeforeningen.no Website: https://www.tannlegetidende.no/ The Norwegian Dental Journal (Tidende) is a peer-reviewed journal and membership magazine of the Norwegian Dental Association. It publishes articles on new developments in odontology as well as information concerning dental political issues, international developments, interviews and a variety of useful information for members concerning for example new laws and regulations.

Competent authorities

Norwegian Directorate of Health <i>Helsedirektoratet</i>	The Ministry of Health and Care Services <i>Helse- og omsorgsdepartementet (HOD)</i>
PO Box 220 Skøyen N -0213 Oslo Norway Phone: + 47 47 47 20 20 Email: postmottak@helsedir.no Website: https://www.helsedirektoratet.no/english	PO Box 8011 Dep N – 0030 Oslo Norway Phone: +47 22 24 90 90 Email: postmottak@hod.dep.no Website: https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/hod/id421/
Helfo – The Norwegian Health Economics Administration	The Norwegian Board of Health Supervision
PO Box 2415 N – 3104 Tønsberg Norway Phone: +47 23 32 70 00 Email: post@helfo.no Website: https://www.helfo.no/om-helfo/om-helfo/about-helfo	PO Box. 231 Skøyen N – 0213 Oslo Phone: (+47) 21 52 99 00 Email: postmottak@helsetilsynet.no Website: https://www.helsetilsynet.no/en/

Dental Schools:

Public Universities	
University of Oslo – Faculty of Dentistry	University of Bergen – Department of Clinical Dentistry
Geitmyrsveien 69/71 PO Box 1142 Blindern N - 0317 Oslo Phone: +47 22 85 20 00 Email: postmottak@odont.uio.no Email (study programme): studiekonsulent@odont.uio.no Website: http://www.odont.uio.no Available programmes: - Master of Dentistry (undergraduate training) - Bachelor in Dental Health (Dental Hygiene) Language of study: Norwegian	Det medisinsk-odontologiske fakultet Institutt for klinisk odontologi PO Box 7804 N - 5020 Bergen Norway Phone: +47 55 58 66 00 E-mail: post@iko.uib.no Website: https://www.uib.no/en/dentistry Available programmes: - Master of Dentistry (undergraduate training) - Bachelor of Dental Hygiene - Language of Study: Norwegian
The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) – Department of Clinical Dentistry (Tromsø)	
UiT Noregs arktiske universitet Det helsevitenskapelige fakultet Institutt for klinisk odontologi UiT Noregs arktiske universitet PO Box 6050 Stakkevollan N - 9037 Tromsø Norway Tel: +47 77 64 40 00 E-mail: postmottak@uit.no Website: http://uit.no/odontologi Website (English): https://en.uit.no/startside	