

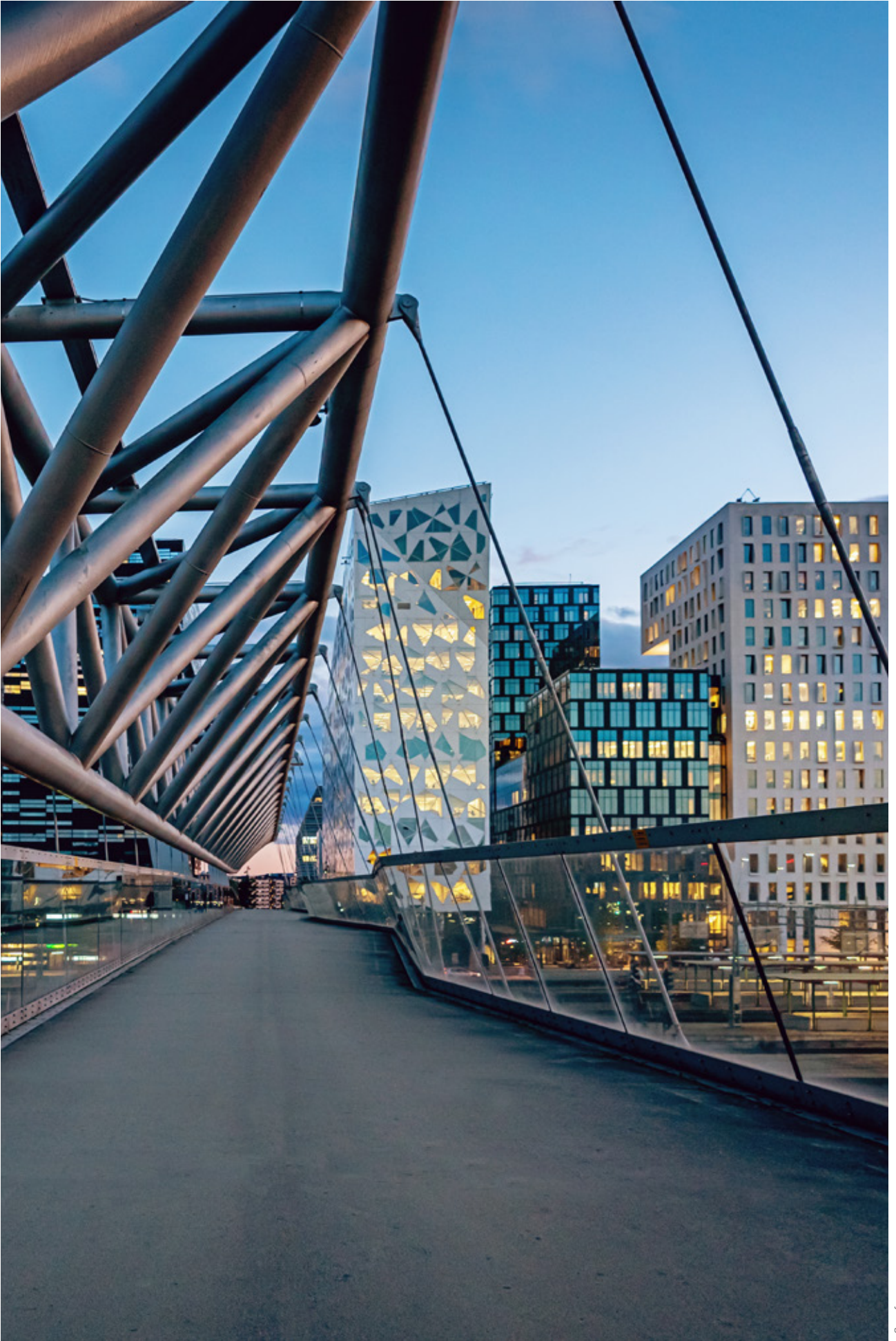


Norwegian Ministries

Action Plan

The Norwegian Government's action plan for export





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1. PREFACE

Norway's prosperity depends on the Norwegian business community having access to international markets in order to buy and sell goods and services. Exports contribute to value creation in Norway. The Norwegian economy and business community currently find themselves in an extraordinary situation. Norway has been through an economic downturn, and there have been signs of increasing protectionism, less predictable market access and increasing competition in our export markets for some time now. In addition, the global economy and business community are at the start of a significant transition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The coronavirus pandemic, which began to spread in early 2020 and subsequent measures to prevent infections, have led to a dramatic decline in global demand for goods and services. The resulting economic crisis has led to significant adverse impacts on Norwegian exports and the operations of Norwegian companies abroad. The reduced demand internationally particularly affects businesses which operate in competitive markets. In addition, lower oil prices have led to cutbacks in investments in the petroleum sector and a reduction in demand for services from the supply sector. Jobs have been lost. National furlough schemes, compensation schemes and increased grants for technological development, innovation and restructuring have all been essential measures to help both large and small export companies across the country through the crisis. Internationally, Norway's export-oriented policy instruments have helped Norwegian businesses and their employees to handle challenges and issues arising from the coronavirus crisis. However, the crisis also presents new opportunities. Some industries are experiencing an increase in demand, and the crisis is likely to accelerate the work towards a green and digital shift, both in Norway and in other countries.

Against this backdrop, the Government is presenting an action plan for exports. The aim of this action plan is to maximise value creation within a sustainable framework. Increased exports and international trade are not goals in themselves, but an instrument for achieving the goal of increased value creation. Exports

have impact on value creation through many channels and mechanisms. The measures set out in this export action plan is meant to contribute to more competitive businesses being able to export goods and services which are in demand in the global markets. The aim is to boost value creation in Norway and ensure that Norwegian exports help to build up the Norwegian business community in the wake of the coronavirus crisis.

The Government presented its "*Strategy for Export and Internationalisation*" in 2017. This export strategy remains in force and aims to ensure that Norway strengthens and develops its position as a trading nation, partly by securing market access, increasing exports from existing export industries, facilitating new export industries, attracting foreign investment to Norway and streamlining and targeting policy instruments. The measures set out in this action plan build on the export strategy in light of the new challenges and opportunities we now face as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

To boost Norwegian exports, we must to a greater extent focus on strategic initiatives than is currently the case. Our ambition should be to promote industries with competitive advantages and show and connect them with specific opportunities in the global markets. Businesses, industry organisations, clusters, public policy instruments and the foreign service possess valuable expertise as to opportunities in the markets and knowledge of Norwegian competitive advantages.

In order to achieve the goal of boosting value-creating exports, it is essential to draw on this expertise in a simpler and more effective way, so that we can work together towards common prioritized areas. In a dialogue with the business community, we will therefore look at how public services can best be aligned to help businesses seize opportunities where they are willing to invest time and money. In this way, the business community and the public instruments will collectively help to ensure that we get the right industry to the right market at the right time. To support these strategic initiatives, we are proposing to step up the state's efforts to promote exports, an initiative we will return to in the National Budget for 2021.

We will make greater use of the clusters and networks in our export work, and we will restructure the public export financing system to ensure that our financing schemes for value-added exports become even more effective. The business community's access to international capital and expertise will be secured through further initiatives from Invest In Norway, and

we will also become better at exploiting the major export opportunities that are inherent in the EEA Agreement. Good and predictable market access forms the basis for everything we want to achieve within the field of exports. We are therefore giving priority to further development of international trade regulations, simpler and more flexible flows of goods and services and, last but not least, negotiating more trade agreements and also make better use of them.

The Government has received extensive feedback and inputs while drafting the action plan, and many consultation meetings have taken place. Several of the comments received have resulted in measures being proposed in the action plan. The comments have also highlighted the importance of powerful, swift and targeted measures to counteract the economic consequences of the coronavirus crisis. We greatly appreciate this input and look forward to productive collaboration during the implementation of the measures in the action plan.



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