AI Policy and Regulations of Norway

Comprehensive Report

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Introduction

Norway, officially the Kingdom of Norway, is a Nordic country located on the Scandinavian peninsula in northern Europe. With the North Sea to the west and the Barents Sea to the north, Norway has land borders only to the east—with Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The country is characterized by its mountainous terrain, with about two-thirds of Norway being mountainous, and its much-indented coastline carved by deep glacial fjords, alongside some 50,000 islands. Norway has a population of approximately 5.5 million people and is one of the most sparsely populated countries in Europe. It operates as a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system, where King Harald V serves as the head of state and Jonas Gahr Støre as the prime minister. The Norwegian economy features a combination of free market activity and government intervention, with the government controlling key areas such as the petroleum sector. Norway is not a member of the European Union but is linked to the EU through the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. The country is richly endowed with natural resources including petroleum, hydropower, fish, forests, and minerals, and has one of the world's highest standards of living.

1. Recent Legal Regulations (2020–2025)

Merger and Acquisition Regulatory Framework: Norway's M&A transactions are governed by a comprehensive statutory framework consisting of the Private Limited Liability Companies Act ("LLCA"), the Public Limited Liability Companies Act ("PLLCA"), and the Partnership Act. For companies listed on regulated marketplaces in Norway, such as the Oslo Stock Exchange (OSE), tender offers and transactions are subject to the Securities Trading Act (STA) and the Securities Trading Regulation (STR). This corporate-specific framework is supplemented by various general regulations found in the Contracts Act, the Sale of Goods Act, the Accounting Act, and the Income Tax Act. As a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Area (EEA), Norway has implemented most EU regulations pertaining to M&A transactions into Norwegian law. This implementation subjects cross-border transactions within the EU involving publicly listed companies to antitrust regulations enforced by the European Commission (EC) and the EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA).

Implementation of EU Regulations: Norway has implemented several key EU regulations into its legal framework, including the Prospectus Regulation, the Takeover Directive, the Transparency Directive, and MiFID II (Directive 2014/65/EU on markets in financial instruments). The Market Abuse Regulation (MAR) has also been incorporated into Norwegian law, replacing the previous Market Abuse Directive. Since September 2022, derivatives with shares as underlying instruments, regardless of whether they are cash-settled or settled by physical delivery, are counted when calculating disclosure thresholds for shareholdings. This change represents a significant update to the regulatory framework governing financial instruments and market transparency in Norway.

Sector-Specific Regulations: The Norwegian Financial Institution Act regulates acquisitions of banks, insurance companies, and other financial institutions, maintaining an approval regime for shareholdings exceeding 10%. Such acquisitions must be notified to the Norwegian Financial Supervisory Authority and require approval from the Ministry of Finance, with further approvals needed when ownership exceeds 20%, 30%, and 50%. Additionally, the National Security Act grants the Government powers to intervene and stop acquisitions of shares in companies holding investments in sectors vital to Norwegian national security. As of July 1, 2023, the government received extended competence to apply the National Security Act to more businesses, and the threshold for subjecting businesses to ownership control under this Act has been lowered.

Digital and Environmental Regulations: In 2025, amendments to the E-Com Act introduced stricter requirements for obtaining user consent before setting cookies or other online tracking technologies. Norway has also established a national goal that all new cars sold by 2025 should be zero-emission vehicles, either electric or hydrogen-powered. This commitment to environmental sustainability aligns with Norway's broader policy goals of reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to greener technologies. Additionally, minor changes to employment laws were introduced on January 1, 2025, including updates to regulations on staffing agencies and sick leave benefits.

2. Government AI Action Plan

Strategic Vision and Objectives: In January 2020, the Norwegian government presented its National AI Strategy with the objective of outlining policy actions to maximize the opportunities that artificial intelligence can bring to individuals, businesses, industry, and the public sector. The strategy adopts the definition of AI set out by the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group, describing AI systems as those that act in physical or digital dimensions by perceiving their environment, processing information, and deciding actions to achieve given goals. Norway aims to take a leading position in developing and applying AI with respect for individual rights and freedoms, viewing this approach as a key advantage in global competition.

Education and Skills Development: A core element of Norway's AI strategy is expanding education programs and workplace training in the field of AI to create a solid foundation of digital skills and capabilities. The government has reformed curricula at primary and secondary education levels to include more programming and computational thinking. At the tertiary level, the number of ICT-related study places has increased by more than 2,150 compared to 2014, with dedicated AI programs being developed at bachelor and master levels. Comprehensive education opportunities are also being offered to schoolteachers through centers such as the Centre for Computing in Science Education and the Centre for Teaching and Learning in Science and Technology. Recognizing that AI will bring changes to many jobs, the strategy highlights the importance of upskilling, reskilling, and lifelong learning.

Research and Innovation Support: The Norwegian Research Council allocated a budget of EUR 145.7 million to research, innovation, and advanced ICT applications in 2018, with 40 percent of budget allocations to ICT research in 2019 targeting projects related to AI, robotics, and big data. The Norwegian Centre for Research-Based Artificial Intelligence Innovation (SFI NorwAI) was launched in 2020 as a new research center on AI and big data, developing cutting-edge theories, methods, and technologies for efficient and responsible use of data-driven AI. To enhance innovation capacity using AI, the government is facilitating the development of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) to help small and medium-sized enterprises get started with applying AI. Organizations like DigitalNorway help businesses in their digital transformation and provide guidance throughout the innovation process.

Ethical Framework and Data Infrastructure: Norway's AI strategy emphasizes that artificial intelligence should be built on ethical principles and respect for human rights and democracy. The government aims to promote responsible, accountable, transparent, and trustworthy AI while safeguarding the integrity and privacy of individuals. Guidelines for trustworthy use of AI are being developed in line with recommendations made by the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence. The strategy also focuses on constructing a strong data infrastructure ensuring open data and data sharing across sectors and business areas. The Norwegian language bank at the National Library provides dedicated opportunities for language data resources.

Investment Focus Areas and Infrastructure: Norway plans to invest in AI in areas where it has distinctive advantages, such as health, seas and oceans, public administration, oil and gas, energy, and mobility. The government will facilitate world-class AI infrastructure in Norway through digitalization-friendly regulations, good language resources, fast and robust communication networks, and sufficient computing power. The Work on communication infrastructure, particularly 5G networks, is a priority area, and access to computing power will be secured through national and international resources for high-performance computing. The government is also facilitating the development of data centers in Norway, offering scalable access to renewable energy for such enterprises.

3. Intellectual Property & Data Usage

Intellectual Property Legal Framework: Norway has established several laws that protect intellectual property rights, including the Copyright Act, the Trademarks Act, and the Designs Act. The Intellectual Property Office in Norway issues the trademarks of businesses registered in the country.

Data Protection Regulations: Norway, as an EEA Member State, applies the GDPR following its adoption by the EEA Joint Committee through Decision 154/2018. The Norwegian Personal Data Act (personopplysningsloven) is the primary data protection and privacy regulation, which supplements the European General Data Protection Regulation. This act was implemented on July 20, 2018, and governs the processing of personal data wholly or partly by automated means. The Norwegian Personal Data Act 2018 closely aligns with the EU's GDPR while enhancing data protection with specific national variations. Under this framework, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority may authorize the processing of sensitive personal data where the processing is in the public interest.

Marketing and Consent Requirements: According to the Marketing Control Act, Norwegian consumers may opt out of marketing by telephone or addressed post by registering in the Central Marketing Exclusion Register. Consumers and natural persons may also opt out by contacting traders directly to stop receiving marketing communications. The Electronic Communications Act regulates the use of cookies on websites in section 2-7 b, implementing the requirements of the ePrivacy Directive. Additionally, the Working Environment Act regulates important aspects of processing personal data in the workplace, particularly regarding the use of control measures.

Data Sharing Principles and Methods: The Norwegian government's goal is to facilitate data sharing from the public sector so that businesses, academia, and civil society can use the data in new ways. Data sharing is viewed as beneficial since sharing data with others does not diminish one's own data holdings, and the value of data can increase when shared because it can be combined with other types of data to offer new insights. Various methods are available to make data sharing simpler and safer between different stakeholders, including data lakes (central repositories for storing data), data trusts (where trusted third parties are responsible for shared data), anonymization interfaces, synthetic data, and common open application programming interfaces (APIs).

Personal Data Processing and GDPR Compliance: Organizations in Norway are free to use the European Commission's standard data processing agreement or to draft their own data processing agreement for handling personal data. Personal data is defined as any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, including identifiers such as name, identification number, location data, online identifiers, or factors specific to physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural, or social identity. Processing of personal data encompasses operations such as collection, recording, organization, storage, adaptation, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure, alignment, restriction, erasure, or destruction. Special categories of personal data include information revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, health data, sexual orientation, genetic data, or biometric data.

4. AI Outputs & IP Protections

Current Legal Frameworks for AI and IP: Currently, there are no specific laws, statutory rules, or regulations in Norway that directly regulate artificial intelligence. Norway is not expected to enact its own comprehensive AI legislation beyond adopting the EU AI Act, which will become Norwegian law as it does for all European Economic Area (EEA) Member States. The EU AI Act is expected to be implemented as Norwegian law, though no formal decision or approval has yet been made. Norwegian laws are largely technology-neutral and flexible, thereby indirectly encompassing AI within a significant portion of its legal framework. This approach means that existing legal provisions often apply to AI applications without requiring specific AI-focused regulation.

AI-Generated Content and Ownership Issues: In Norwegian legal theory, there appears to be agreement that only people can create intellectual property, suggesting that AI systems cannot be copyright holders under Norwegian law. The prevailing view in Norway is that AI systems cannot be inventors under Norwegian patent law. This raises challenges in defining ownership of AI-created content, as there is uncertainty about whether AI-generated works can receive copyright protection when there is minimal human involvement. The Government wants Norwegian companies to make informed and competent decisions regarding the protection, use, and enforcement of their intellectual assets and rights, including how they handle AI-related innovations.

Data Mining and Copyright Exceptions: Data mining exceptions are relevant in the context of AI technologies because training machine learning algorithms sometimes involves data mining activities that could otherwise infringe copyright. The Norwegian Copyright Regulation facilitates data mining in certain specified situations, but further data mining exceptions have recently been proposed. These proposed changes would particularly implement the EU Digital Single Market (DSM) Directive, establishing an exception for text and data mining from lawfully accessible works. The Norwegian preparatory works to the proposed data mining exceptions highlight the importance of data mining in relation to artificial intelligence technologies.

Protecting Intellectual Property in AI Systems: Protecting intellectual property rights is important for ensuring that the AI market develops appropriately. Any uncertainty about ownership of the various elements that make up solutions based on AI—such as data, development frameworks, pre-trained algorithms—how they are licensed, or how access to the solutions is paid for, will have negative impacts on the market. The provider of an AI system may influence the protection of input and output of generative AI systems through terms and conditions, which may include license terms. Various components of an AI system, such as datasets, algorithms, and models, can be kept secret and obtain the status of trade secrets under the Norwegian Trade Secrets Act.

Balancing Innovation and Protection: Norway has the opportunity to lead globally in AI-related intellectual property frameworks. As a small yet nimble country with a collaborative ecosystem, Norway can set new precedents for protecting both AI-generated creations and the rights of creators whose works are used in training AI. This may involve pioneering frameworks to define clear ownership and usage rights for AI-generated content, establish guidelines for AI authorship (especially in collaborative projects), and develop a system for registering AI-generated works. Additionally, frameworks could ensure AI training respects copyright laws, implement opt-in data models to protect creators' rights, and balance innovation incentives with proper attribution.

5. AI Investments & Computing Power

Government Funding Commitments: Norway has demonstrated substantial commitment to advancing artificial intelligence through significant financial investments. The Norwegian government has set aside one billion Norwegian kroner (NOK) to support digital technology and Artificial Intelligence research. This commitment amounts to investing at least NOK 1 billion over the next five years to develop national artificial intelligence research. Additionally, Norway is accelerating digital and artificial intelligence (AI) transformation across business and society, backed by government investment of €90 million (NOK 1.1 billion). In 2023, the government announced that at least one billion NOK would be dedicated to establishing four to six AI research centers which will contribute to technology development as well as knowledge about the societal, legal, and ethical impacts of AI technologies.

Supercomputing and Infrastructure Development: Norway has made significant investments in enhancing its computing infrastructure to support AI research and development. The government has purchased a new supercomputer in a deal worth almost €20 million to boost the country's artificial intelligence capabilities. This new supercomputer, named Olivia, will play a significant role in developing artificial intelligence (AI) and will be the most powerful supercomputer ever deployed in Norway's history. The HPE Cray Supercomputing EX system will provide a total of 304 Nvidia GH200 GPUs, making it the most powerful supercomputer ever deployed in Norway. The contract has been signed, allowing Norway to get a new supercomputer that can become a central engine in realizing the potential of the government's investments in AI research.

Strategic Computing Centers and Facilities: Beyond national supercomputing facilities, Norway is also developing specialized AI computing centers. Groq and Earth Wind & Power are building an AI Compute Center for Europe in Norway that may rival tech giant scale. This AI Compute Center will provide enough generative AI inference capacity to satisfy most of the needs of the country and potentially serve broader European requirements. The new supercomputer will be housed at the Lefdal Mine Datacenter, leveraging Norway's capabilities in sustainable data center operations. Norway is emerging as a strong candidate for enterprises looking for a strategic foothold in the European AI landscape due to its combination of advanced infrastructure, renewable energy resources, and supportive government policies.

Sector-Specific AI Investments: In addition to general AI infrastructure investments, Norway is directing resources toward specific sectors where AI can provide substantial benefits. For example, Norway is investing in improving global regulation of Artificial Intelligence use in health care through a partnership that includes a NOK 45 million grant investment in HealthAI's 3-year strategy. This plan aims to build local capacity to implement global standards for regulating AI in health responsibly while building global networks. The Norwegian government recognizes that within global health, AI provides tremendous potential to increase access to health care, improve treatment, and play a role in strengthening health systems. This targeted investment demonstrates Norway's commitment to ensuring that AI development is not only technically advanced but also responsibly regulated and ethically implemented.

Research Council Recommendations: The Research Council of Norway has provided concrete recommendations for future AI-related investments. It recommends investing 2.6 billion NOK in high-performance computing (HPC) for research and artificial intelligence. This substantial investment would significantly enhance Norway's research capabilities in AI and related fields. The work on implementing these recommendations is now underway, with the government promising to spend a minimum of NOK 1 billion (over €87 million) over five years on Norwegian AI research. These investments reflect Norway's strategic commitment to becoming a leader in AI research and application, particularly in areas where the country has distinct competitive advantages.

6. Judicial Decisions on AI

Current Status of AI Jurisprudence: To date, there are no judicial decisions in Norway concerning AI systems. There are also no judicial decisions in Norway that define the notion of artificial intelligence. Most issues relevant to legal AI systems have yet to reach any relevant courts and produce judgments that can be utilized for establishing precedent. This legal vacuum creates uncertainty about how existing frameworks will be applied to novel AI-related disputes, but it also provides an opportunity for Norway to develop thoughtful, balanced approaches through its courts and regulatory bodies as cases emerge.

AI in the Norwegian Legal System: Despite the lack of judicial decisions, AI is beginning to be integrated into Norway's legal ecosystem. One team (LovData) in Norway is using AI technology to remove people's names from public court documents, representing a novel application of AI for privacy protection in legal contexts. The Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet) has published a report on the results of the LawAi regulatory sandbox project, which addressed what legal bases are relevant to enable the use of court decisions to train LawAi, a tool designed to help those navigating legal processes. This suggests that while formal judicial decisions on AI are lacking, the Norwegian legal system is actively exploring how AI can be appropriately integrated into legal processes.

Recent Complaints and Regulatory Actions: A significant development in the Norwegian regulatory landscape for AI was a complaint filed against OpenAI after ChatGPT allegedly hallucinated false information about a man. The complaint was filed to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority, alleging that OpenAI violates Europe's GDPR rules. This case highlights the emerging tensions between AI capabilities and existing data protection frameworks. The Norwegian Data Protection Authority has signaled that it prioritizes the complaint and intends to coordinate its efforts in this case with other European data protection authorities. This coordination demonstrates the increasingly transnational nature of AI regulation and the importance of international cooperation in addressing novel legal challenges posed by AI systems.

Regulatory Sandbox Approach: In the absence of established judicial precedents, Norway has adopted a regulatory sandbox approach to explore AI applications while managing potential risks. Since 2020, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority has provided a regulatory sandbox and conducted several sandbox projects to help facilitate testing and implementation of AI technologies in areas covered by the data protection law framework. The main mission for the Data Protection Authority's regulatory sandbox is to stimulate privacy-enhancing innovation and digitalization. In 2020, Datatilsynet established the Sandbox to allow for testing, developing, and monitoring AI concepts in a protected environment, and to promote the development of ethical and responsible AI solutions. As of January 2024, Datatilsynet is in the fifth round of the Sandbox, with the most recent round selecting four new projects in Generative AI.

Anticipating Future Legal Developments: Norway is positioned to implement the EU AI Act, which will become applicable in Norway through the EEA agreement. Generally, Norwegian politicians have been reluctant to initiate AI regulation efforts over the last few years, and Norway's regulatory efforts in this area are soon expected to center around the implementation of the EU AI Act. The Norwegian Minister of Digitalization has stated that Norway aims to follow the EU's timeline and implement the AI Act so that it will become applicable in Norway at the same time as in the EU. When the AI Act becomes applicable in Norway, it will constitute the first cross-sectoral legal framework for AI in Norway, as existing laws only contain piecemeal provisions addressing AI use for certain limited purposes within specific sectors.

Conclusion

Norway has established itself as a forward-thinking nation in its approach to artificial intelligence, balancing ambitious technological development with careful regulatory considerations. The country has implemented various legal regulations between 2020 and 2025, including updates to M&A frameworks, securities trading regulations, and sector-specific requirements for industries like finance and national security. The E-Com Act amendments and zero-emission vehicle goals further demonstrate Norway's commitment to modernizing its legal framework while pursuing sustainability.

Norway's 2020 National AI Strategy outlines a comprehensive approach focused on education, research, innovation, ethics, and infrastructure. The government has committed significant resources to AI skills development, with reformed curricula and increased study places in ICT-related fields. Research initiatives like SFI NorwAI and substantial financial allocations from the Norwegian Research Council highlight the country's dedication to advancing AI capabilities.

In terms of intellectual property and data usage, Norway has established robust protections through the Copyright Act, Trademarks Act, and Designs Act, while implementing the GDPR through its Personal Data Act. However, the country faces challenges in defining ownership of AI-created content, with the prevailing legal view being that only humans can create intellectual property. Proposed data mining exceptions demonstrate Norway's efforts to balance copyright protection with AI innovation needs.

Norway's AI investments are substantial, with the government committing at least NOK 1 billion over five years for AI research and development. The acquisition of the Olivia supercomputer, featuring 304 Nvidia GH200 GPUs, represents a significant enhancement to the country's computing infrastructure. Additionally, sector-specific investments, such as the NOK 45 million grant for healthcare AI regulation, show Norway's commitment to responsible AI application in critical fields.

While there are currently no judicial decisions in Norway specifically concerning AI systems, the country is actively preparing for AI-related legal challenges. The Norwegian Data Protection Authority's regulatory sandbox approach is facilitating innovative AI applications while managing risks, and recent complaints against companies like OpenAI indicate growing regulatory attention to AI implications. Norway's plans to implement the EU AI Act will provide a comprehensive framework for AI regulation.

As Norway continues its AI journey, it stands positioned as a potential leader in responsible AI development, leveraging its technological capabilities, ethical considerations, and collaborative approach to shape the future of artificial intelligence in a manner that respects individual rights while fostering innovation.

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