

theo@oslomet.no – Theo Koritzinsky: Lecture for foreign students 2.9.2019, 16.15 - 18.00.
University of Oslo – Sophus Bugges hus – Aud. 3

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN NORWAY

Introduction: The concepts “*Norwegian*”, “*political*” and “*system*”

1 Constitutional principles 1814 -2018: Continuity and changes

- a. National independence: Danish rule to 1814 – Swedish to 1905 – Memberships and alliances (UN, WTO, NATO, CE, EU/EEA)
- b. Local government (from 1837) – development of municipalities and counties: functions, powers, numbers. Local reforms – centralization
- c. Constitutional monarchy, parliament (Stortinget) and parliamentarianism (from 1884). The development of the relations between Government and Parliament. How are Governments established – and changed?
- d. Extended popular democracy: voting rights (1913), local and national elections, election system, participation, party system
- e. Religion and politics in Norway: Pluralism, secularism, end of Lutheran State Church
- f. Human rights and freedoms – reforms of our written Constitution 1814 - 2018

2 Levels in the political system: Institutions, functions, elections

- a. The *state* – (staten), Parliament (Stortinget) with 50 + 19 elected members. Central and local government and administration
- b. The traditional 19 *counties* – (fylker), county boards, county government and administration. Centralization processes from 2017 – to 11?
- c. The traditional ca. 430 *municipalities* (kommuner), municipal boards, municipal government and administration. Centralization processes from 2017 – to ca 350.

- d. Debates and tensions about the plans and decision-making processes for fusions, centralization, and other reforms of municipalities and counties.

3 Cooperation and conflict dimensions in the political system

- a. *Constitutional democratic issues*: Main parties and development
- b. *Socio-economic issues* (the traditional left-right dimension): Main parties and development
- c. *Centre-periphery issues*: Main parties and development
- d. *Moral-religious issues*: Main parties and development
- e. *Foreign policy and migration issues*: Main parties and development
- f. *Ecological issues*: Main parties and development

4 Influence and power-channels in the system – and democracy

- a. *Parliamentary channel* (voters – parties – parliamentary institutions)
- b. The present parliamentary situation (parties in Parliament, Government and opposition, opinion-polls last months, national elections in September)
- c. *Interest organisation channel* (through actions, media, lobbying etc)
- d. *Bureaucratic channel* (public servants, committees, expert groups etc)
- e. *Mass-media channel* (newspapers, radio, TV, Internet , “social media”)
- f. *Action-channel* (demonstrations, strikes, Internet and other mass media)
- g. *Business/corporate-channel* (econ. power and through other channels)
- h. *Global/the outside world-influence*: globalisation in the float of finance, natural resources, industrial products, people and culture