Theo.Koritzinsky@hioa.no – Lecture for foreign students 19.2.2018 – 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**

1. National independence: Danish rule to 1814 – Swedish to 1905 –

 Memberships and alliances (UN, WTO, NATO, CE, EU/EEA)

1. Local government (from 1837) – development of municipalities and

 counties: functions, powers, numbers. Local reforms – centralization

1. Constitutional monarchy, parliament (Stortinget) and parliamentarianism

 (from 1884). The development of the relations between Government and

 Parliament. How are Governments established – and changed?

1. Extended popular democracy: voting rights (1913), local and national elections, election system, participation, party system
2. Religion and politics in Norway: Pluralism, secularism, end of Lutheran State Church
3. Human rights and freedoms – reforms of our written Constitution 1814 - 2018

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

1. The *state* – (staten), Parliament (Stortinget) with 50 + 19 elected members. Central and local government and administration

1. The traditional 19 *counties* – (fylker), county boards, county government and administration. – Centralization processes from 2017
2. The traditional ca. 430 *municipalities* (kommuner), municipal boards, municipal government and administration. Centralization processes from 2017
3. 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**

1. *Constitutional democratic issues*: Main parties and development
2. *Socio-economic issues* (the traditional left-right dimension): Main parties

 and the development of this dimension

1. *Centre-periphery issues*: Main parties and development
2. *Moral-religious issues*: Main parties and development
3. *Foreign policy and migration issues*: Main parties and development
4. *Ecological issues*: Main parties and development

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

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