

NEWSLETTER SERVICE

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If you have suggestions for how we can improve Newsletter Service, please send an email to Ivy Swenson at iswenson@sofn.com.

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Education in the Eyes of Scandinavia

In countries such as Norway and Sweden, the Nordic model boasts high social equality, high productivity, and high levels of happiness. When it comes to explaining why, many people believe it's because of Scandinavia's generous welfare states or free market openness. However, David Brooks, a columnist for the New York Times, is convinced it is a result of how education is viewed in these countries.

More specifically, he believes it is their *bildung* approach to learning. Although *bildung* doesn't directly translate to English, it means "the complete moral, emotional, intellectual, and civic transformation of the person."

In the Scandinavian countries, the *bildung* approach helps students gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between their inner selves, their communities, and society as a whole. In comparison, schooling in America is primarily focused on teaching specialized skill sets, such as math and reading.

The outcome of the *bildung* approach is an increased sense of shared responsibility in all aspects of a person's life, creating a higher degree of social trust.

Hurray, it's the 17th of May!

As Norway's most celebrated holiday, Syttende Mai honors the anniversary of the signing of the country's constitution in 1814. Over time, the day and what it represents to the people of Norway has evolved greatly. Historically, May 17 was a day of politics marked by speeches and rallies; today it is filled with national pride, festivities and tradition.



Each year, thousands of people in Norway—and around the world—take part in waving Norwegian flags, marching in city parades and professing their love of Norway. Many of today's festivities are centered on music, food, children and graduating high school students. For more facts about Syttende Mai and details on how the day is celebrated, check out the Sons of Norway blog at www.sofn.com/blog/syttende-mai-10-fun-facts.

Also, however you choose to celebrate this year, remember to take lots of photographs. The Viking magazine's District Happenings Section is the perfect place to showcase your Norwegian celebrations. For information, check out the Viking Photo Guide found in the Member Resources section of the website: https://www.sofn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/district_happenings_photo_guide_20181.pdf.

Norway Offers a Glimpse of the Future for Gas Stations

What would a world without gas stations look like? That's what fuel industry representatives have been asking themselves when they visit Norway, where electric vehicles—EVs—are quickly becoming the norm.



Around half of all new cars sold in Norway are fully electric, and the Norwegian government is planning to phase out gas-powered vehicles completely within five years.

This means Norway functions as a kind of test case for the rest of the world, allowing a glimpse of what the future might look like if roadside convenience stores no longer center on fuel in the way they do today. Because most EV charging takes place at home, simply replacing gas pumps with charging stations won't necessarily be adequate.

To stay in business, gas stations will need to find new ways to add value as drivers switch to EVs. Around the world, fuel companies are taking their cues from Norway as they consider how to adapt their business models, for instance by expanding their offerings to include things like premium food, shipping services and car repairs.

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a little in English...

Hero Helped Norwegians Flee; Celebrates 100th Birthday

Henrik O. Mongstad helped Norwegians flee to Britain during the war. He was awarded the Norwegian Armed Forces Medal of Merit for heroic efforts.

Mongstad grew up on the Mongstad farm in Lindås. He lived there until he was 19 years old. That same year, 1939, World War II broke out. The Germans attacked Norway on April 9, 1940. King Haakon and the government refused to give power to the Germans. But two months later, the Germans had taken over the country. The occupation lasted until 1945.

Member of the Resistance

In the spring of 1941, Mongstad participated in resistance work in Sørum, and in 1942 he became a contact for Norwegian forces in the United Kingdom. Mongstad worked for the Secret Intelligence Service radio station in Nordhordaland. The radio station had contact with members of the resistance in Norway and with the Norwegian authorities in the United Kingdom. Mongstad helped Norwegians flee to Britain. They fled because the Germans wanted to kill them or capture them. "Most people who fled were resistance members who were discovered by the Germans," Mongstad told Utrop.no.

Hiding in boats

"The refugees came by boat from Stavanger to Bergen. They would hide in the boats. The Germans did not find them. Then they hid on a shuttle boat and went from Bergen to Lindås. Mongstad got them into the boat that went to Shetland.

Risked life for the refugees

Mongstad helped several people escape during the war. His job was treacherous. His family was also in danger. "I know many who were killed or sent to prison camps," he says. "I was lucky." On January 4th, he turned 100 years old.

litt på norsk...

Hedersmann hjalp nordmenn med å flykte – feirer hundrede år

Henrik O. Mongstad hjalp nordmenn med å flykte til Storbritannia under krigen. Han har fått Forsvarets Fortjenestemedalje for heltmodig innsats.

Henrik O. Mongstad vokste opp på gården Mongstad i Lindås. Der bodde han til han var 19 år. Samme år, i 1939, brøt andre verdenskrig ut. Tyskerne angrep Norge 9. april 1940. Kong Haakon og regjeringen nektet å gi makten til tyskerne. Men to måneder senere hadde tyskerne tatt over hele landet. Okkupasjonen varte helt til 1945.

Motstandsmannen Mongstad

Våren 1941 var Mongstad med på motstandsarbeidet i Sørum og i 1942 ble han kontaktperson for norske styrker i Storbritannia. Mongstad jobbet for radiostasjonen til Etterretningstjenesten i Nordhordaland. Radiostasjonen hadde kontakt med motstandsfolk i Norge og med norske myndigheter i Storbritannia. Mongstad hjalp nordmenn med å flykte til Storbritannia. De flyktet fordi tyskerne ville drepe dem eller ta dem til fange.

– De fleste som flyktet var motstandsfolk og avslørt av tyskerne, sier Mongstad til Utrop.

Gjemte seg i båtene

– Flyktningene kom i båt fra Stavanger til Bergen. De gjemte seg i båten. Tyskerne fant dem ikke. Så gjemte de seg i en rutebåt og dro fra Bergen til Lindås.

Mongstad fikk dem over i båten som gikk til Shetland.

Risikerte livet for flyktningene

Mongstad hjalp flere med å flykte under krigen. Jobben hans var livsfarlig. Familien hans var også i fare.

– Jeg kjenner mange som ble drept eller sendt i fangeleir, sier han.
– Jeg var heldig.

4. januar fylte han 100 år.

Vegetarian Zucchini Tart with Leek

Ingredients

2/3 cup (150 grams) butter
1 1/2 cups (180 grams) all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. water

1 leek
1/2 zucchini
4 eggs
1/4 cup (50 ml) cream or milk
pinch of pepper
1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/4 cups (300 grams/ 11 oz.) cottage cheese
10 cherry tomatoes (optional)



Image source: www.melk.no

Recipe

1. Cut butter into flour and mix in salt and water. Chill dough for 30 minutes.
2. Grease tart tin and line pan with baking paper. Bake tart shell at 440° F/225° C for 10 minutes.
3. Clean and cut vegetables into small pieces.
4. Whisk the eggs together with cream/milk and seasoning. Mix in cottage cheese and vegetables.
5. Fill the prepared tart shell with vegetable and egg mixture.
6. Bake the filled tart at 400° F / 200 °C for about 35 minutes.



Celebrate Syttende Mai and Membership!

Have Nordic fun this spring with a Syttende Mai-themed spring picnic on May 17. Enjoy a few of Norway's most popular Constitution Day foods—like ice cream and Pølser med lompe (hot dogs wrapped in lefse). Plus, tag our Sons of Norway social media channels to share photos and let us know how you are celebrating this Syttende Mai, and encourage your friends to join us for more Nordic fun!



Peace of Mind In Volatile Times

In times like these, it may feel like nothing is certain, and that volatility is just a way of life for your finances. Give yourself the peace of mind of a fixed rate of return and rest easy knowing that a portion of your assets are protected. Reach out to your Insurance Professional and see if putting some of your assets in a fixed annuity is right for you and your family.



Norway Leads the Way on Plastic Recycling

To curb the growing environmental concerns around plastic waste, the European Union has set ambitious goals for recycling: by the year 2029, EU countries will be required to recycle at least 90 percent of the plastic they use. But Norway has already blown past this target, with a 97 percent recycling rate, and it has done so a decade ahead of schedule.

One secret to Norway's success appears to be a robust and near-universal deposit system in which buyers pay a few cents more for their purchases, and then return the empties for a refund at conveniently located "reverse vending machines." The concept: buy the product, borrow the packaging.

The deposit system in Norway has been so successful that it is beginning to catch on elsewhere. In Lithuania, for instance, plastic recycling jumped from 34 to 92 percent in just two years after adopting a similar, deposit-based method.

The process of returning empty plastic bottles has become such an ingrained part of Norwegian life that it even has its own verb: *a pante*, pronounced "oh-pant-uh."

Oslo's Vision Zero a Success

Oslo became the first city ever to record zero cyclist or pedestrian fatalities in a calendar year as the city's new policies on street traffic showed astounding success in 2019. Oslo's Vision Zero campaign achieved this success even as large American cities such as New York and Los Angeles saw traffic and pedestrian deaths rise year over year.



So how did Oslo achieve this remarkable feat? By enacting a careful mix of regulations, including removing cars from the city center, lowering speed limits, expanding bike infrastructure, and redesigning roads around schools. The city removed 700 parking spaces and replaced them with 37 miles of bike lanes. In addition, they established *Hjertesoner*, or "Heart Zones," to separate different types of traffic, particularly around schools.

U.S. cities are taking note of these successes in their own efforts to keep bicyclists and pedestrians safe. In places like Washington, D.C., where specific measures are underway to reduce pedestrian fatalities, the number has been dropping. Increasingly, Oslo's Vision Zero will become a roadmap to a safer future.

Van Gogh Self-Portrait Confirmed Authentic

In 2014, the Oslo gallery, Nasjonalmuseet, asked the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam to perform an extensive analysis of a Van Gogh self-portrait in the Oslo collection. After years of inspection, the painting has recently been authenticated as a genuine work by Van Gogh himself. In fact, the painting is also the only known piece he painted while suffering from psychosis.



Image source: www.nga.gov

During the year he spent working on the painting, Van Gogh admitted himself to an asylum and suffered a six-week psychotic episode. The portrait is mentioned in a letter Van Gogh wrote to his brother, in which he discussed a self-portrait attempt that he had made during his illness.

Previous doubts about the painting's authenticity stemmed from Van Gogh's uncharacteristic use of a palette knife to flatten parts of the painting. However, an expert who inspected the painting believed it to be the artist's way of draining the life from the portrait to express his emotional state. Ultimately, the Amsterdam museum announced it was "unmistakably" Van Gogh's work.

a little in English...

Children Want to Be Inclusive

Children do not care about ethnic and cultural differences.

"A lot is different, but inside we are equal," so goes a famous Norwegian children's song. "Children do not care about ethnic and cultural differences," says Professor Thomas Moser, one of the country's most experienced researchers on pre-schoolers.

"We see that most children are generous toward each other," says Moser. He has been a member of the leadership team for a collaboration project between eleven European countries that aims to curb inequalities and strengthen inclusion.

The collaborative project is called ISOTIS, which in Greek means "equality and justice." The project is based on the strengths and potential of culturally and linguistically diverse families. The University of Southeastern Norway discusses the project, which shows that children would like to include other children.

Insight from children and Turkish mothers in Norway

In Norway, the researchers spoke to Turkish mothers, in addition to children in multicultural schools and pre-schools in Southeastern and Central Norway. One of the most surprising findings after three years of research across Europe is how young children themselves are a driving force for positive change.

The children want to be inclusive and are not too concerned about whether other children come from a different culture and have a different ethnic background.

Pre-school may play a key role

"I think pre-school can play a key function when it comes to meeting multicultural families. There is a lot of talk about pre-school's important social role with regard to issues such as equality and children's development, but it can also be of great importance to an inclusive society. Our research shows that pre-school can help with several challenges that arise in multicultural societies," Moser tells the University of Southeastern Norway.

litt på norsk...

Barn ønsker å være inkluderende

Barn bryr seg ikke om etniske og kulturelle forskjeller.

"Mye er forskjellig, men inni er vi like", heter det i en kjent norsk barnesang. – Barn bryr seg ikke om etniske og kulturelle forskjeller, sier professor Thomas Moser, en av landets mest erfarne barnehageforskere.

– Vi ser at barn flest er raus med hverandre, sier Moser. Han har sittet i ledergruppen for et samarbeidsprosjekt mellom elleve europeiske land som vil dempe ulikheter og styrke inkludering.

Samarbeidsprosjektet heter ISOTIS, som på gresk betyr likeverd og rettferdighet. Prosjektet bygger nettopp på styrkene og potensialet til kulturelt og språklig ulike familier. Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge forteller om prosjektet som viser at barn gjerne vil inkludere andre barn.

Snakket med barn og tyrkiske mødre i Norge

I Norge snakket forskerne med tyrkiske mødre, i tillegg til barn i flerkulturelle skoler og barnehager i Sørøst-Norge og Midt-Norge. Et av de mest overraskende funnene etter tre års forskning over hele Europa er hvordan små barn selv er en drivkraft for positiv endring.

Barna ønsker å være inkluderende og er ikke så opptatt av om andre barn kommer fra en annen kultur og har en annen etnisk bakgrunn.

Barnehagen kan ha en nøkkelrolle

– Jeg mener barnehagen kan ha en nøkkelfunksjon når det gjelder å møte flerkulturelle familier. Det snakkes mye om barnehagens viktige samfunnsrolle med tanke på temaer som likestilling og barns utvikling, men den kan også ha stor betydning for et inkluderende samfunn. Forskningen vår viser at barnehagen kan hjelpe med flere av utfordringene som oppstår i flerkulturelle samfunn, sier Moser til Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge.

Seterjentas Rømmebrød – The Dairymaid’s Wafers

Ingredients

- 1 cup sour cream
- 7/8 cup butter
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. cardamom
- 4 Tbsp. sugar
- 4 1/2 cups flour, approximately

Directions

1. Warm the butter to room temperature and stir together with sour cream.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Reserve a little flour for rolling out the dough.
3. Knead into a fairly firm dough. Chill for 2 hours.
4. Sprinkle a little sugar on top and roll into the dough.
5. Cut out a cardboard template the size of krumkake iron; trace and cut wafers from the pattern. Bake in heated krumkake iron until a nice golden color.



Build a Buzz: Let Others Know How Much You Enjoy Membership!

Do you LOVE rosemaling, making lefse, enjoying Nordic music and dance, or celebrating other aspects of Norwegian culture & heritage through your Sons of Norway membership? Then spread these honey-sweet words and get nonmembers buzzing to join the fun! Help our lodge and Sons of Norway family grow in 2020!



You Have A Plan—Does It Cover Everything?

Planning for the unexpected is difficult but necessary. You have plans in place for car repairs, you plan for the water heater to break down, and you may even have a plan in case of job loss. But most people don't have life insurance in case the worst should happen. Reach out to your Insurance Professional and see if a whole life policy fits your plans to safeguard your family's future.