SNAPSHOT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NORWAY

QUESTIONNAIRE TO MEMBERS OF THE AFFINITY GROUP OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (AGNA)

June 2015
Snapshot of civil society in Norway: Questionnaire to AGNA members

Who We Are

The Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) brings together national associations from around the world. Created in 2004, it aims at strengthening national umbrella organisations, fostering greater co-operation across national and regional boundaries to pursue mutual interests.

THE CONTENT OF THIS PAPER HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF NGOS IN NORWAY (Frivillighet Norge)

www.frivillighetnorge.no
THE CONDITIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NORWAY

WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHALLENGE FACED BY CIVIL SOCIETY IN YOUR COUNTRY IN 2014/2015?

Comparatively speaking the Norwegian civil society is relatively strong and faced minor challenges compared with other countries. However, after the election of a conservative-liberal government there seems to be a growing discrepancy between words and action from the side of the government. They clearly express intentions of support for the civil sector, also financially, but these intentions are rarely followed through in reality.

WHAT WAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ACHIEVED BY CIVIL SOCIETY IN YOUR COUNTRY IN 2014/2015?

The proposal to forbid begging was withdrawn, partly due to the protests of the civil society.

WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY OR CHALLENGE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN YOUR COUNTRY THAT YOU FORSEE IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

In Norway there is a strong discrepancy between the number of people who actually do volunteer work (64 % last 12 months) and the number people believe do volunteer work (most people believe that less than 40 % of the population has done volunteer work the last 12 months). We think that the Norwegian civil society would benefit if the population to a greater extent identified themselves as "a people of volunteers". This would also make it more politically opportune to support the voluntary sector.

THE SITUATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY’S RESOURCING
ARE RESOURCING CONDITIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?

Slightly better, although the funding is more often than before dependent of the realizations of some specific goals set by the state or donator.

IS CIVIL SOCIETY EXPLORING NEW STRATEGIES TO DIVERSIFY RESOURCING AND ARE ANY OF THESE PROVING SUCCESSFUL?

Yes. Both cooperation with state institutions in which they provide the funding, and selling talks and seminars on the voluntary sector to those who are interested. Both have proved successful.

ARE YOU SEEING A MOVE AWAY FROM GRANT FUNDING (AS PROVIDED BY DONORS AND GOVERNMENTS) TO OTHER METHODS OF SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY?

Yes, to some extent. The Directorate of Health is for instance changing their system of subsidies in the reproductive health program to a public tender.
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