

Studying in Norway

A guide for international students & families — how Norwegian higher education works, the student residence permit, the new non-EU tuition picture, English programs, and work rights.

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WORLD-CLASS — AND NO LONGER FREE FOR ALL

Norway offers **research-driven universities, hundreds of English-taught master's, and stunning nature**. The big change: after decades of free tuition for everyone, Norway introduced **tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students in autumn 2023** — though a 2025 reform now lets institutions decide whether to charge, so the picture is shifting. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Norway's tuition rules changed in 2023 and are being made flexible from 2025; fees and the funds requirement change. The figures here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with UDI, Study in Norway, and your university**.

Understand Why Students Choose Norway

WHAT TO KNOW

Norway offers **strong research universities, hundreds of English-taught master's, an informal and discussion-based teaching style, high graduate salaries, and world-class nature** — balanced against high living costs and, now, tuition for non-EU students.

BY THE NUMBERS

Research universities

UiO, NTNU, UiB, UiT

English master's

hundreds of them

High salaries

+ great nature

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Norway's **quality, salaries, and nature** against high living costs and (for non-EU students) the new tuition — and check whether your program still waives fees.

GOOD TO KNOW

Norway's teaching is **informal and discussion-based**, with a strong focus on independent thinking — distinctive and well-regarded.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Norwegian higher education is **mostly public and research-based**, spanning universities, university colleges, and specialized institutions. Leading universities include **Oslo (UiO)**, **NTNU (Trondheim)**, **Bergen (UiB)**, and **Tromsø (UiT)**. Degrees follow the European structure.

BY THE NUMBERS

Mostly public

research-based

UiO / NTNU / UiB / UiT

the leaders

3+2

European structure

HOW TO HELP

Choose among Norway's **research universities and university colleges**, noting that most English-taught options are at the **master's level**.

GOOD TO KNOW

Most of Norway's English-taught programs are at **master's level** — English bachelor's options are more limited.

Understand the Non-EU Tuition Change

WHAT TO KNOW

The headline: since **autumn 2023**, non-EU/EEA/Swiss students pay tuition (recently **NOK 130,000–340,000/year**, varying by program). A **2025 reform** lets institutions decide whether to charge, so some may reduce or waive fees — always check your specific university.

BY THE NUMBERS

Since 2023

non-EU pay fees

~NOK 130k–340k/yr

varies by program

2025 reform

institutions may waive

HOW TO HELP

Check your **specific university and program's current tuition** — the rules are shifting, and some institutions may charge less (or nothing) from 2025–26.

WATCH OUT

Norway's non-EU tuition is **in flux** after the 2025 reform — confirm the exact fee (and any waiver) for your program before deciding.

Get the Student Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU/EEA students staying over 90 days need a **student residence permit (studietillatelse)** from **UDI** (the Directorate of Immigration), applied for via the UDI Application Portal after admission. EU/EEA students just **register** after arrival.

BY THE NUMBERS

studietillatelse

from UDI

After admission

apply via UDI portal

EU/EEA

just register on arrival

HOW TO HELP

Apply for your **student residence permit via the UDI portal** once admitted, then submit documents and biometrics at an embassy/VFS — processing takes 1–3 months, so apply early.

GOOD TO KNOW

Apply **as soon as you accept your offer** — UDI processing can take up to three months.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Applications typically go **directly to universities** (some undergraduate routes use Samordna opptak). Credential recognition may involve **NOKUT**. Deadlines for non-EU students needing a permit are often around **1 December–15 January** for autumn.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly
to universities

NOKUT
credential recognition

Early deadlines
for permit applicants

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly to your chosen universities** by their (often early) international deadlines, and handle credential recognition — leave ample time for the permit.

GOOD TO KNOW

Non-EU students needing a permit face **earlier deadlines** — apply well ahead of the standard dates.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the permit, UDI requires proof of living funds — recently about **NOK 167,000–170,000 per year** (adjusted annually), usually held in a **Norwegian or university deposit account**. This is *in addition* to any tuition.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

~NOK 167k–170k/year

Deposit account

Norwegian or university

Plus tuition

if applicable

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** at the current UDI amount, typically deposited in a **Norwegian or university account**, on top of any tuition — confirm the exact figure and method.

WATCH OUT

The funds usually must sit in a **Norwegian/university deposit account** — a specific requirement, so plan the logistics early.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

For **English-taught** programs you prove English (commonly **IELTS** or equivalent). Norwegian isn't needed to study those, though learning Norwegian genuinely helps daily life and (scarce) part-time work.

BY THE NUMBERS

English

IELTS or equivalent

No Norwegian needed

for English programs

Some Norwegian

helps a lot

HOW TO HELP

Take an **accepted English test** for your program, and learn some Norwegian — it materially helps with daily life and finding work in Norway.

GOOD TO KNOW

Part-time work is **scarce without Norwegian** — don't rely on it to fund your studies.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

Prepare for **very high living costs** (Oslo is among Europe's priciest), and after arriving, **report to the police, get an ID number, and register**. Housing is competitive — apply early for student housing (SiO and similar).

BY THE NUMBERS

High costs

Oslo is expensive

Register

police + ID number

Housing

apply early

HOW TO HELP

Budget for **Norway's high living costs**, arrange student housing early, and complete arrival registration (police, ID number) promptly.

GOOD TO KNOW

Norway is **expensive** — build a realistic budget, since part-time work won't reliably cover the gap.

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU/EEA students may work **up to 20 hours per week during term** (and full-time in holidays), but **part-time work is genuinely hard to find** without Norwegian, and won't cover tuition plus living costs.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work

20 hrs/week in term

Hard to find

without Norwegian

Not a funding plan

budget fully

HOW TO HELP

You may work **20 hours/week**, but **don't base your finances on part-time work** — it's scarce and won't cover your costs. Plan to fund your studies fully.

WATCH OUT

Treat part-time work as a **bonus, not a plan** — Norway's job market is tough for students without Norwegian.

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

After graduating, you can apply for a **job-seeker residence permit** to look for skilled work in Norway. Its strong economy and high salaries offer real pathways for graduates who find qualified employment.

BY THE NUMBERS

Job-seeker permit

after graduating

Strong economy

high salaries

Community

get involved

HOW TO HELP

Plan for the **post-study job-seeker permit**, build networks during study, and target Norway's strong sectors if you want to stay — confirming current conditions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Norway offers a **post-study job-search permit** — confirm the current duration and conditions, which can change.

Studying in Norway: The Essentials

A snapshot — tuition rules changed in 2023 and are becoming flexible, so confirm everything with UDI, Study in Norway, and your university.

The system

Mostly public, research-based universities and university colleges (UiO, NTNU, UiB, UiT); hundreds of English-taught programs, strongest at master's level.

Tuition

EU/EEA/Swiss study free; non-EU/EEA students pay fees since autumn 2023 (~NOK 130k–340k/year), though a 2025 reform lets institutions decide whether to charge — check your program.

The permit

Non-EU students need a student residence permit (studietillatelse) from UDI, applied for after admission via the UDI portal; EU/EEA students just register on arrival.

Money

Prove living funds (~NOK 167k–170k/year), usually in a Norwegian/university deposit account, plus any tuition; living costs are very high (Oslo especially).

Work & after

Work up to 20 hrs/week (part-time work is scarce without Norwegian); a post-study job-seeker permit allows time to find skilled work.

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