



WORKING IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN NORWAY

(Updated June 2017)



About the industry

The hospitality sector in Norway is growing. The number of foreign visitors to hotels increased with 9.9 % in 2016 over 2015. Growth in the number of overnighting for 2016 was 5 % over 2015, with growth in all regions of the country. The fjord region in western Norway has the largest proportion of foreign tourists (38%), while the eastern region had the greatest overall growth. The tourist sector is an international work place with a much higher percentage of non-native staff than other sectors.

The demand for workers in the tourist industry varies seasonally and geographically. In general, the summer season starts in May and runs through August/ September; the winter season usually starts in November and ends in March/ April (Easter). The sector is working to extend the season with new activities and attractions. The larger cities have a need for staff year-round but there many more applicants for these positions.

In the recent years the tourist industry has emphasised developing “adventure tourism”. The aim is to make Norway stand out as an interesting and “exotic” destination, offering something unique with its rugged and unspoiled nature. Such activities are also aimed at extending the high season. Examples are cultural festivals, agro-tourism, whale safaris, hiking, snow scooter safaris, ice hotels, sports events, hunting and fishing, paddling and rafting, dog sledging and Northern lights spotting (Aurora Borealis). Tourism in the northern arctic region is very popular and attracts tourists looking for something extraordinary. Food heritage, and the “Nordic Kitchen”, is increasingly emphasized, using local products in hotels and restaurants.

Visitors to Norway come from all parts of the globe, with a great many from Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, USA and France. The number of tourists from Asia is increasing strongly. The majority of tourists, however, are Norwegian.

Demand for workers

There is a demand for skilled personnel, preferably with vocational training or a fair amount of experience, especially in the following categories:

- Chefs and cooks
- Waiters/waitresses and bartenders
- Front desk staff, such as shift managers and receptionists
- Spa therapists

- Guides (group guiding, rafting, rock-climbing, dogsledding, etc)

There is also a demand for unskilled workers:

- Cleaners
- Bartenders and waiters
- Assistant serving staff
- Kitchen assistants
- Shop assistants

Many of the niche/adventure products previously mentioned very often need additional service personnel and special competence that has to be attracted from elsewhere.

How to find work in the tourism industry?

It is important that you register and up-date your CV on the EURES Portal as EURES and employers use the portal to find candidates.

All the job vacancies published by The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) are on the European job mobility portal [EURES](#).

At the European Job Mobility Portal (choose "Norway") a small EU flag is attached to vacancies where the employer is particularly interested in attracting job seekers from abroad, for instance due to language skills, or national labour shortages

You may also contact the national contact point, NAV Service Centre EURES, to enquire about job vacancies:

phone: (+47) 55 55 33 39 - Monday- Friday, 08:00 to 15.30 (CET)

e-mail: eures@nav.no

[chat](#): every Friday, 10:00 to 13.00 (CET)

Most job vacancies in Norway are written in Norwegian. There are though job vacancies written in English, you can find them [here](#).

Another idea is to access the websites of the large hotel chains. There you can register your CV online, and choose from a menu as to where you are interested in working, and in what type of work.

In general most employers require a written CV along with an application. Almost all Norwegian employers will ask for references; preferably from a previous employer that can speak English or a Scandinavian language.

More information about how to apply for jobs in Norway [here](#).

Language, education and qualifications requirements

The tourist sector often requires good knowledge of Norwegian or another Scandinavian language (Danish or Swedish), especially for staff having close contact with customers. Some employers use English as a common working language, so it is essential that you have a good understanding of this language.

Norwegian language courses: there are various providers of language courses in Norway, and online courses. You can find most of them at [Skills Norway](#), the National Agency for Lifelong Learning.

Wages

There is no general minimum salary in Norway. But there is a system of pre-agreed wages signed by employers' organisations and trade unions every year, called the "tariff" agreement.. The standard wages vary according to qualifications, experience and type of position. The rates are adjusted each year, usually in early spring. Employers are required to pay at least tariff wages to all employees in some work categories regardless of whether they are unionized or not. Cleaners are one such category. See [minstelønn for renholdere](#).

Wages per hour (June 2016)

Qualified Cook (over 18 yrs. old)	From NOK 165 – NOK 180*
Unskilled Cook (over 18 yrs. old)	From NOK 131 – NOK 171*

*Wages depend on the type of job and your experience. As working in the hotel and restaurant sector often means irregular hours, you may also be entitled to extra pay (NOK 11-23 per hour) for working late night shifts, weekends and holidays, etc.

For more specific information about the wage agreement in the hospitality sector, you should check with a trade union. See Trade Union information further down on the page. Remember to ask for a written work contract before you start to work. When you work for a Norwegian employer, you are required to pay tax in Norway. See www.workinnorway.no for more information.

Important things to consider

Some employers provide accommodation, but you may have to share living space, kitchen and bathroom with other tenants. Some employers also have rooms available to let, or camping facilities. The rent may vary considerably, depending on the standard of accommodation and where in Norway you are located. Those who do not offer housing will in many cases help in finding accommodation. Norwegian employers often offer training that can be a plus on employees' resumes.

Some of these jobs are in small places, and public transportation may be very limited. You may need your own transportation to get around.

Trade Unions

In Norway, the trade unions play an important role in working life. Over 50% of the employees in Norway are members of a trade union. You may wish to contact a trade union to get more information about working in the hospitality sector:

- www.fellesforbundet.no Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union
- www.nhoreiseliv.no Norwegian Hospitality Association

Related information

- www.visitnorway.no Tourist information
- www.reiselivsbasen.no Norwegian Hospitality Association, only in Norwegian
- www.turistforeningen.no Norwegian Trekking Association

Taxes, working conditions and relocation

Visit [Work in Norway, the official guide](#) to get step by step information about registering, paying taxes and working conditions.