

Hordaland

The Central County of Western Norway



HORDALAND
FYLKESKOMMUNE





Hordaland County

Hordaland, with its more than 480,000 inhabitants, is home county to 10 % of Norway's population. Only the capital Oslo and the surrounding county of Akershus have larger populations.

The county is almost divided in two by the 179 km long Hardangerfjord, one of Norway's main fjords and a great tourist attraction.

Hordaland is a region of islands and skerries and sheltered bays, fjords with steep mountainsides, magnificent waterfalls, mountain plateaux and glaciers, and fertile valleys.

The majority of the population live in the coastal areas and on the low-lying narrow strip of farmland along the fjords.

The county comprises 33 municipalities with their own governing councils.

Bergen, one of Europe's great scenic cities, is known as the Gateway to Western Norway. It is the centre of Hordaland County and the site of the county administration.

Hordaland has more than 100 natural parks. The Hardanger Mountain Plateau is the largest national park in Norway and the largest mountain plateau in Northern Europe. The park is the home of the largest herd of wild reindeer in Europe.

Photo left: Oddmund Lunde.

Photo under: The Hardanger Mountain Plateau with Mount Hårteigen, 1690 m, is the largest plateau in Northern Europe. (Hardangervidda Natursenter Eidfjord.)





Bergen – World Heritage City

Bergen is the second largest city in Norway, unofficially recognized as the “Coastal Capital” of the country.

The Quayside on the old harbour front, the Hanseatic wharf, is listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Its characteristic old timber houses still stand as a monument to the city's widespread trading activities during the era of the Hanseatic League.

The birthplace of Edvard Grieg retains a solid position as one of Scandinavia's most vibrant cultural cities, with its International Festival, its well-known symphony orchestra, a richly endowed musical life, ballet, theatre and other cultural activities.

With its mixture of modern, efficient big city facilities and traditional picturesqueness, Bergen is a popular tourist destination and a frequent host to congresses and meetings.

... and Gateway to the Fjords

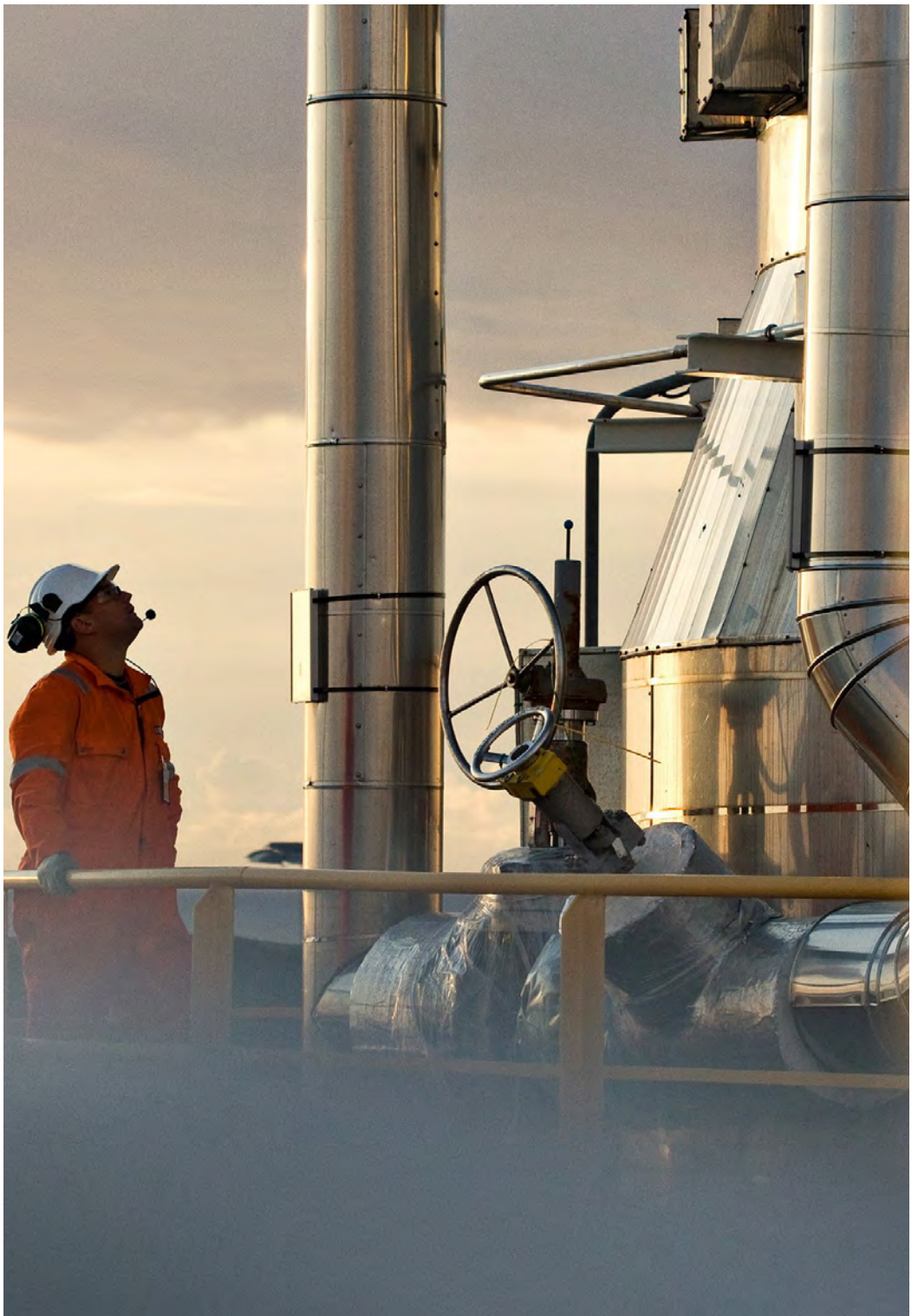
Bergen is also the gateway to the world famous fjords of Western Norway, several times rated the world's best travel destination by esteemed magazine National Geographic Traveler.

The Hardanger region comprises the very essence of the national romantic nature of Western Norway, where the fjords, the lush green, the waterfalls, the mountains and the glaciers have been attracting tourists for over a hundred years.

Photo left: Bergen, view from Fløyen. (Geir Lien.)

Photo under: World Heritage Site, the Hanseatic wharf (Bryggen), in Bergen. (Geir Lien.)





The blue region

Hordaland is to a great extent powered by the sea. Bergen's historically central position in the North Sea region was based on trade and commerce, especially within the Hanseatic League. Today, Hordaland is a leading region in terms of fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, marine technology, tourism and export of oil and gas.

Several major oil companies have offices in Bergen and a number of huge oil and gas fields are operated from here. On the island Stord, there are a number of companies that build sections and equipment for platforms and the offshore industry.

Shipyards in Hordaland build vessels, act as subcontractors and service facilities for the fishing and the merchant fleets, the offshore industry and the transport and passenger market. Companies in Hordaland are world-leading within subsea technology.

Several major actors within international shipping operate out of Bergen, and the port of Bergen is Europe's leading cruise destination.

Tourism is another industry of major importance to the county. Hordaland is Norway's second-most popular tourist area in the summer.

Beautiful mountain scenery and a well-developed network of ski-trails and lifts have turned Voss into one of Norway's most popular winter sport resorts.

About 28,000 persons (2009) are employed in manufacturing in Hordaland. Only the neighbouring county of Rogaland employs more (30,000).

The manufacturing industry includes leading companies in electronics, microwave and satellite communications. Important industrial areas are Bergen, Stord, Husnes, Øygarden and Mongstad.

Photo left: The processing plant at Kollsnes, west of Bergen, treats gas from the Troll, Kvitebjørn and Visund fields in the North Sea, and can handle up to 143 million standard cubic metres per day. (Manfred Jarisch/Statoil.)
Photo under: Hardangervidda Nature Centre, Eidfjord.





Aquaculture and fishing

Hordaland is Norway's most important aquaculture county and a pioneering region in modern aquaculture. In 2009 fish farms in Hordaland produced 145,513 tons of salmon (17 % of the total Norwegian production) and 30,599 tons of trout (40 %). The firsthand value of the production was approx. 3,950 million NOK in 2009. More than 80 % of the production is exported, the most important markets being France, Russia, Denmark and Poland.

The aquaculture industry is now widening the range of species farmed to include crustaceans, molluscs, cod, halibut, turbot, wolffish and eel.

Hordaland amounts for about 10 % of the total Norwegian seafood export.

In 2009 fishing fleets from Hordaland delivered fish with a firsthand value of 1,872 million NOK – around 17 % of the total Norwegian catch. Only about 1/7 of the Hordaland catch was delivered in the county.

Photo left: The fishing fleet in Austevoll. (Linda Mathilde Økland, Austevoll Forlag.)
Photo under: A typical fish farm. (Inge Døskeland.)





Energy sources: Water and petroleum

Hordaland has a unique position in the Norwegian energy market. The key words are water and petroleum. Norway's net export of crude oil and petroleum products (including NGL) is about 3 million barrels per day. This puts Norway in third place among the world's leading net crude oil exporters.

Four-fifths of the oil and gas come from the fields off the coast of Hordaland. Two crude oil terminals are located in the county, at Sture and Mongstad. Mongstad is also the location of Norway's largest refinery – producing 10 million t.o.e. per year.

Natural gas from the vast Troll field is processed at Kollsnes (Øygarden) and piped to Europe. Troll gas will be an important source of energy and chemical feedstock for continental Europe for at least 50 years. The Troll field is the biggest offshore gas reservoir in Europe, and contains about 40 % of the total gas reserves on the Norwegian continental shelf. Thus it represents the very cornerstone of Norway's offshore gas production.

The power stations in Hordaland yearly produce 14,000–20,000 GWh of electric energy (2006–2010), more than anywhere else in the country (except 2006).

Photo left: Skykkjedalsfoss in Eidfjord, one of the highest waterfalls in Norway (300 m). (Helge Sunde.)
Photo under: The Mongstad Oil Refinery. (Helge Hansen/Statoil.)





An international environment for research and education

Several of Norway's most important centres of research and education are located in Hordaland. Times Higher Education ranks the University of Bergen (UiB) as the 135th best university worldwide and top notch in Norway (2010).

UiB is a research university with a strong international profile that is committed to academic and research excellence. The faculty and staff of UiB count more than 70 different nationalities.

UiB is engaged in the European Union's Framework programs for research and technological development and has been designated as a European Research Infrastructure and a Research Training Site in several scientific fields. Four research centres at UiB are labelled Norwegian Centre of Excellence by the Research Council of Norway.

The other most important research and educational institutions include the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH), the Foundation for Social and Industrial Research (SNF), Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) and its subsidiary Chr. Michelsen Research, the Marine Research Institute, the Norwegian Underwater Technology Centre (Falck NUTEC) and Bergen High-Technology Centre (HIB).

The range of educational institutions in Hordaland also include: Bergen University College, Stord/Haugesund University College, Bergen National Academy of the Arts, NLA – College of Teacher Education and NLA – Academy of Religion and Education, and the Naval Academy and other schools of the Navy.

A total of more than 30,000 students were registered at the universities and colleges in Hordaland in 2010, i.e. 15 % of the total number of students in Norway.

Photo left: The University of Bergen. (Geir Lien.)

Photo under: Nordahl Grieg Upper Secondary School. (Bjarte Brask Eriksen.)





Communications

Bergen Airport at Flesland with its more than 5 million passengers a year is the main gateway to Western Norway. The Bergen–Oslo railway, express buses, Bergen light rail, ferries and fast-moving catamarans are other important means of transportation. Bergen is the point of departure for the coastal route Hurtigruten between the southern and northern parts of Norway. There is a ferry link from Bergen to Denmark.

The Port Authority of Bergen (BOH) is the largest port in Norway, measured both in tonnage and number of calls. The ports within BOH handle in total 50 % of all goods (oil and gas included) loaded and unloaded in Norwegian ports.

The road network in Hordaland is constantly being improved and developed, in particular the major roads. The Bergen peninsula and the surrounding district are connected by bridges.

In 2000 the longest tunnel in Hordaland (11 km), under the Folgefonna glacier, was opened. Close to the Folgefonna tunnel, the Jondal tunnel (10 km) is under construction and will open in 2013.

Two suspension bridges and the longest underwater tunnel in Northern Europe connect the islands of Stord and Bømlo with the mainland to the south.

A new bridge is under construction in Hardanger, and is a replacement for today's ferry connection between Bruravik and Brimnes. The total length is 1,310 meter and the bridge will be opened in 2013.

A major project in the next decade in Western Norway is the further development of the "The coastal highway E39" between the cities Kristiansand and Trondheim. A major challenge is to facilitate crossing of the fjords by bridge or tunnel, replacing today's eight ferry stretches. Road development is to a great extent financed by toll fees.

Photo left: Bergen Airport Flesland. (Avinor.)

Photo under, left: Gas ferry, Fanafjord. (Stanley Hauge.)

Photo under, right: Bergen Light Rail. (Geir Lien.)





Photo: From the show "All About My Mother" at DNS, Den Nationale Scene (The National Venue of Theatre, in Bergen) is Norway's oldest permanent theatre with roots dating back to Det Norske Theater (The Norwegian Theatre) founded in 1850 by the Norwegian violinist Ole Bull. (Photo: Fredrik Arff/DNS).

A vibrant cultural life

Hordaland is a major cultural centre in Norway, with Bergen as the hub of the region. Arts and culture in Hordaland are like the architecture of Bergen: an exciting mixture of old and new.

Bergen is – in addition to being the home of Edvard Grieg and one of the oldest symphony orchestras in the world – a musical melting-pot that has fostered a range of international artists within classical and contemporary music, jazz, pop and rock. Leif Ove Andsnes, Kings of Convenience, Kaizers Orchestra, and Röyksopp are but a few present-day examples.

The well-known Bergen International Festival presents art in all its guises: music, theatre, dance, opera and visual art. The festival is the largest of its kind in the Nordic countries, with more than 150 events in 15 days.

In recent years, the city has also placed itself on the cinematic map of the world with its Bergen International Film Festival. The documentary programme at BIFF is seen as one of the most important in Europe.

Carte Blanche – the Norwegian National Company of Contemporary Dance – resides in Bergen. Its repertoire includes work by some of the best and most celebrated Norwegian and international choreographers, strongly emphasizing commissioned work by a new generation of contemporary dancemakers.

The first Norwegian theatre was established in Bergen in 1850 with Henrik Ibsen as one of its first directors. Naturally, the playwright Jon Fosse, born in Hordaland, – who is regarded by many as the greatest Norwegian dramatist since Ibsen – is frequently played here.

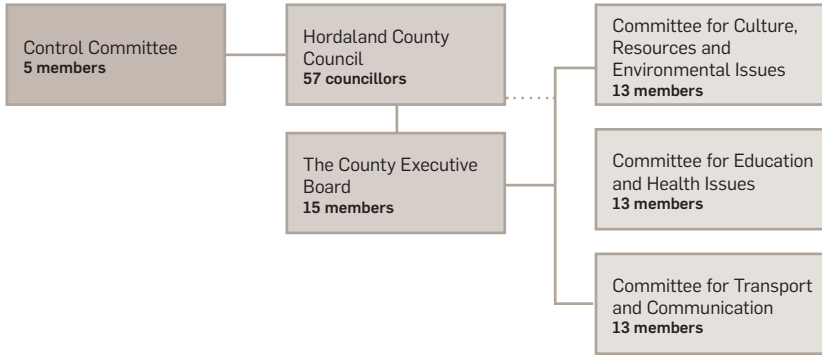
Hordaland ranks number one among Norwegian counties in terms of the number and variety of museums, ranging from maritime history and traditional coastal culture and applied arts to traditional folk culture and contemporary art.

Bergen Art Museum is one of the largest art museums in the Nordic countries and houses several of Edvard Munch's masterpieces, as well as works by the leading representatives for Norwegian art in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In Hardanger, the art house Kabuso has made the village of Øystese a destination in its own right. It is a showcase for both contemporary and traditional art, and regularly attracts artists of world renown, such as Damien Hirst. It is, according to the widely acclaimed travel guide Lonely Planet, a terrific place that you do not expect to find in a small village on the shores of a Norwegian fjord.

Across the fjord, the Hardanger Folk Museum houses, among other objects, the country's largest collection of Hardanger fiddles – Norway's national instrument with its characteristic silvery sound.

The political structure



Chief Executive, Rune Haugsdal

head of the administration an principal policy advisor to the Council

County Mayor of Hordaland, Tom-Christer Nilsen

representing The Conservative Party



The Hordaland County Council

Hordaland County Council is responsible for county policy regarding secondary education, cultural affairs, communications, dental health, economic development and regional planning, including the development of the road system.

The County Council employs around 4 400 people with an annual budget of around 6, 000 million NOK (2011).

Almost 80 % of the work carried out by county employees is related to secondary education. 46 secondary schools (including satellites) situated in various parts of the county have some 17, 000 pupils.

The council's income is derived principally from local taxes (35 %), Norwegian Government block grants (39 %), earmarked Norwegian Government grants, and fees from certain services provided by the county. The level of income is defined by the national government.

The Regional Strategy Plan draws up the aims and strategies for the development of the county.

The County Council is the elected body responsible for county policies. The Hordaland Council has 57 members elected every four years.

For the election period 2011–2015 nine political parties are represented in the Council: The Conservative Party (17 representatives), The Labour Party (16), The Progress Party (8), The Christian Democratic Party (5), The Liberal Party (4), The Centre Party (3), The Socialist Left Party (2), The Red Party (1) and The Norwegian Green Party (1).

Detailed decision making is delegated to the County Executive Board elected by the County Council among its 57 members.

The full council meets 4-5 times a year, the County Executive Board about once a month and the other principal committees once a month.

The Hordaland Coat of Arms



The Hordaland Coat of Arms is based on the ancient seal of the Onarheim "ting" or council at Tysnes in southern Hordaland, applied to an address to the Norwegian king in 1344. The Onarheim seal was approved as the county Coat of Arms by royal decree in 1961.

The Hordaland Coat of Arms is made by Magnus Hardeland.

Facts about Hordaland

Population, 1st Jan 2011 484,240

Area (total) 15,440 km²
 Continental area 13,367 km²
 Offshore islands 2,083 km²
 Area of freshwater lakes 886 km²
 Area of glaciers 338 km²

Agricultural area in use (2010) 282 km²
 Offshore islands 6,482
 Islands in freshwater lakes 2,645
 Freshwater lakes 15,529

Length of the mainland coastline 2,237 km
 Length of the islands' coastline 6,504 km
 Length of coastline, total 8,740 km
 Largest island: Osterøy 329 km²
 Highest mountain: Hardangerjøkulen 1,863 m

Highest waterfall (approximate vertical fall):
 Skykkjedalsfossen (Eidfjord) 300 m
 Tyssestrengene (Odda) 300 m
Highest waterfall, not regulated, (approximate vertical fall):
 Vedalsfossen in Eidfjord 200 m
Longest fjord:

Hardangerfjorden 179 km
 (The second longest fjord in Norway.
 Sognefjorden - 204 km - is the longest.)
Largest glacier: Folgefonna 212 km²
 (The third largest glacier in Norway.
 Jostedalbreen and Svartisen are larger.)

Longest road tunnel:
 Folgefonnntunnelen 11,150 m
 Bømlafjordtunnelen (under sea) 7,931 m
 Vallaviktunnelen 7,510 m

Longest railway tunnel:
 Finsetunnelen 10,589 m
Longest road bridge:
 Nordhordlandsbrua, pontoon 1,610 m
 Askøybrua, suspension bridge, 1,056 m
 (centre span 850 m)

Climate:
 Highest annual precipitation:
 Haukeland in Masfjorden (1990) 5,303 mm
 Precipitation during 24 hours:
 Matre in Sunnhordland (1940) 229.6 mm
 Highest recorded air temperature:
 Voss (5 July 18892) + 34.0°C
 Lowest recorded air temperature:
 Finse (7 Jan 1982) ÷ 39.6°C

Photo: Vardetangen is the westernmost point of mainland Norway, 4°56' 43,182" eastern length. (Stanley Hauge.)



Employment by sector in Hordaland

Employed persons 15–74 years, by sex, 4th quarter 2009.

	Total	Males	Females
Hordaland county	219,329	114,848	104,481
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5,196	3,930	1,266
Mining and extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	4,127	2,902	1,225
Manufacturing	27,734	21,606	6,128
Electricity, water supply and sanitation	3,013	2,404	609
Construction	18,989	17,322	1,667
Wholesale and retail trade, car repairs	31,985	15,298	16,687
Transport and storage	14,450	11,290	3,160
Hotels, pubs and restaurants	7,544	2,811	4,733
Information and communication	6,683	4,728	1,955
Financial services	5,742	2,791	2,951
Technical services, property maintenance and -management	14,533	9,051	5,482
Business management and -services	11,732	6,372	5,360
Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	12,491	7,130	5,361
Education	21,452	7,503	13,949
Health and social services	49,826	8,576	41,250
Other social and personal activities	8,248	3,357	4,891
Unspecified	947	369	578



Municipalities

The population of Hordaland is 484,240 (Jan 2011). More than half the population, 260,392 live in Bergen. Eight other municipalities have more than 10,000 inhabitants. Modalen is the smallest municipality with 370 inhabitants.

Municipality:	Area Km ²	Population 1st Jan 2011
Askøy	101	25 602
Austevoll	117	4 680
Austrheim	58	2 789
Bergen	465	260 392
Bømlo	246	11 421
Eidfjord	1,492	959
Etne	735	3 909
Fedje	9	587
Fitjar	142	2 929
Fjell	148	22 220
Fusa	378	3 851
Granvin	213	947
Jondal	210	1 041
Kvam	617	8 442
Kvinnherad	1,128	13 243
Lindås	476	14 516
Masfjorden	557	1 672
Meland	93	6 824
Modalen	412	370
Odda	1,616	6 985
Os	140	17 210
Osterøy	255	7 465
Radøy	112	4 896
Samnanger	269	2 394
Stord	144	17 804
Sund	100	6 265
Sveio	246	5 138
Tysnes	255	2 756
Ullensvang	1,399	3 405
Ulvik	721	1 118
Vaksdal	716	4 153
Voss	1,806	13 957
Øygarden	67	4 300



Apple flowering in Hardanger. (Andrzej Mandzelowski/frukt.no.)

The map on the opposite side shows the municipalities in Hordaland and part of the road system.

The Land of Hordar

Hordaland (Old Norse: Hǫrðaland) is the old name of the region which was revived in modern times. The first component, hǫrðar, can be ascribed to an old Germanic tribe immigrating to Western Norway in the 5th or 6th century AD. The word is probably deduced from haruðóð, an old Celtic word for “warrior” or “hero”. The last component is land, in the meaning of “landscape” or “region”.



Links to information about Norway

www.norway.no

Public sector information and services on the Internet

www.government.no

Gateway to information about Norway, government etc.

www.invanor.no

Innovation Norway

www.nortrade.com

The Official Norwegian Trade Portal

www.ssb.no

Statistics Norway

www.stortinget.no

The Norwegian Parliament's official web site

www.hordaland.no/Internasjonalt/English/

International activities in Hordaland County Council

Tourist information:

www.visitnorway.com

www.visithordaland.com

www.visitbergen.com

www.fjordnorway.no

www.northsea-cycle.com



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Februar 2013. Informasjonsseksjonen.