



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF ENERGY

The Minister

Mr Dan Jørgensen
Commissioner for Energy and Housing
European Commission

Your ref

Our ref

Date

24/2869-

19 December 2024

Dear Commissioner Jørgensen,

Kjære Dan,

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations on your election as Commissioner for Energy, and the first-ever Commissioner for Housing.

Norway and the EU are close and mutually committed partners. Our shared values and our common commitment to democracy, rule of law and human rights is the foundation for our close relationship. These values will continue to guide us as we develop our relationship. The security and prosperity of Norway and the EU are interconnected and interdependent. In a volatile and increasingly challenging security environment, it is even more important that we continue to work together to promote international co-operation and a rules-based international order.

This year, we have celebrated the 30-year anniversary of the EEA agreement, which makes the EEA EFTA States members of the Internal Market. The EEA agreement is the cornerstone of the special relationship between the EFTA States and the EU. This unique framework has withstood the test of time. Together, we have created unparalleled prosperity and freedom for our citizens. In addition, Norway's numerous partnerships with the EU, such as the Green Alliance and our Security and Defence Partnership, makes us the EU's most closely associated partner.

Looking ahead, we are committed to further strengthening the EEA, making it fit for the future. The Internal Market will remain the launchpad for our societies and economies to

thrive, build resilience to external shocks, further enhance competitiveness and facilitate the green and digital transition.

In the field of energy, we have indeed a long lasting and well-functioning cooperation between Norway and the EU. Norway is now the EU's largest provider of natural gas, covering 34% of EU gas imports the first six months this year. Total export from Norway in 2024 is expected to reach around 122 bcm. We will continue to be a stable and reliable provider of natural gas to Europe in the years to come.

Norway is part of the internal energy market through the EEA Agreement, and we are well connected to our neighbouring countries on the electricity side. Norway's exchange capacity is approximately 9000 MW, more than 22 percent of total installed production capacity. We believe that a well-functioning energy market is crucial to ensure energy security and the transmission to green energy in Europe.

We share an ambition to develop offshore wind in Europe. Norwegian sea areas are deep, and floating offshore wind will be a key technology in these areas. To unlock necessary cost reductions, technology and supply chain development, the state aid guidelines should allow tailored state aid schemes for immature technology.

We have close cooperation on technology development through the EU Strategic Energy Technology Plan (the SET plan), and we have for many years cooperated particularly closely to develop Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) in Europe. We look forward to continuing our close dialogue on industrial carbon management, also in the context of further development of European legislation in this field.

We believe that both renewable and low-carbon hydrogen could play an important role in the European energy transition. The aim should be production of sufficient volumes of hydrogen with low to zero emissions, at the lowest possible cost.

The challenges affecting the EU related to housing affordability are also of great concern in Norway. This year we presented a white paper that outlines the main objectives for our housing policy. The government's four priority areas are:

- More people shall have the opportunity to own their home.
- Safe conditions on the rental market.
- Take care of the homes we have and build the ones we need.
- Increased support for those who are unable to obtain and keep suitable housing.

Through our state-owned Housing Bank, we are committed to assisting individuals in entering the housing market. We are therefore looking forward to the forthcoming EU strategy for affordable housing.

The task of reducing emissions within the housing sector will be pivotal for the European Union to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Norway has a long-standing tradition of

developing eco-friendly and sustainable housing. We have implemented stringent regulations to ensure energy-efficient buildings with minimal greenhouse gas emissions, and I trust that the EU and Norway will continue to be constructive partners in this important area.

The “EU – Norway Energy Dialogue” has been ongoing for more than 20 years, with an annual political meeting and a conference. I propose to organise the next dialogue in Brussels this spring.

I would also like to invite you to Norway, to visit some of our key energy installations. One possible occasion is the opening of the Longship CCS project in June 2025. This is a milestone in the development of value chains for CCS in Europe, and the storage facility will also receive CO₂ from industry in the Netherlands and Denmark.

I look forward to our close co-operation and wish you a successful tenure.

Yours sincerely,



Terje Aasland