

ENAAT Country report: "Norway"

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1. Norwegian arms exports over the last year

The last official data published on the trade volume concludes that Norway exported strategic goods and services worth 2,92 billion Norwegian kroner¹ or Ca 360 million euro in 2005. We have several indications that the export has increased considerably in 2006, and it is likely to increase even more in 2007. The official export statistics for 2006 will not be published by the ministry of foreign affairs before May 2007. However, the two largest arms manufacturers in Norway, Kongsberg and Nammo, recently reported an annual growth in their income for 2006 of 13 % and 31 %.

This massive growth is also visible in the companies order reserves. Nammo told us this week that they hold 3 billion kroner, (Ca 370 million euro), in orders on arms and ammunition sales at the moment. When we look at the contracts being signed in 2006 it also indicates a year of substantial growth for the Norwegian arms industry. On the PROTECTOR² arms mounting system, Kongsberg signed contracts worth 1,1 billion kroner (134 million euro), in 2006 alone. Within missiles, large caliber ammunition and military software we are also experiencing fast growth in the Norwegian military industry at the moment.

US is still the biggest buyer of Norwegian arms. The Americans are now buying more than half of the Norwegian arms being exported, and this proportion is growing. Since 2000 the American share of the market has been rising steadily, seemingly independent of the overall volume of the Norwegian arms export. Except for the growth in the US exports, the Norwegian producers of war material are experiencing growth in the Middle Eastern countries. Particularly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE are importing more Norwegian war materials. The region is defined as a very important emerging market by the most significant Norwegian arms manufacturers³.

¹ Stortingsmelding 19 (2005-2006), page 27

² Protector is used by several countries, but the great bulk goes to the US Stryker brigades, mostly being used in Iraq at the moment.

³ Kongsberg: Kongsberggruppen: "Våre viktigste markeder", Årsrapport 2005

2. Norwegian official export control policies 2006

In 2006 we saw several positive movements towards increased end user control, parliamentary export control and measures to improve transparency in reporting on arms exports at the political arena.

After strong pressure from the Norwegian Peace Association, the government is now in discussions with the parliament about how to establish a parliamentary export control council, (after the Swedish model), and the introduction of end user certificates with re-export clauses for “close allies” have been discussed among the three parties now in government. However, no new export control legislation has been introduced in Norway over the last twelve months.

The governmental information on the arms trade has become better in 2006. The annual whitepaper produced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2006 published two new tables of information after pressure from the Norwegian Peace Association and Amnesty International in 2006. This new information concerns small arms transfers and arms transfers from the Norwegian ministry of defense.

Norway exported war materials to 53 countries in 2005, and there were 65 Norwegian exporters of these strategic goods in 2005. Of these exporters, 39 were arms manufacturing companies. The total number of exporters, (59), was an increase by 20% since 2004, and in 2003 the total number was only 36.

3. Norwegian peace work against the arms trade 2006

The Norwegian Peace Association ran the most active and progressive lobby efforts for stronger export control in 2006. Besides us, there were five other peace organizations in Norway campaigning against arms trade in 2006. These were PRESS, Changemaker and Juvente – all youth organizations – and Amnesty and The Norwegian Church Aid. Together with the Norwegian Peace Association these three youth organizations form an information group on arms trade within the Norwegian Peace Council. The Norwegian Church Aid ran a large scale and very successful campaign questioning the end use of Norwegian arms in the beginning of 2006. Together with Amnesty they produced a report on Norwegian arms export called “Bullets without borders”. The Church Aid have also been working on marking and tracing throughout the year. Amnesty has run the million faces petition and exhibitions in relation to this campaign. Amnesty has been visible in the media on arms issues. The Norwegian Peace Association has contributed vastly to the Norwegian public debate on arms trade issues in the year of 2006.

For more detailed information on arms trade activities in Norway, see: www.fredslaget.no