

**The Norwegian Association of  
Researchers:  
Work programme  
2010–2012**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the Norwegian Association of Researchers (NAR) is to improve working conditions in research and higher education and to protect members' financial and professional interests.

Stronger emphasis on higher education and research is a prerequisite for growth in Norway's welfare and economy. Education and research also make invaluable contributions to self-understanding, culture and society's general level of knowledge. This makes universities, university colleges and research institutes key institutions in our knowledge society, along with archives, libraries and museums (the 'ABM' institutions). Since these institutions are responsible for research, teaching and development in their designated fields, NAR demands higher wage levels, accompanied by working conditions that comply with the Working Environment Act and safeguard professional integrity, academic freedom and research ethics at the institutions.

NAR calls upon the political authorities to remain conscious of their responsibility for providing a framework that enable the institutions and their employees to fulfil their responsibilities in keeping with society's expectations as regards academic standards, transparency and relevant new knowledge. The demand that researchers be allowed sufficient time for research and development work will be given high priority during the plan period. It is important for the sector to be able to retain competent employees and recruit highly-qualified candidates to academic and technical-administrative positions in research, higher education and the ABM sector. Given the need for labour in our sector in the years ahead, attractive wage conditions will be imperative for recruiting and retaining the best and the brightest.

Reorganisation in the public sector should take place in collaboration with the civil servants' organisations. NAR will strive to ensure that employees' rights are protected in a satisfactory manner pursuant to the Civil Service Act and the Working Environment Act.

In the light of this and based on NAR's Articles of Association, the objectives for the plan period from 2010 to 2012 have been framed in three main points:

- Raise members' wages to a level which is commensurate with their education, expertise and sphere of responsibility and which is competitive relative to corresponding positions in the public as well as the private sector.
- Improve working conditions for members in order to promote high-quality research, education, culture management and dissemination, in the best interests of society.
- Strengthen members' rights as employees.

The main objectives will be achieved through goals and initiatives in the work programme's three main chapters, which deal with:

- *working conditions* that address the prerequisites for high-quality professional work.
- *wage conditions* that should be consistent with qualifications and responsibilities and that must be competitive in the struggle for the very best employees.
- *instruments* which NAR must apply to achieve the main objectives embodied in its work programme.

Through its political work, NAR should stand out as a serious societal actor as well as a strong trade union backed by a good network of allies. Using clear, well founded arguments presented through the media and through direct contact with political authorities and decision makers at the central and local levels, we aspire to be heard, gain political acceptance and achieve our goals. Success is contingent on NAR being suitably organised, with emphasis on expertise at every level and with good internal communication between the various parts of the union. Priority will be given to supporting and strengthening NAR's local branches. In collaboration with qualified, motivated local union representatives, the Executive Board and the secretariat share a common responsibility for carrying out the work programme for the plan period.

## 2. WORKING CONDITIONS

### 2.1 Stepping Up Research Efforts

Research and higher education form the basis of today's knowledge society. Research and higher education lead to new discoveries and significant advances, ensuring a high level of expertise among the members of the general public. A higher level of R&D investment in Norway would enhance the economy's adaptability and could be an important incentive for growth in the longer term. It is important for Norway to maintain a level of research that makes it possible to absorb new knowledge as well as research produced by other countries.

Research investments in Norway lag far behind the other Nordic countries measured both as a percentage of GDP and as *per capita* research investment. Norway faces formidable challenges associated, not least, with health, climate and energy. Investment in research and higher education is an important policy instrument for finding solutions to these challenges, and for promoting future value creation.

NAR is of the opinion that Norway should stand firmly behind its objective to escalate research efforts to 3 per cent of GDP, but the target can be postponed until 2014. Further, the public sector's share of this should account for at least 50 per cent, given the low R&D intensity in Norwegian business and industry. NAR maintains that the public sector's research efforts ought to be measured as a percentage of the National Budget. The work to encourage business and industry to carry out more research must be developed further.

In recent years, research growth has generally taken place within directed research. Accordingly, there is a need to increase the resources spent on long-term fundamental research and basic research. Meanwhile, the university, university college and institute sectors face different challenges in this situation. This implies a need to clarify the distribution of roles between the university and university college sector and the institute sector. Increasing the institutions' basic allocations could help strengthen basic research in all disciplines, while ensuring that resources are not allocated solely to issues that are in vogue. There is also a need to increase the share spent on funding independent projects under the auspices of the Research Council.

#### Goals:

- Norway should increase its research spending to 3 per cent of GDP by 2014. The public sector's research spending should be increased to at least 4 per cent of the National Budget.
- Basic allocations to universities, university colleges, research institutes and the ABM sector should be strengthened. It is expected that the basic allocation to universities and university colleges will reach a level that is more or less equal to comparable institutions.
- A higher percentage of the yield on the Research and Innovation Fund should go directly to the institutions.
- The allocation for independent basic research under the auspices of the Research Council should be tripled/increased significantly.
- The SkatteFUNN tax relief scheme should be strengthened by raising the cap, and hourly rates should be raised and index-regulated. Further, deposit-based schemes and other incentive schemes must be introduced for research projects in business and industry.
- Raise the threshold for when commissioned studies must be put up for tender.
- Ensure the national funding share required for EU projects.

### 2.2 Quality in Research

The increase in research spending calls for special initiatives to assure the quality of the research performed. Academic staff must be allowed sufficient time for R&D work and have better opportunities for skills development and self-initiated research. Time for research and development work is the key factor for qualifying for top academic positions, and for contributing to international knowledge development.

The institutions must be equipped with modern scientific equipment for research and education, and they must have sufficient resources for academic travel and research assistance. There is a documented need to invest in equipment and infrastructure costing roughly NOK 11 billion over the next 10 years (Source: Research Council of Norway (RCN)).

All research institutions should be assured basic funding that will enable them to maintain and utilise expertise in their fields and to make it possible to carve out international positions. The basic allocation should ensure that the staff has opportunities to carry out self-initiated research and engage in skills development efforts.

The university and university college sector is underfunded and, over time, the basic allocations have deteriorated relative to the institutions' overall levels of activity. This is partly because recruitment positions and RCN and EU projects are not fully funded, and because the institutions are not granted full compensation for wage settlements. It is necessary to increase basic allocations to cover a larger percentage of the overall allocations. The funding system must be further developed to attend to the needs of different academic environments and institutions. Further, the funding system for the university and university college sector must take into account the need for more cooperation and higher quality.

The incentive-based research component for the university and university college sector is calculated on the basis of a redistribution model and is a zero-sum game. NAR is of the opinion that payment of the incentive-based research allocations must be linked to the results achieved by the individual institution. All institutions that improve their performance should be rewarded by higher allocations.

### **Goals:**

- Academic staff in associate professorships and professorships should spend at least 50 per cent of their working time on R&D. Academic staff in other combined positions should be assured that at least 30 per cent of their working time can be spent on R&D.
- Members of the academic staff at universities, university colleges, research institutes and in the ABM sector are to be ensured sufficient resources and contiguous blocks of time to carry out R&D work.
- Employers should ensure that the duties of academic staff can be completed in the course of ordinary working hours.
- Research sabbaticals for academic staff are to be enshrined in local or central agreements. Funds should be set aside centrally and/or locally to finance these schemes.
- Technical and administrative support functions associated with the research communities are to be used to relieve academic staff of technical and administrative duties.
- A government fund should be built up to provide an annual yield of at least MNOK 800 for investment in research infrastructure.
- No further components should be introduced into the funding system for universities and university colleges.
- The institutions should be granted full compensation for the increase in real wages.
- Basic allocations for the research institutes and the ABM sector should be increased so that academic staff can devote at least 25 per cent of their working time to self-initiated research and skills development.

## **2.3 Quality in Higher Education**

Having equal rights to education is a fundamental principle which must remain a cornerstone of Norway's educational policy. This means the public sector is responsible for funding higher education, for ensuring the necessary equipment for good teaching, and for maintaining a satisfactory system for student grants and loans. This presupposes that teaching will be research-based, that the forms of evaluation will be adapted to the distinctive character of the various disciplines, and that students will be followed up closely during their studies. It is important to ensure that students have general framework conditions that enable them to study full-time.

The finances of institutions of higher education must be strengthened to prevent cutbacks in the resource-intensive segment of teaching, i.e. where there are smaller groups and assignments are handed in. In this context, it is decisive that student places be fully funded to prevent any further deterioration in the situation.

One reason that academic staff has little time for R&D during working hours is that the teaching burden on the individual has become excessive. A growing number of students and closer follow up of individual students have further added to employees' workloads. At the same time, institutions' tight finances have put pressure on the actuarial factors used to set parameters for preparations and follow-up work. The actuarial factors must be adjusted to reflect actual time spent so that the percentage of time spent on teaching is correct in the individual's working plan.

These days, the dimensioning of higher education is largely governed by students' wishes. Students generally apply to places of study in major cities, while university colleges in outlying areas have serious problems recruiting qualified applicants. This makes it difficult to exercise national steering and improve the overall roster of courses. Meanwhile, it is incumbent upon the national authorities to ensure that a wide variety of subjects is offered. Small and vulnerable disciplines are essential for maintaining diversity and attending to cultural needs, and they may also be complementary subjects for other disciplines. The process of discontinuing disciplines is virtually irreversible, as it takes many years to build up an academic environment.

### **Goals:**

- Academic positions are to be combined with the right and obligation to engage in research and development, teaching and dissemination.
- More employees are required in order to maintain the high quality of teaching.
- Student places created over the National Budget are to be fully funded.
- All teaching in higher education should be research-based.
- Teaching should be concentrated to allow adequate blocks of time for R&D.
- Students are to be guaranteed financing that will enable them to study full-time.
- The actuarial factors for preparation and follow-up work should be accurate when it comes to actual time use.
- It must be possible to maintain small, vulnerable disciplines even in times of few applicants.

## **2.4 Libraries**

Specialist and research libraries are part of the scientific infrastructure that is essential for researchers and students to have access to the latest quality-assured information resources. These libraries are a resource that improves the quality of education and research, and they must be guaranteed funding that makes this possible.

Information expertise is part of the qualifications framework for higher education and, in collaboration with academic staff; libraries will play an important part in the development of this area. One central aspect of these efforts is the development of students' and researchers' skills in finding, critically assessing and using sources and reference literature. Information expertise is also a means for preventing plagiarism and academic misconduct.

### **Goals:**

- Ensure funding that allows researchers and students access to the latest quality-assured library resources.
- Improve students' and researchers' information expertise as a step in promoting academic honesty.

## 2.5 University Museums

The cultural and natural history museums at the universities administer unique artefacts that form a platform for research and dissemination in a wide range of disciplines. Reports from the Office of the Auditor General have revealed serious shortcomings in storage conditions at the museums. These same critical factors have been identified in White Paper No. 15 (2007–2008) on the university museums.

The White Paper also devotes attention to conditions for research at the university museums. Working conditions for the staff at the university museums have not been given the priority they deserve relative to the scientific and social importance of their collections. Realising the intentions in the proposal for a new 'National digital university museum' will pave the way for scientific work on university museums' artefact material.

### Goals:

- Help secure the university museums' artefact material and enhance its value in use by fulfilling the intentions underlying the establishment of the digital university museum.

## 2.6 Internationalisation and Mobility

NAR will address the trend in international research cooperation proactively, in particular the integration between stakeholders in the common European Research Area (the ERA) and the development of bilateral and multilateral programme cooperation through joint announcements of research funding.

NAR is of the opinion that it is necessary to implement initiatives to ensure that foreign researchers and students at higher education and research institutions can get easier access to the Norwegian labour market. Institutional cooperation is a central component in the internationalisation of higher education. Stimulation of joint activities will invigorate the internationalisation of Norwegian research and higher education. NAR will monitor the development of the Bologna process and the EU's Lisbon strategy, as well as the development of the global market for higher education.

### Goals:

- Norwegian researchers should have the equipment and resources required to enable them to take active part in international cooperation, and which will make them interesting cooperation partners.
- Research collaboration between Norwegian and foreign researchers should be fortified through measures to promote mobility (exchanges, placements, cooperation) for academic staff members.
- Schemes must be set up to protect researchers' rights as employees in connection with more international mobility.
- Schemes of a practical, administrative nature must be established to make it easier for Norwegian PhD candidates and researchers to make the transition when returning home from extended stays abroad.
- Teacher exchanges and joint development of educational programmes are to be encouraged through support provided for institutional cooperation.

## 2.7 Organised Research Training and the Recruitment of Researchers

There is political consensus that Norway's investments in research should be escalated. Meanwhile, the institutions are facing a considerably higher number of staff retiring in the years ahead. Many academic environments need more employees to carry out their current teaching and research duties. Accordingly, recruitment will be one of the greatest challenges for many academic environments in the years ahead.

On average, one of five academic staff members at state universities and university colleges is on a fixed-term contract (not including recruitment positions). This is more than twice as many as in working life otherwise. Extensive use of temporary academic positions makes jobs less attractive to those seeking a career in research. To ensure researchers' academic freedom and society's confidence that research is taking place in a critical, independent manner, permanent appointments and job security are of the utmost importance for academic staff. Further, the high percentage of fixed-term contracts leads to a less attractive wage development (cf. Chapter 3).

Prevailing legislation affords externally-funded positions less protection than it gives to regular employees. From 2002 to 2008, the percentage of employees on specific assignments / projects climbed by nearly 150 per cent. Accordingly, there is reason to re-examine the regulations.

Academic career paths are characterised by long periods of temporary employment. For that reason, a new type of academic position should be explored, e.g. tenure track or an entry-level position. This position should provide greater predictability than is the case with short-term temporary positions, since an entry-level position may ultimately lead to a longer term of employment and to being considered for tenure. Conditions must, however, be attached to the use of this new position so that it does not supersede tenured positions, and so that it does not merely imply additional flexibility for the employer. NAR's most important conditions are that such positions be created over the National Budget, that they offer a realistic qualification path up to professor, and that they will lead to tenure as professor if the candidate is qualified under the regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts.

Many PhD candidates fail to complete their degrees within the PhD period. Efforts must be made to ensure that doctorates can be earned in the prescribed period of time. NAR has drawn up a *Plan of action for PhD candidates* which is the foundation for the union's efforts on behalf of this group.

The job structure and scheme of personal promotions for academic staff are also important instruments for being able to recruit and retain highly-qualified personnel in research and higher education. NAR will strive to ensure that today's scheme for promotions between academic posts is retained and further developed. Further, NAR will strive to promote the establishment of good job and career structures. It is important to be able to offer alternative career paths, so that expertise and specialisation pay off in the same way as they would with a career in management or administration.

### **Goals:**

- The use of temporary positions must be curtailed significantly, and job protection must be strengthened in statutory and regulatory provisions.
- External funding should not lead to any undermining of employees' rights.
- Post-doctoral candidates should only be given required duties if the appointment is for more than three years.
- The current scheme for personal promotions for academic staff in the State should be retained and expanded to also comprise new positions and other relevant bargaining areas.
- Good job and career structures should be established for administrative, technical, health-related and library staff members.
- All PhD and post-doctoral positions should be fully funded.
- To establish clearer career paths for research recruits, the institutions must draw up and apply recruitment plans to a greater extent.
- Studies should be made of a new academic position, tenure track, for the purpose of increasing predictability for younger recruits.
- PhD candidates are to be given satisfactory working conditions and the resources to complete their doctorates, including the resources needed to perform research abroad.
- PhD candidates are to be ensured co-determination at their workplaces, pursuant to legislation and collective agreements.

- Efforts are to be made to ensure that new recruits are integrated into active research communities.
- PhD candidates who fail to complete their doctorates by the end of their PhD period should be entitled to unemployment benefits even if they continue working on their thesis in their free time.
- A special programme should be established for funding independent projects under the auspices of the Research Council. It should be reserved for younger researchers (completion of a PhD in the past eight years).
- The institutions' basic funding should allow for the local PhD programmes to be academically competitive at the international level.

## **2.8 Skills Development for Technical-administrative Personnel**

The duties of the institutions in research and higher education call for high-level professional expertise on the part of the administration, and higher education is usually a requirement for being hired in such positions. Continuous skills upgrading for the staff is required to achieve the best possible quality of the work and ensure that the institutions are able to adapt to changing conditions. Procedures must be developed to guarantee that the staff has opportunities to maintain and further develop their expertise.

### **Goals:**

- Technical-administrative staff should be guaranteed resources for skills development.
- The institutions are to have plans and procedures for upgrading the skills of personnel.

## **2.9 Institutional Mobility**

NAR will strive to ensure that employees at institutions for cultural heritage work are given employment conditions that facilitate research, skills development and the build-up of a list of academic merits. This will also facilitate mobility between cultural heritage work and other institutions in the sector.

Accepting employment in cultural heritage work should not preclude opportunities for employees to return to educational and research institutions.

The lack of mobility in the system also contributes to maintaining the large number of temporary academic positions at educational and research institutions, since many are unwilling to leave these institutions for fear of not being able to return.

### **Goals:**

- Cultural heritage employees should be guaranteed time for research and skills development.
- Ensure a merit system that makes it possible to transfer from cultural heritage work to educational and research institutions.
- Improve mobility between cultural heritage work and educational and research institutions.

## **2.10 Organisation and Form of Affiliation**

State and political authorities bear the overall responsibility for the university and college sector. This responsibility is best taken care of by the state universities and university colleges continuing to be autonomous state bodies with special authorisations. These institutions are important bearers of culture as well as social institutions that bear social responsibility. The institutions should have academic and artistic freedom and be academically independent of the State.

The State is a guarantor for the institutions' continued autonomy and academic freedom.

It is necessary to have national steering and coordination of overarching questions regarding the establishment of new disciplines and studies, the dimensioning of admissions and the maintenance of courses of study in higher education in the outlying areas.

Norway's research institutes are to some extent organised as independent legal entities, to some extent as administrative bodies, and to some extent as private companies. For NAR, it is vital to ensure the institutes' independence of owners and contractors, ensuring at the same time that the public sector does not renounce its general, long-term responsibility for the sector. It is necessary to have basic funding that guarantees operations and mandatory responsibilities as well as the necessary researcher-initiated projects and skills upgrading among staff. The institute sector is also influenced by shifting general conditions, as the institutes encounter growing competition on a limited market, for example from the universities and university colleges due to establishment of border zone activities and more stringent requirements regarding external revenues.

NAR supports today's standard scheme for governing and administrating the universities and university colleges, featuring an elected Rector as chair of the Board and joint management at the top level. Further, NAR is of the opinion that the various groups of staff representatives should, collectively, have the majority of seats on university and university college boards. Collegial bodies at all levels provide a foundation for academic independence and institutional autonomy. NAR is deeply critical of the dismantling of collegial bodies. This creates a 'democracy deficit' at the institution that cannot be replaced by employee co-determination based on the Basic Agreement. At the institutions where unitary management and employed managers have been introduced, the degree of employee co-determination and empowerment has clearly been undermined. The consequences may be that decisions are poorly anchored in the organisation and that the implementation of decisions takes time and encounters resistance. Like collegial bodies, elected managers with loyalty downstream in the organisation are crucial for the universities and university colleges to fulfil their role as independent research and educational institutions.

Mergers or network formations in the university and college sector must be based on voluntarism on the part of all involved institutions.

### **Goals:**

- Universities and university colleges will continue to be autonomous state bodies with special authorisations.
- The research institutes should be guaranteed independence from owners and contractors through a robust basic allocation.
- Collegial bodies are to be the standard scheme under the Act and the different groups of staff representatives are, collectively, to have a majority on the Board."
- The institutions use the scheme with an elected Rector. The academic environments themselves should decide whether they want to elect or employ a manager at a lower level.
- Mergers or network formations in the university and college sector are to be done on a voluntary basis. No one should have their employment terminated as a result of mergers.
- To make the best possible use of the resources at hand, a process should be implemented to clarify the division of roles and responsibilities among universities, university colleges and research institutes.

## **2.11 Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom for Employees**

NAR will strive to ensure that all employees are able to blow the whistle on any censurable conditions in the workplace, without fear of dismissal or reprisals in his/her working environment. NAR will strive to ensure that the academic freedom now incorporated in the Act relating to universities and university colleges is lived up to. NAR will also strive to ensure that individual academic freedom becomes a normative right in other segments of the research sector, including research institutes, health enterprises and the ABM sector.

## **Goals:**

- Employees should not be prevented from or to fear the consequences of blowing the whistle on censurable conditions in the workplace, nor should they be prevented from expressing their own viewpoints in public.
- The institutions should appoint joint committees to establish procedures for whistleblowing.
- Academic freedom for individuals and institutions should be safeguarded and strengthened.
- Academic freedom within the university and college sector should be in full compliance with the spirit of the law, including the freedom to choose one's own publication channels.
- Research institutes, health enterprises and the ABM sector should incorporate academic freedom in their regulations, planning documents, etc.

## **2.12 Co-determination and the Working Environment**

NAR seeks to ensure that co-determination schemes are strengthened and that the resources available to trade union representatives will be increased in all bargaining areas. Accordingly, NAR will oppose every attempt to deprive employees of their established and contractual rights to co-determination. In cases of transition from the public to the private sector, co-determination must be maintained at the same level as in the State.

In processes of reorganisation, separate agreements should be drawn up to ensure co-determination for local union representatives at all levels and throughout all parts of the reorganisation. Co-determination should lead to genuine influence, and sufficient resources must be allocated to carry out reorganisation processes in a satisfactory manner.

NAR will protect the rights of the individual members during reorganisation and downsizing processes. NAR will work to strengthen the regulations associated with these processes. Local union representatives play an important part in carrying out such processes. NAR seeks to ensure that the union representatives are well equipped to do this work.

Funds for training and development are crucial for the training of union representatives. NAR will strive to ensure that this scheme is maintained at the current level, as a minimum. It is also important that the scheme of funds for training and development of union representatives is applied in all bargaining areas.

NAR will strengthen training in co-determination in all sectors by providing training in collective bargaining processes and in how to deal with practical issues.

As far as possible, NAR will assist individual members who have been subjected to unfortunate psycho-social and physical burdens in the working environment, to a lack of workplace adaptation following illnesses, etc. NAR will work to promote a stronger Working Environment Act and Inclusive Working Life (IWL) agreement. NAR will provide instruction for our local union representatives in the regulatory framework associated with the working environment, in conflict resolution and in the adaptation of jobs for employees on sick leave.

## **Goals:**

- NAR will strive to achieve equal rights within academia. There shall be no discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.
- Staff co-determination according to collective agreements should be strengthened at every level.
- The funds for training and development of union representatives should be maintained at the current level, and expanded to include all collective bargaining areas.
- Reorganisation agreements should be drawn up in all reorganisation processes.
- Employees should be assured co-determination and genuine influence during reorganisation processes.
- Training in the field of co-determination should be strengthened through central and local courses.

- The regulations that refer to reorganisation and downsizing should be strengthened.
- The Working Environment Act's requirements in respect of the working environment and the IWL agreement should be complied with in actual practice, and not be undermined.

## 2.13 Copyright and Open Access

NAR will protect members' intellectual property rights to works created on the job as well as outside the workplace. NAR will continue its efforts to ensure that members' work is not misused or exploited financially. NAR will strive to protect employees' moral rights to their own works. This is highly relevant in connection with the development and use of digital teaching materials.

NAR aspires to ensure that researchers' right to publish is protected under public contracts for research projects and commissioned studies.

NAR favours its members voluntarily publishing in open access journals or open institutional records. It is important to add that the institutions cannot require publication in their institutional records even if an article is submitted there. Publication is contingent upon the consent of the author.

With the establishment and further development of open institutional records, the institutions must ensure that writers' copyrights are protected, and the systems must not call for additional administrative work on the part of the researchers.

The institutions are not entitled to order their employees to publish in open access channels, since this runs counter to the principle of academic freedom. NAR is also opposed to researchers themselves having to pay to publish in open access journals; financing for publication must be triggered automatically when an article is accepted subsequent to peer review. We will strive to raise a debate on a broad front about all aspects of open access.

### Goals:

- No assignment of copyrights from employee to employer other than when necessary to satisfy the terms in contracts of employment.
- Standard public-sector contracts for commissioned studies are to ensure that the researcher/scientist is entitled to publish his/her results.
- There should be no conveyance clauses in contracts of employment that obligate employees to assign more intellectual property rights than are required to achieve the goals of the contracts of employment.
- Schemes must be established to provide funding for publication in open access journals.
- Cooperation with the Norwegian Non-Fiction Writers and Translators Association (NFF) and the Freedom of Expression Foundation, Oslo, will be prolonged during the plan period to ensure that employees' copyrights are dealt with in the best possible manner.
- Develop institutional archives as a supplement to the Norwegian Science Index.

## 2.14 Stage-of-Life Policy

A good stage-of-life policy creates a more meaningful and inclusive working environment. Employees must therefore be assured working conditions throughout their working careers that make it possible for them to use their work capacity and resources in the best possible manner.

Employees with care giving responsibilities must be allowed flexible working conditions that enable them to combine parenting and working life, for example through home office arrangements.

NAR is working to promote flexible work schedules that make it easier for parents of small children to work full time. The arrangements are intended to promote gender parity, and should be of genuine importance to all the groups organised by NAR.

Senior citizens should, to a greater extent, be mentors for younger employees in order to better utilise the senior's expertise and experience, and to ensure that their contacts and networks also benefit their younger colleagues.

**Goals:**

- Employees must be given a chance to adapt their responsibilities to their circumstances.
- Expertise and network transfers from senior employees to younger colleagues.
- Employees with care giving responsibilities must be assured flexible working conditions in order to achieve better work-life balance.
- Employees over the age of 60 should have an opportunity to redistribute their work obligations.

## **2.15 Equal Opportunity**

In research and higher education, quality rests on the premise of equal opportunity. The world of academia is still characterised by inequality, although 2007 was the first year in which there were more women than men who held PhD positions. The Norwegian labour market is very gender-segregated, and this also has an impact on which disciplines men and women choose. The main challenge is that women account for only 19.2 % of the professors in the university and university college sector (2008). The percentage of female professors climbed by 3.1 points from 2003 to 2008. In 2007, the percentage of women in executive positions was 34 % (2005: 31 %).

Having to do a great deal of the research work outside of ordinary working hours can affect women more than men. Initiatives to reduce the use of fixed-term contracts and to arrange for work assignments that can be completed within ordinary working hours are therefore important from the gender parity perspective. NAR has drawn up a *Plan of action for gender parity*, which is the foundation for the union's work with equal opportunity.

**Goals:**

- More women should hold academic and technical-administrative executive positions.
- More women should apply for personal promotions.
- The authorities and the institutions should set target figures to increase the share of the underrepresented gender in tenured academic positions and other executive positions.
- Working conditions that make it attractive for women to choose a career in academia.
- There should be a good gender balance in all disciplines.

### 3. WAGES

NAR will work to ensure that all of our members in research, higher education and the ABM sector are offered competitive wage levels that correspond to those in other sectors of society. Wage levels should reflect members' expertise, responsibilities and efforts. This is a prerequisite if the sector is to recruit and retain the best qualified, motivated and talented young individuals, who will contribute to the increased level of knowledge production on which society depends. The absence of wage hikes for NAR's members will upset the very foundation for acquiring new knowledge and the quality of higher education, and thus have far-reaching consequences for society-at-large. Work must be targeted to rally support for acknowledgement of this fact in the public opinion as well as among politicians. A successful wage policy is contingent on a proactive media policy that also helps provide information and motivates members to engage actively in bargaining work at the local level.

Today's wage level for NAR's member groups is a product of existing collective wage agreements and NAR's influence on the negotiations under the prevailing systems of agreement. NAR's members have not experienced a satisfactory wage development over time. For that reason, a strategy has been devised for NAR's wage policy.

NAR's wage strategy for the period from 2010 to 2012 is embodied in a separate wage policy document that sets the stage for a two-tiered approach. On the one hand, NAR will work to ensure wage growth for member groups within the existing collective bargaining systems, with full utilisation of the opportunities at hand, both centrally and locally. On the other hand, NAR will draw up alternative strategies, such as major or minor modifications of the bargaining system in the public sector, fund-based financing of the university and university college sector, wage packages, special agreements or other alternative strategies. Studies and the implementation of these alternatives to existing systems for wage formation will take place during the period.

NAR has drawn up a separate *Wage policy strategy document* which is the foundation for the union's wage policy work.

#### Goals:

- All NAR's member groups are to be ensured a significant rise in real wages. The wage level should be raised considerably and be competitive with comparable positions in society-at-large, enabling the institutions to compete at both the national and international levels when recruiting and retaining the best qualified individuals.
- Wages and working conditions should be good enough to recruit the best qualified and motivated graduates to take up careers in research, and good enough to recruit extremely well-qualified scientists to return to researcher positions.
- The wage gap between NAR's member groups and comparable groups in the public sector should be closed.
- To reduce the wage gap between the public and the private sector, the wage growth in research and higher education must outpace the wage growth for comparable groups in the private sector for a period of time.
- Alternatives to the instruments that exist in the current bargaining and negotiating system should be drawn up and implemented.

## 4. NAR'S POLICY INSTRUMENTS

### 4.1 Organisation

NAR's work on organisation, communications, information and public relations is a policy instrument for achieving the union's objectives with a view to wage and personnel policy and research and education policy. NAR's influence is closely related to its total number of members. A well-functioning organisation is crucial for rallying support for topics of current interest and for providing all members with the assistance they need. Organising a high percentage of the staff gives NAR greater legitimacy, more influence and more financial freedom of action. Accordingly, the recruitment of new members will be given priority.

An efficient, powerful organisation presupposes that the central levels, the local branches and the trade-specific networks are all pulling in the same direction, and that all levels cooperate closely to promote members' interests. NAR will strengthen the local branches and their role as active suppliers of the terms and conditions in the union's policy and strategic development, in addition to the work aimed at their own workplace.

The local trade union representatives bear the main responsibility for drawing up NAR's objectives and for implementing the union's policies and helping members. Consequently, local union representatives must be ensured good working conditions and well-functioning training programmes.

#### Goals:

- Further develop NAR as the natural trade union for employees in research, higher education and the ABM sector.
- Strengthen NAR's efforts on behalf of the members, and give individual members the help and service they need.
- Improve NAR's results in respect of wage, research and educational policies.
- NAR will strive to ensure that the number of members continues to grow, and have a recruiting strategy appropriate to the anticipated growth in research in the years ahead.
- The National Council should be used actively as a body for developing policies and strategies and for promoting communication between the local branches, the trade-specific networks and the Executive Board.
- A study will be conducted to determine whether the National Council should be changed into a National Board. The study should also evaluate the present division into constituencies/electoral districts.
- The role of the sectors and constituencies/electoral districts is to be strengthened through annual meetings financed by training and development funds.
- NAR will involve its local union representatives in the development of strategies and policies, in its regular and *ad hoc* committees, and in the central negotiating committees.
- The need for and sphere of responsibility of NAR's trade-specific networks will be evaluated.
- All local branches will be encouraged to recruit new union representatives.
- The training of local union representatives should maintain high quality through a relevant, professional and flexible series of courses.
- The financial resources made available for the local representatives should be increased significantly. Experience from local union work ought to be included in the criteria for local pay raises, and full-time union representatives ought to have extra wage compensation.
- Efforts should be made to pave the way for developing forms of cooperation with trade unions whose interests coincide with NAR's.
- NAR will work to ensure the development of cooperation and influence within its own confederation.
- NAR will strive to ensure the establishment of more agreements on double membership within the Confederation of Unions for Professionals, Norway.
- NAR's membership benefits, such as insurance schemes and banking services, are to be attractive and to give to the union a competitive edge compared with other organisations.

## 4.2 Information and Media Relations

NAR's communication strategy is a crucial policy instrument for achieving the union's political objectives. Media relations should help promote the union's viewpoints and communicate its objectives to members, local union representatives, institution leaders, politicians and the authorities in higher education and research.

Media-related public relations will be used actively to facilitate the achievement of goals relating to wages and working conditions and to rally support for the union's viewpoints on education and research policy. This calls for the communication of a clear message, cogent argumentation and a pro-active focus on the media. NAR's president plays a central part in this work. NAR will make its policies and points of view clear to its own organisational units, local union representatives, members and potential members through active use of internal information. This will help ensure that all organisational units and union representatives are familiar with the union's policies, priorities and results so that the entire organisation can work towards common goals.

### Goals:

- Improve NAR's media coverage and presentation of cases, and use this actively in goal achievement efforts.
- Follow up the wage policy strategy with a special media plan.
- Disseminate knowledge about wage development trends and actual placement on the salary schedule in our sector to the public, as well as to decision makers and the appropriating authorities.
- Disseminate knowledge about the resource situation in research and higher education and the ABM sector, and the consequences for the public, to decision makers and the appropriating authorities.
- Participate in communication strategy networks through the Confederation of Unions for Professionals, Norway, the sector's conferences for information workers and other relevant professional meeting points.
- Strengthen the qualifications of local branches for dealing with the media on local matters.
- The periodical *Forskerforum* will strengthen its position as a leading news and debate forum in the sector.
- Information to members, elected officers, local branches and networks should be as complete and up-to-date as possible.
- NAR's policy and viewpoints on topics of current interest will be communicated to the members.

## 4.3 Public Relations

To reach our political objectives, it is important that NAR stands out as a clear, high-profile and serious societal actor. The union's viewpoints and objectives will be made known to institution leaders, politicians and the authorities in higher education and research. NAR's public relations are intended to garner more support from the authorities. The union attaches importance to entering into political processes at an early stage to contribute knowledge and proposals for solutions. To rally support for its causes, NAR must get engaged in the public debate with a clear and distinct message. Extensive cooperation and alliance-building with other players are important for achieving results.

### Goals:

- Further develop NAR's position as the leading societal actor and the trendsetting special interest organisation within the union's sphere of responsibility.
- Further develop cooperation and contact with other societal actors within the union's area of interest to garner as much support as possible for NAR's policies.
- Influence the content of the policies devised by the Confederation of Unions for Professionals.
- NAR will participate in international organisations such as ETUCE and Education International to stay updated on development trends of importance to the sector.