



# Work programme 2017–2024

Programme on Democratic and Effective Governance,  
Planning and Public Administration – DEMOS



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Programme on Democratic and Effective Governance,  
Planning and Public Administration - DEMOS

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# 1 Summary

The primary focus of the DEMOS programme revolves around the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation's areas of responsibility, which include government administration policy, municipal policy, housing policy, physical planning and regional policy. The programme will provide a platform for viewing government administration research and municipal research in relation to each other and for raising questions on the role the public administration should play in a representative democracy. It will also facilitate efforts to view government administration research in the context of other societal challenges and to study how the public administration can create a foundation for social development in various types of regions. Furthermore, the DEMOS programme will focus on urbanisation, as well as on the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the welfare society. The DEMOS programme will promote research designed to enhance the knowledge base for integrated, knowledge-based policies within the public sector.

The DEMOS programme is the successor to the Research Programme on Democracy and Governance in Regional Context (DEMOSREG) (2005–2014) and represents a continuation of that programme. The final report of the DEMOSREG programme stated that the strength of the programme was in its broad-based thematic focus on the interface between sectors, the levels of governance and territorial units in a democratic context. These main elements are incorporated into the new DEMOS programme. At the same time, however, the DEMOS work programme represents renewal with regard to research in areas such as the government administration and municipal and county services.

Research activities under the DEMOS programme are to have a long-term perspective, contribute to knowledge-building and address research questions of a fundamental nature. The programme will fund projects involving critical research and pave the way for development of new theory and methodology within different disciplines. The programme will prioritise research projects of high scientific merit, thereby promoting the development of highly competent research groups. At the same time, activities under the DEMOS programme are to be relevant and useful for decision makers and other users, for the public debate, and for expanding the knowledge base for innovation in the public sector.

The programme will create arenas for interaction and fund research cooperation across disciplines and research groups to ensure a broad analysis of relevant thematic areas and research topics. The DEMOS programme will work to encourage researchers to participate in various forums for European research cooperation and to take advantage of the potential under Horizon 2020 to study issues in an international perspective.

## 2 Background and challenges

### 2.1 Strategic perspectives

The DEMOS programme is a 10-year research programme (2015–2024) on the development of public governance, planning and administration, and the conditions that support effectiveness and democracy. The programme will generate research-based knowledge that can form the basis for the development and implementation of policy, and will more generally expand expertise and knowledge within the programme's thematic priority areas. The DEMOS programme is the successor to the Research Programme on Democracy and Governance in Regional Context (DEMOSREG) (2005–2014).

The DEMOS programme takes its point of departure in fundamental structures and changes in society, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation's areas of responsibility, and findings and recommendations from the DEMOSREG programme.

Fundamental structures and structural changes at the local, regional, national and international levels create the framework for democracy, public governance and service production. Norway's global competitive situation is changing, and structural shifts are occurring in trade and industry and labour markets. Demographic trends and limited access to labour are presenting challenges for the municipal sector as well as for the state. Problems related to governance, societal development, land use and climate change require new solutions. Urban areas are facing challenges with regard to growth, sustainability, housing production, planning and transport. Norway is facing particular challenges related to, for example, a small population, small cities, sparsely populated areas and long distances. The challenges vary from one part of the country to another, and solutions must take this into account. The programme period for the DEMOS programme coincides with a local government reform that may alter the municipal structure, the role of the counties, and the relationship between the state and the municipalities.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation's areas of responsibility encompass government administration policy, municipal policy, housing policy, physical planning and regional policy. This enables the programme to view public administration research, municipal research and planning research in relation to each other and to raise questions on the role the public administration should play in a representative democracy, including how considerations relating to governance capacity and political representation should be weighed in relation to each other. It also provides an opportunity to consider this research in conjunction with other societal challenges and to study how the public administration can create a foundation for social development in various types of regions. In general, the DEMOS programme is intended to be a cross-cutting initiative across the ministry's entire sphere of responsibility, which in principle opens the programme to research that seeks connections between its entire range of tasks. In practice, however, there are some limitations, in part because some thematic areas are encompassed by other Research Council programmes (see Section 8) or special initiatives.

## **2.2 Experience gained from the DEMOSREG programme**

The DEMOSREG programme employed the following three thematic priority areas: Economic development and public sector restructuring; Public governance and planning; and Democracy and political participation. The final report from the DEMOSREG programme stated that the strength of the programme was in its broad-based thematic focus on the interface between sectors, levels of governance and territorial units in a democratic context. Some thematic areas have been well researched, others less so. The report stated that there is a need for more research in areas such as the government administration and municipal and county services, among other things. It also pointed out that the international dimension was inadequately addressed under the DEMOSREG programme. There were too few projects that incorporated an international, comparative component or that explored the significance of European integration. Too little research was conducted on the increase in globalisation and Europeanisation related to industrial development, policy, planning and government administration. These conclusions have been valuable when designing the framework for further research activities.

Knowledge generated under the DEMOSREG programme has been beneficial for policy development and implementation alike. However, it is uncertain whether the project results are widely enough known, are perceived as relevant and have been utilised by the programme's target groups.

Experience from the DEMOSREG programme indicates that it can be difficult to get researchers to draw clear conclusions and formulate recommendations regarding policy formulation and choice of solutions. In many cases, the most important contribution of research is to clarify challenges, dilemmas and choices. The report therefore recommended that a new research programme takes steps to ensure better dissemination, and that both the individual projects and the programme as a whole focus greater attention on how research can contribute to solutions.

## 3 Objectives for the programme

### 3.1 Primary objective

The DEMOS programme is a policy-oriented programme designed to expand the knowledge base for democratic and effective governance, planning and public administration. The programme will support cross-level, cross-sectoral research that provides a basis for knowledge-based policies for tasks that are the responsibility of the public authorities. The programme will also play an important role in developing the knowledge base for renewal and innovation in the public sector, which is one of the long-term priorities set out in the Norwegian Government's Long-term plan for research and higher education 2015–2024<sup>1</sup>. The programme will thus generate relevant and important knowledge for addressing one of the major societal challenges facing Norway.

Research activities under the DEMOS programme are to have a long-term perspective, contribute to knowledge-building and address research questions of a fundamental nature. The programme will fund projects involving critical research and pave the way for development of new theory and methodology with perspectives and contributions from a variety of disciplines and subject areas. The programme will prioritise research projects of high scientific merit, thereby promoting the development of highly competent research groups. At the same time, activities under the DEMOS programme are to be relevant and useful for decision makers and other users, and the programme is to be visible in the public debate. Consequently, importance will be attached to relevance, the anticipated results, the practical benefits, and specification of target groups when projects are selected for funding.

Primary objective of the programme

**The DEMOS programme is designed to expand the knowledge base for democratic and effective governance, planning and public administration. The programme will generate new knowledge about cross-level, cross-sectoral challenges, and promote knowledge-based restructuring and renewal of the public sector.**

### 3.2 Secondary objectives

In addition the following secondary objectives form the basis for the programme's activities. The programme will award funding to research projects that:

*Scientific secondary objectives*

- are of high scientific merit;

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<sup>1</sup> Meld. St. 7 (2014–2015) Long-term plan for research and higher education 2015–2024, white paper from the Ministry of Education and Research.

- challenge prevailing thinking and develop new perspectives, in terms of both theory and methodology;
- address research questions of significance for actors in the private and public sector, primarily in the areas of policy and public administration;
- give researchers the opportunity to define research questions, topics and perspectives within the framework provided by the work programme;
- create a basis for developing new scientific/analytical concepts that can be used to understand/analyse society;
- outline potential solutions to identified problems;
- promote cooperation across disciplines, methodological approaches and research traditions.

#### *Structural secondary objectives*

- advance the development of highly competent research groups that participate in the international forefront in the programme's thematic priority areas;
- produce research results that are relevant to the ongoing public debate;
- give adequate consideration to perspectives relating to both genders;
- involve users/practitioners;
- conform with the established ethical guidelines relating to research in the social sciences, humanities, law and theology;
- are internationally oriented and have their basis in international research;
- employ a comparative approach, for example between places or countries, between levels and administrative entities, between actors, sectors and processes, and between the past and the present;
- promote the development of research communities and competence-building in the research system within the subject areas encompassed by the programme and that lay the foundation for careers in research;
- take advantage of the unique data available in Norway.

These objectives apply to the programme as a whole, not to each individual project.

## **4 Thematic and scientific priority areas**

The environmental, economic and social sustainability of the welfare society presents fundamental challenges and necessitates restructuring. What role should the public sector play in addressing these challenges and in paving the way for and taking part in this restructuring? What changes and reforms are necessary and desirable? The DEMOS programme will promote research designed to enhance the knowledge base for integrated, knowledge-based policies within the public sector.

Research under the programme will be distributed among four thematic priority areas:

1. Internationalisation, the state and local democracy;
2. Integration and sectorisation;
3. Regions and urbanisation;
4. Welfare state services and service providers.

Democracy and effectiveness are issues that must be studied within and across the four thematic priority areas. In addition, the questions addressed within the individual thematic priority areas are closely interrelated. The programme is seeking research that extends across the individual areas, when this is relevant, and that addresses connections or overarching topics and research questions that involve more than one of these areas. Throughout the programme period, the programme board may set more specific priorities in the calls for proposals with regard to thematic area as well as application type.

The diagram below illustrates the relationships between the programme’s four thematic priority areas and the cross-cutting dimensions:



### 4.1 Internationalisation, the state and local democracy

What does local democracy entail in an age of increasing globalisation, declining confidence in knowledge, Europeanisation, climate challenges, public restructuring, strong professions and judicialisation? What impacts do new kinds of knowledge dissemination and new sources of knowledge have on public perception and the governance of democratic processes and the public administration? Is genuine local democracy possible at a time when mutual dependence between various authorities and private actors is an increasingly important factor in public decision-making? Is it possible that we can best address major global challenges by taking local action?

Local democracy has been a main component of national democracy in Norway for more than 175 years, and the municipalities have a considerable responsibility for realising national policy in addition to their responsibility to safeguard local common interests. In today’s world, not only national policy but also global and supranational frameworks affect the local latitude for action. The DEMOS programme will focus on integration and consistency in national policy vis-à-vis the municipalities and on how local democracy may be further developed in light of supranational guiding principles. There is a need for more knowledge about how Norway’s international obligations and challenges affect the municipalities and on how national policy affects the local policy room for manoeuvre. Do the municipalities themselves have any influence over or sufficient competence for

dealing with these legal trends, and are they equipped to deal with the consequences of these obligations? This is a research area that is well-suited for interdisciplinary and comparative studies.

The residents of a country are members of both a municipal and a state political community, and it is not immediately obvious which of these levels should provide the main framework for the formation of the democratic premises of various areas of public policy. Finding a balance between national and local considerations is a political dilemma. How is this dilemma addressed in various sectors? How is the role and latitude for action of local democracy perceived, and what conditions help to strengthen and weaken the local political arena for participation and empowerment? How does the increased use of ICT in the public administration affect the relationship between citizens and the authorities? The physical, political and symbolic distance to the decision-making authorities, and particularly to the government administration – or supranational power centres – has been a key factor in Norwegian policy for many decades. The division between the centre and periphery is manifested in different ways in different policy areas, and historically and culturally oriented studies in this context should provide valuable insight.

The principles of local democracy are related to, among other things, *placement of responsibility* – the municipal sector and publicly elected officials must be held accountable for decisions taken vis-à-vis citizens – and *autonomy* – understood in this context to mean the ability of municipalities to take decisions based on local preferences and with ramifications for their own local communities. In addition to highlighting local democracy's realm of potential and local political governance, the programme will give priority to projects that study innovative solutions for ensuring that public opinion reaches the municipal decision-making processes. This may involve schemes for participation at the sub-municipal level or schemes for initiatives from residents. To what extent is the democratic legitimacy of the municipalities affected by various types of participation? What are the ramifications of changes in the composition of the population for the authorities' democratic legitimacy, both locally and nationally?

The DEMOS programme is seeking research that generates knowledge about how local decision-making and planning processes take place and how they change over time. The programme will provide funding for analyses of who among both public and private actors launches initiatives, who takes decisions and who implements them. How are trade and industry, associations and organisations, civil society and the general public included in the various parts of the decision-making processes? Do the different ways of organising these interests influence the outcome of the decision-making processes? Who is not being heard, and who is not being allowed access; i.e., does Norway's thoroughly organised society also have elements of exclusion? Issues of trust, conditions for participation and inclusion and how participation in democratic processes has evolved historically will also be of relevance here.

The legitimacy of counties is being challenged in various ways, both by a decline in popular interest and involvement and by alternative assignment of tasks and functions that are too large for the individual municipalities. Like a variety of regional bodies in other parts of Europe, the counties have evolved from primarily being a service producer to assuming a greater responsibility for societal development. Experience of identity and regional affiliation and the conditions for designing regional development strategies are changing, partly due to regional expansion, shifting economic cycles, urbanisation and changing transport and industrial structures. Different forms of state organisation and sectoral divisions at the regional level make this even more complex. The DEMOS programme is seeking comparative research that investigates the fundamental conditions of the publicly elected regional level.

## 4.2 Integration and sectorisation

The relationship between *society* and the *governance system* (across ministerial areas and the state-municipal, political-administrative and public-private dividing lines) is a key aspect of this thematic priority area under the DEMOS programme. The programme is seeking research on how the existing governance system is being challenged by various changes in society, such as the expanding use of ICT, increasing migration, restructuring of the economy and the transition to a low-emission society, and on what has been done – and can be done – to design a political-administrative system with the scope to accommodate current and future challenges. Is it possible to establish forms of organisation and instruments of governance that satisfy the requirements relating to both the capacity and the representativeness of governance? The ability of the system to meet the needs of individuals, both as citizens of a democracy and as users of public services, is critical in this regard. To what degree can the system be renewed within the framework of the existing one – and to what extent is it necessary to confront and reconfigure long-established principles and features?

The DEMOS programme is seeking projects that focus on persistent tensions within the system of governance, such as between market schemes, networks and hierarchies, with emphasis on the individual public institutions and the system of governance of which these are a part. What conditions must be present to ensure that various forms of governance function well and how can the relationship between these be developed? The public sector is organised around sectors and levels, and the increased complexity in society has been met primarily with greater specialisation. At the same time, there is a growing need for governance at the interface *between* levels and *between* sectors. This also applies to the interface with other spheres, such as the private, non-governmental and international spheres. Key challenges – e.g. related to restructuring, climate/the environment, poverty, migration, urbanisation, public health and preparedness – must be dealt with broadly and in-depth, both globally and locally. More knowledge is needed about how European integration affects the system of governance. How can the demand for greater integration be met without at the same time undermining various forms of responsibility and accountability?

The *implementation ability* and *governance capacity* of the political-administrative system should be assessed critically, and research should aim to identify which features and other conditions impede and promote the system's ability to implement political decisions in accordance with the intentions. What role does ICT play as a tool for administrative and organisational development, coordination, public contact and high-quality services? How is ICT changing the conditions for governance at various levels? How do various forms of monitoring, control and auditing mechanisms function, based on the ideal of promoting effective, democratically based work methods, routines, practices and decisions in the municipalities and central government administration. The latter question may be discussed in light of the development of the regional state's multiple roles and functions, and the responsibility it has for a number of public considerations and mutually conflicting, but nonetheless fully legitimate sector policy objectives.

The questions of what is a public task and what are the public sector's boundaries are fundamental political questions that reflect ideology and values. There is not necessarily a correlation between the general public's expectations of what the public sector is to deal with and what the state has formally assumed responsibility for. The shared boundary and interaction with the private sphere and civil society are a part of this discussion. How are the organisation and the basis for legitimacy of the public governance system affected by the discussion of (and actual shift in) the public sector's boundaries and by the general public's expectations of public benefits and array of services? How can a governance system be designed to take into account the need for equality/standardisation on the one hand and local/individual adaptation on the other? Does the concept of effectiveness imply

something different in the public sector than in other segments of society and, if so, what is the relationship between effectiveness and other key values and considerations, such as the rule of law, democracy and quality? Is the political-administrative system attentive to the demands and needs of the population? Does the general public have confidence in the various government bodies and how much legitimacy does the system of governance have within the population?

Norway has a system of governance built around organisations that have their own individual characteristics, e.g. in the form of inherited administrative cultures and practices, and around an assortment of tensions between legitimate interests, needs and considerations related to quality and effectiveness. How has the interaction between governance systems and leadership developed over time and what ramifications will a changed composition of the population have for this interaction? Knowledge about this may also be obtained by looking outside of Norway's borders: Does a Nordic model exist (in this context, understood as a governance system, see also Section 4.4), and if so, what are the characteristics of, cultural conditions for and historical principles guiding this model – and is it under pressure?

### **4.3 Regions and urbanisation**

Norway is closely linked to Europe and the world at large. There is both a national and an international geographic distribution of tasks and competition related to the knowledge and resource base. Cities and urban areas become highlighted as drivers of an increasingly knowledge-based economy in which various effects of physical proximity (agglomeration effects) are thought to be critically important. The DEMOS programme is seeking knowledge about value creation in Norwegian regions and how the regions assert themselves in global competition. What can be done to ensure value creation in the long term?

Large companies are increasingly being subsumed into global corporations. What is the significance of this internationalisation for production, expertise, financing, management, ownership and value creation in the country and in the regions? How does this trend affect the ability of national, regional and local authorities to engage in planning and governance of local and regional development?

Norway's industrial structure is based largely on natural resources, which historically has resulted in positive economic development. Restructuring to a more knowledge-based business sector has often led to the emergence of new activities at other locations than those where activities are being dismantled, often resulting in unemployment and exclusion. However, Norway's regional economic differences are small compared with other countries. The DEMOS programme wishes to gain more insight into how the national and international distribution of tasks functions and how various forms of resources, production, transport, research and development services, public administration, financing and management are associated with societal development, as well as the impacts of exclusion on administration and democracy.

In most European countries, the task of regions is to serve as development actors and to lead regional partnerships with trade and industry and municipalities. There is a need for international comparative analyses of regional development, as well as insight into various forms of systems for coordinating national policy, regional efforts and private initiatives. The DEMOS programme is seeking a better understanding of national and international migration patterns and the ramifications for national, regional and local development.

Norway is at the forefront in the area of registry data, which provides excellent opportunities to renew the methods used in regional analyses and provide greater insight into the results and impact of public initiatives on local and regional development. The DEMOS programme will support the

renewal and assessment of methods, preferably in cooperation with international research, with an emphasis on identifying variations in time, space and between multiple levels.

Planning research has largely focused on planning as a tool for local political governance, planning processes and planning systems. This includes both land-use and social planning and economic and activity planning. There is a need for more knowledge about how the planning system functions as a national governance and development system, as a coordination tool (both vertically and horizontally), as a tool in the transition to sustainable low-emission urban areas, and as a tool for cooperation between the public and private sectors. To what extent is the planning system able to resolve difficult conflicting interests? To what degree do municipalities and counties take advantage of their latitude for action through planning? There is a need to explore how municipalities and counties can cooperate in urban areas, but also how local authorities can plan for societal development in smaller regions.

Little attention has been paid to the knowledge base for planning and the results of planning, and limited research has been conducted on the consequences of urban sprawl, compact cities and densification around transport junction points. There is also a need for more knowledge about development of attractive cities and towns based on environmental, health and value creation considerations. To what extent is planning used as a tool for finding a balance between urban and local development, value creation and sustainability and health needs?

Urban areas are an especially interesting topic of inquiry for investigating a number of factors of interest to the DEMOS programme: regional development, urbanisation and its conditions, the ability of public actors to direct societal development, vertical and horizontal cooperation and coordination, and governance tools for such cooperation, the democratic basis, the role of planning in these processes, and how plans are implemented by various public and private actors.

Physical planning in Norway today is increasingly carried out by private actors, and the implementation of these plans depends on the private actors' resources and priorities. More knowledge is needed about forms of cooperation and distribution of tasks between public and private actors in a governance and network perspective in which power, alliances, stakeholders and politics within and outside the planning system play a central role. There is a special need to explore the connection between municipal planning, regulation and construction case management, and development agreements. More knowledge is also needed about planning expertise in municipalities and counties as a result of this market-driven planning and any ensuing competency challenges in the public sector.

Housing policy is an area in which policy objectives are set out by national authorities, but are implemented by the local authorities in cooperation with private actors. Housing production is based primarily on a deregulated market. The government's role consists of establishing the framework and creating conditions for the market to contribute good solutions. This is challenging both in growth regions, where the location of new housing has a major impact on development patterns, and in sparsely populated areas, where the housing markets are small and vulnerable. Development of the housing market affects the attractiveness of urban areas and local communities, as well as the competitiveness of the business sector. There is a need for research on how planning creates a framework for meeting complex housing needs and ensures that adequate numbers of housing units are constructed, in the cities as well as in the outlying districts. More insight is also needed into how residential environments may promote participation in the local community and civil society.

## 4.4 Welfare state services and service providers

The municipal sector is responsible for a large share of public service production, understood here to mean benefits and services within the areas of health, care, the social and cultural spheres, and education. Research and development on education, health and care are covered by other Research Council programmes (the Programme on Research and Innovation in the Education Sector (FINNUT) and the Programme on Health, Care and Welfare Services Research (HELSEVEL)), and projects with this as the main focus will not be funded under the DEMOS programme. Many of these typical welfare tasks have their roots in local initiatives, but since World War II the state has become increasingly involved in setting the agenda. There is less acceptance for variation in the array of services offered within such service production than within other municipal service areas such as transport, technical services, cultural activities and industrial policy. It can be seen as paradoxical that local political bodies, which by definition are intended to articulate their own will, are given so much responsibility for public service production. However, local democracy and the municipality as an institution have been found to provide the best possible local adaptation of national policies to local conditions. Local adaptation assumes that the municipalities have a large degree of freedom to decide how the tasks will be carried out and how they will be prioritised. Ensuring that the same level of services are available to all will be achieved partly through economic equality, legislation/regulations and monitoring, and partly through the municipalities' use of local knowledge, local adaptations and priorities, and easily accessible adjustment and impact reinforcement mechanisms. The DEMOS programme will highlight how and to what extent the state governance system helps to achieve the objectives regarding efficiency and provision of the same level of services to all.

A key feature of the Nordic model is that a large share of the responsibility for implementing national welfare services is delegated to the municipal sector. Structural and task-related reforms are being discussed in all of the Nordic countries. The reforms are pulling in different directions. The DEMOS programme is seeking to shed light on this trend and whether it is still meaningful to talk about a Nordic model with regard to municipal responsibility for welfare services, local organisation of service production, and state regulation of the content and quality of the services. Is there a trend towards greater heterogeneity in the Nordic countries? Does the trend reflect a changed view of the place of municipalities and local democracy in the governance system and in the relationship between residents and the municipality? In this context, historical and values-related surveys can also provide relevant insights.

Municipal responsibility is not synonymous with tasks being carried out by municipal bodies. In many cases, private actors, both commercial and non-governmental/civil society, are responsible for the actual service production. What are the costs and benefits of such models? Can public and private actors function in the same market? How does public-private cooperation complement and challenge democracy at the state and local levels? Can increased individualisation and use of customised services move and redefine the boundaries for what the public sector should take responsibility for?

The DEMOS programme wishes to generate more knowledge about how municipalities and counties carry out their role of producing services and executive authority. To what degree do they serve as active owners of pre-schools, schools and nursing homes, and how do they fulfil the role of procurers of such services? What actions do they take as the owners of physical common goods such as green spaces, roads and cultural facilities? Are quality indicators actively used in decision-making processes and in the follow-up of the activities? If so, what types of quality indicators are used? Who propels the quality development forward? Is it the residents and users, local politicians, professions or state sectoral authorities?

Professional practitioners such as doctors, psychologists, teachers, planners and social workers play important roles in modern welfare states and for societal development. They evaluate the need for services and take decisions regarding measures for the individual user. The quality of their professional practice affects many people, and confidence in the municipalities and local democracy is closely linked with how these professionals meet and treat the users. There is a need to explore the basis and conditions for good professional practice, and thus also quality and equal treatment in municipal services and tasks. To what degree, and in what way, does political and administrative governance of the services conflict with effective, autonomous professional practice? What is the relationship between politics and professional fields? What is the status of the principle of equal treatment, effectiveness and democracy?

Finding solutions to future challenges will require innovation and the application of new technology. What new solutions will the public sector develop and use? What are the characteristics of municipalities that are innovative and rapidly incorporate new technology? How is the pace of innovation affected by the governance and financing system? To what extent does the general public use the new solutions? Is there variation among groups of users regarding use of the new communications and technology solutions?

Efficiency analyses show that the municipalities vary widely in the services they provide from the resources at their disposal. It is important to further develop these studies with regard to both the data and the methods used. It is especially critical to develop and include better quality measurements in the services and to gain more knowledge about the characteristics of effective municipalities that provide high-quality services. Have they chosen a way of organising and financing service production that is different from other municipalities? Are the entities responsible for the results and do they have more autonomy in carrying out the tasks?

## **5 Priorities for structuring the research effort**

In keeping with the objectives and thematic priority areas, the programme board will base activities under the programme on the following structural priorities.

### **5.1 International cooperation**

The objective of the DEMOS programme is to cultivate broader participation in a wide array of European research cooperation activities. The EU framework programme for research and innovation, Horizon 2020, in which Norway is a full member, runs from 2014 to 2020. Horizon 2020 is a research and innovation programme that encompasses funding for outstanding research, competitive trade and industry, and research to solve societal challenges. Research under the DEMOS programme is to take full advantage of the potential under Horizon 2020 to study challenges facing Norwegian society in an international perspective. This will be particularly relevant in 2018–2020, when “Governance for the future” will be a special topic under Societal Challenge Six, Europe in a Changing World, in the Horizon 2020 Work Programme. In connection with this, several calls for proposals will be issued that will be thematically relevant for Norwegian research groups studying topics addressed in the DEMOS work programme.

The DEMOS programme is seeking comparative projects that are based on data from multiple countries and involve active international cooperation. International cooperation is essential for further enhancing the quality of Norwegian research. It is vital that researchers engage in substantial, lengthy cooperation with other researchers and research groups in countries where the research is of

high quality and relevant for the issues addressed under the programme. The DEMOS programme will attach importance to international cooperation and researcher mobility when allocating funding, in keeping with the Research Council's Strategy for International Cooperation 2010–2020.

As part of European research cooperation, Norway participates in a number of collaborative activities in which national research programmes are coordinated towards a common objective. Several of these will be relevant for the DEMOS programme, such as the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Urban Europe, in which urbanisation and its challenges and opportunities are a main topic of inquiry, and New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Co-operation in Europe (NORFACE), which has a research programme Democratic governance in a turbulent age (Governance). When relevant, the DEMOS programme will consider contributing funding to joint calls under these initiatives.

In keeping with the Government's research policy<sup>2</sup>, the DEMOS programme will encourage researchers to take part in the European Research Area (ERA) and Horizon 2020, in addition to bilateral cooperation with countries with which Norway has signed collaboration agreements. The DEMOS programme seeks to increase the number of researchers and research groups in Norway that receive funding from international sources.

The DEMOS programme will take the following steps to strengthen international research cooperation:

- publicise the Research Council's various funding schemes for bilateral research cooperation and for positioning activities and project establishment to support the submission of grant applications to the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation;
- provide funding for participation in international conferences and international networks;
- encourage the use of joint European infrastructure;
- require that research projects plan to publish their results in international journals;
- facilitate contact and project collaboration with international researchers and groups of relevance for research under the DEMOS programme, e.g. through network funding;
- ensure that information about the programme and projects is available in English;
- take part in various types of international cooperation at the programme level.

## 5.2 Social dialogue, dissemination and meeting places

The DEMOS programme will take a proactive approach to communication and dissemination, actively promote publication of findings and results from the programme, and facilitate the establishment of solid, lasting relations between researchers and users in the field. The programme will help to ensure that research on democracy, governance, planning, public administration and societal development provides a sound knowledge base for use in policy development within these fields. It is an objective to make relevant user groups aware of the research conducted and to encourage its use.

Responsibility for this will be divided between the projects funded under the programme, the programme board and the Research Council administration. User relevance and dissemination plans will be given weight in the application assessment process. The programme's webpages will be updated on a regular basis with news articles about projects, research results, activities and plans for funding announcements.

The programme's primary target groups are:

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<sup>2</sup> The Government's Strategy for Research and Innovation Cooperation with the EU: Horizon 2020 and ERA, 5 June 2014.

- Government authorities, politicians and public administrators at all levels – national, regional and local;
- Special interest organisations and other stakeholders in working life, trade and industry, and civil society;
- Researchers and educational and research institutions, both national and international.

The DEMOS programme will encourage research projects to employ the following types of dissemination:

- scientific dissemination;
- user-oriented dissemination;
- publicly oriented dissemination.

*Scientific dissemination* from the research projects is the responsibility of the research-performing institutions and is carried out primarily through scholarly publications as well as presentations at international research conferences and the like. It is a programme objective to increase scholarly publication both nationally and internationally.

*User-oriented dissemination.* The programme will emphasise dissemination of research to relevant users. This may be done, for example, through various types of events such as meetings, conferences and seminars, and through policy briefs written by the project researchers. Dissemination may consist of both project results and knowledge at the national and international research front, targeted towards Norwegian users. In addition, dialogue with users throughout the project and in the final dissemination activities will be conducted at various meeting places under the direction of the programme, the projects or the users themselves. It is desirable that projects publish their results in open access journals, and when appropriate, use new platforms for dissemination and dialogue such as blogs, social media, YouTube, TED Talks and the like. Relevant societal stakeholders will be heard in key strategic programme processes.

*Publicly oriented dissemination* of research results is primarily the task of the researchers and research groups, who will be responsible for facilitating debate about, and dissemination and application of, these results. Aspects of user-oriented and publicly oriented activities include updated webpages under the auspices of the project and programme, a target-group mind set in the projects – state-of-the-art reviews, syntheses, and summaries of new and existing research, adaptation for profiling in the media, and popular scientific contributions from the projects in the form of books and articles, opinion pieces, and participation in public debates.

The DEMOS programme will:

- promote dissemination to users and the general public, and create a framework that facilitates debate about, and dissemination and application of, the research results;
- include representatives for relevant users on the programme board, and hear the views of relevant societal stakeholders in key strategic programme processes;
- initiate and provide funding for summaries of existing research;
- provide funding for various types of events such as meetings, conferences and seminars for dissemination of project results and knowledge from the national and international research front, targeted at Norwegian users.

The DEMOS programme may award funding for subject reports, syntheses and summaries of existing research in the relevant fields, nationally and internationally. The programme may also provide

funding for projects with a didactic purpose that aim to disseminate knowledge to politicians, administrators and other users of DEMOS-related knowledge.

### **5.3 User involvement**

The programme board will continually assess whether the programme should issue calls that specifically require user involvement. This may, for example, involve including users when designing the projects to ensure the research conducted will be relevant to them. For some projects it may also be desirable to establish a form of user panel or reference group to give the projects greater access to users' views in connection with strategic measures, activities related to dissemination and use of the research.

The DEMOS programme will:

- include users when designing the projects, when appropriate;
- establish user panels or reference groups to give the projects greater access to users' views, when relevant;
- facilitate and require dialogue with users throughout the project and in the final dissemination activities at various meeting places under the direction of the programme, the projects and the users themselves.

### **5.4 Types of support**

The DEMOS programme will provide funding primarily for ordinary Researcher Projects of three to four years in duration. Projects with a sizeable funding allocation, organised around high profile researchers, may give the research a larger scope of action and enhance the clarity and impact of the programme. The projects must include plans to recruit new, younger researchers of both genders and aim to develop more dynamic research groups. The programme board will consider whether to include application types other than Researcher Projects in connection with each individual call for proposals. It may also be of relevance to announce funding for Personal Overseas Research Grants or Personal Visiting Researcher Grants, as well as funding to promote participation in international research programmes.

## **6 Cooperation with related instruments**

The DEMOS programme is the Research Council programme that provides funding for general research on governance, planning and public administration. The programme encompasses thematic areas and research questions that share an interface with other programmes and activities at the Research Council. Cooperation with other programmes or activities may be of interest when this can enhance the research or individual topics under the DEMOS programme. This may be, for example:

- coordination of calls for proposals or joint calls for proposals;
- joint dissemination events;
- joint meetings on single topics;
- joint mobilisation for participation in Horizon 2020 (or other international arenas);
- cooperation in JPI Urban Europe, NORFACE or other relevant JPIs or projects under the ERA-NET scheme.

The programmes and activities that are most relevant in this context are:

**Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)** is a European collaboration in which Norway participates with funding for ICT research.

**The Programme for Research-based Evaluation of the Coordination Reform (EVASAM)** compiles knowledge for assessing performance in relation to targets throughout the implementation period (2012–2016) and at the end of the period.

**The Initiative on Europe in Transition (EUROPA)** is the Research Council's initiative on research on change processes in Europe and Norway's relationship with them, including the significance of Norway's agreements with the EU for societal development in Norway.

**The Programme on Research and Innovation in the Educational Sector (FINNUT)** is a large-scale programme with four thematic priority areas. One of these in particular shares an interface with the DEMOS programme: governance, management, organisation and achievement of results.

**The Initiative on Research for Research and Innovation Policy (FORINNPOL)** seeks to expand the knowledge base for use in the design and implementation of research and innovation policy.

**The Public Sector Ph.D. Scheme (OFFPHD)** seeks to promote competence-building and research activity in public institutions, increase researcher recruitment, and enhance interaction between academia and the public sector.

**The Research Programme on Research and Innovation in the Municipal Sector (FORKOMMUNE)** is a user-driven innovation programme designed to encourage innovation in the municipal sector and to assist the sector in using research to strengthen its ability and capacity to innovate.

**The Programme on Research-based Regional Innovation (FORREGION)** seeks to promote regional development by encouraging new actors to carry out research-based innovation and by strengthening cooperation between universities/university colleges and trade and industry. The FORREGION programme is the successor to the Programme for Regional R&D and Innovation (VRI).

**The Programme on Health, Care and Welfare Services Research (HELSEVEL)** is the Research Council's large-scale services research programme. Services research and service innovation are main components of the programme. The services encompassed by the programme are the health and care services, labour and welfare services, and child protection services.

**The Programme on ICT and Digital Innovation (IKTPLUSS)** is the Research Council's large-scale initiative on ICT research. The IKTPLUSS programme seeks to enhance quality, promote bold thinking, and increase the relevance of Norwegian ICT research and innovation, as well as to develop a dynamic ICT environment in Norway that offers new solutions and creates value for society.

**The Programme on Climate Research (KLIMAFORSK)** is a large-scale research programme on climate, and seeks to generate knowledge about the climate system, climate trends, and the direct and indirect effects of climate change on the natural environment and society that may be used as a basis for climate adaptation measures in society.

**The Programme for Environmental Research for a Green Transition (MILJØFORSK)** is a broad-based, interdisciplinary research programme that seeks to generate knowledge about critical environmental issues that can form the basis for policy design.

**Portfolio group for urban research.** The Research Council's various initiatives on urban research are found in several different programmes. These initiatives formed a group in 2014 to coordinate the synergies emerging among the activities.

**The Programme on Societal Security and Safety (SAMRISK II)** seeks to increase knowledge about threats, dangers and vulnerability, about how to prevent undesirable events and how to strengthen crisis management. In particular, the thematic priority area “cooperation, management and organisation” shares an interface with the DEMOS programme.

**The Programme on Welfare, Working Life and Migration (VAM)** has three thematic priority areas in particular that share an interface with the DEMOS programme: “Processes, legitimacy and the normative basis of public policy”; “Production, quality and impact of welfare services”; and “Value creation, the labour market and the organisation of working life”.

## 7 Anticipated results, impacts and societal outcomes

The DEMOS programme seeks to expand the knowledge base for democratic and effective governance, planning and public administration and will support cross-level, cross-sectoral research that provides a basis for knowledge-based policies within the public sector.

The programme is a policy-oriented programme aimed at enhancing the knowledge base for policy design. It is difficult to measure the societal outcome of the application of the research. This is both because the programme’s impacts and societal outcomes will often be indirect, and because the DEMOS programme is one of several initiatives targeting these thematic priority areas, and it will not be easy in many cases to distinguish this programme’s impact from the impact of research funded by others. Still, in some cases there may be concrete advice that can be linked to the research results of one or more projects, particularly the programme’s follow-up and evaluation research projects.

The programme will take active steps to follow up the Government’s *Long-term plan for research and higher education 2015–2024*, in which public sector renewal is one of the long-term priority areas. The DEMOS programme will generate relevant knowledge in this context.

The programme board and programme administration are responsible for assessing the need for monitoring and evaluation of the DEMOS programme and for ensuring that approved plans for monitoring and evaluation are followed up. The programme will be monitored primarily through portfolio analyses and summary reports of the projects funded under the DEMOS programme during the programme period. The portfolio analyses will provide a knowledge overview for, among other things, revising the programme’s action plans. An evaluation may look at the programme’s scientific content, achievement of objectives, results, impacts and societal outcomes or assess whether the programme is organised in a manner that is conducive to achieving the programme’s objectives. Evaluations will be approved by the Research Board of the Division for Society and Health.

### 7.1 Results

The programme will fund activities and set priorities that lead to a wide range of results within the programme’s thematic priority areas.

#### 7.1.1 Scientific results and scholarly publications

Projects awarded funding under the programme are expected to yield results of high scientific merit which are relevant for the programme’s thematic priority areas.

Indicators for measuring knowledge production during the lifetime of the programme are:

- number of publications
- quality of the publications, measured by citation frequency and the journals' impact factor;
- relevance of the publications, measured by the thematic alignment with the programme's thematic priority areas;
- number of publications with authors from multiple subject areas, service levels, regions and/or sectors;
- number of comparative projects.

### **7.1.2 Doctoral degrees**

The DEMOS programme seeks to develop highly competent research groups within the programme's thematic focus, and one indicator used for measuring this is the number of doctoral degrees and post-doctoral research fellowships awarded and completed in projects under funded under the DEMOS programme.

### **7.1.3 Research cooperation across disciplines and research groups**

The programme seeks to encourage collaboration across disciplines and between research groups, including different social science disciplines, the humanities, law and ICT. Indicators for measuring the extent of cooperation in the projects will be the amount of cooperation in projects and the number of new researcher networks and constellations of cooperation with participants from different disciplines and research sectors.

### **7.1.4 Increased internationalisation**

The programme seeks to promote increased internationalisation of Norwegian research and increased participation in international projects.

Indicators for measuring the degree of international research cooperation and international knowledge sharing during the lifetime of the programme are:

- number of international partners in research projects funded under the programme;
- number of co-publications with international partners in research projects funded under the programme;
- number of project managers from the DEMOS project portfolio that apply for international research funding for their projects.

## **7.2 Impacts**

The results from the programme's activities are expected to be implemented in and have significance for the development of public policy and the implementation of policy in the public sector, as well as for innovation in the public sector. This is expected to be reflected in a stronger basis for integrated, knowledge-based policies within the public sector.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that the programme will generate more user involvement in the research and more cooperation between researchers and users.

The programme will promote increased participation in projects with funding from international sources, among other things in the form of a higher returns share from Horizon 2020.

Indicators for quantifying the impacts of the programme's funding of projects and groups during the lifetime of the programme include:

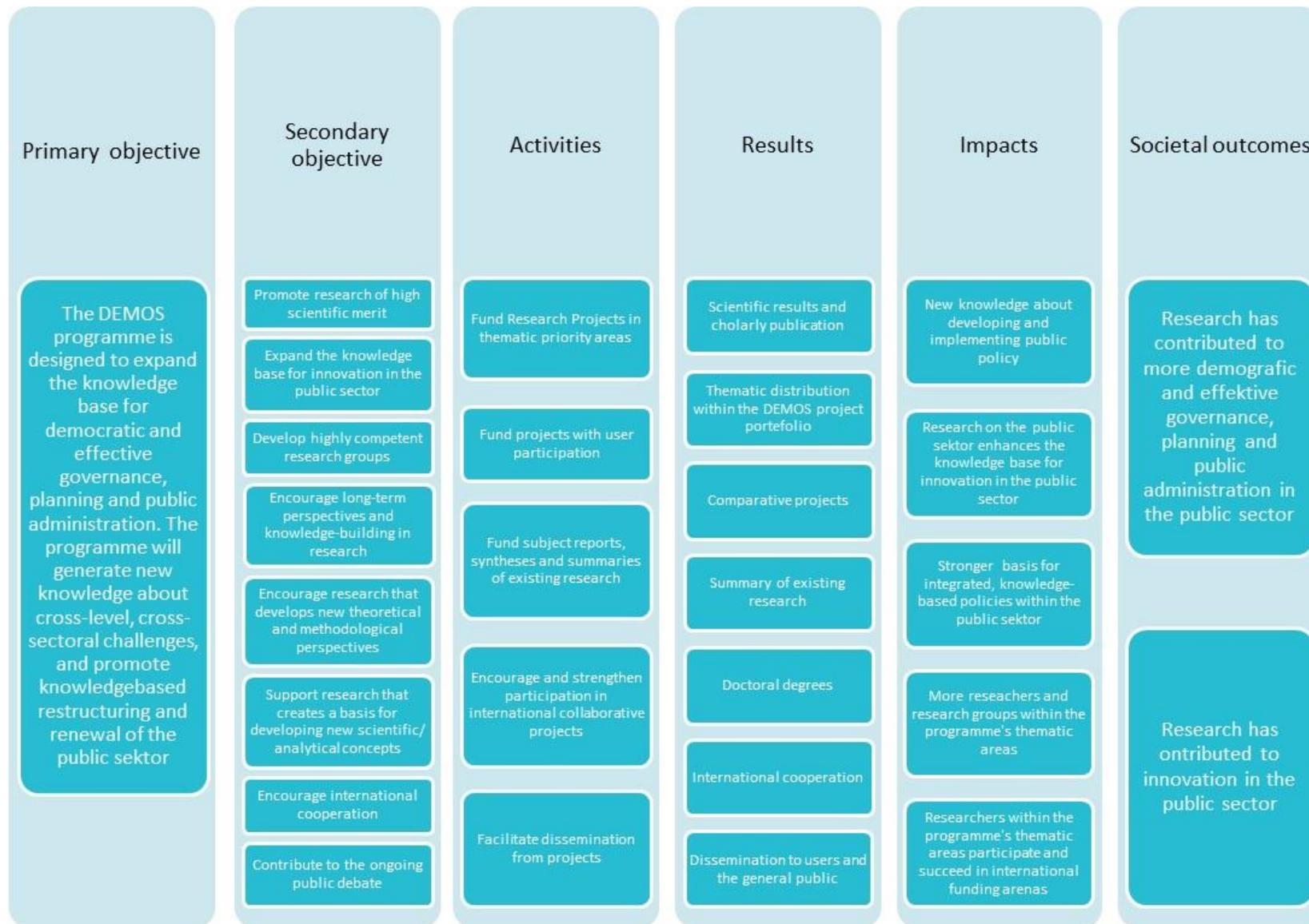
- number of researchers involved in the programme who participate in government-appointed commissions and other advisory groups and bodies in the public sector;

- number of user-oriented reports and policy briefs produced and user-oriented dissemination measures organised under the projects;
- number of projects that incorporate user involvement;
- number of projects with multidisciplinary cooperation across institutions;
- number of project managers who subsequently receive funding from calls in international funding schemes.

### **7.3 Societal outcomes**

The overall societal outcome of the programme is expected to contribute to more democratic and effective governance, planning and public administration, as well as more knowledge-based restructuring and innovation in the public sector. The programme board will clarify whether it will be advantageous to examine this more closely through case descriptions and the like as part of a potential evaluation of programme activities.

Below is a diagram of the programme logic model for the DEMOS programme



## 8 Resources and budget

The DEMOS programme is financed primarily through an annual allocation from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation for the programme period 2015–2024. The budget framework is established by the Storting. The programme has an overall budget framework of NOK 210 million, with annual funding of NOK 21 million. In addition, there is time-limited funding for evaluation of local government reform, the National Election Study and regional economic models. Thus in 2017 the programme has a budget framework of NOK 34 million.

## 9 Governance and organisation

The overall responsibility for the programme lies with the Division for Society and Health, which has appointed the DEMOS programme board. The programme is headed by the programme board, which acts on behalf of the Research Council. The programme board is responsible for ensuring that the programme achieves its stipulated objectives and is implemented as effectively as possible within the approved plans and the framework adopted by the division research board. The tasks of the programme board are primarily strategic in nature. The programme board is organised under and reports to the division research board via the department director and the executive director of the division. The Research Council administration is responsible for carrying out the day-to-day tasks of the programme.

The programme board has been appointed to serve from 10 February 2015 to 31 December 2018, and consists of the following individuals:

### *Members of the programme board*

Terje P. Hagen, Professor, University of Oslo, chair

Marcus Buck, Associate Professor, University of Tromsø

Eva Falleth, Professor, Norwegian University of Life Sciences

Ulla Higdem, Associate Professor, Lillehammer University College Anne Jensen, Senior Researcher, Aarhus University

Åsmund Arup Seip, Researcher, Fafo

Lasse Jalling, Head of Department, Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities

Hallgeir Aalbu, Director General, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation

Eirik Holmøyvik, Professor, University of Bergen (deputy)

Gro Herheim, Chief Municipal Executive, Svelvik Municipality (deputy)



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