

**EUROPEAN DIALOGUE AND
DEMOCRACY ASSOCIATION (EDDA)
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION**



**FINAL REPORT
NORWAY
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025¹**

Introduction

On the 8th of September 2025, the European Dialogue and Democracy Association (EDDA) conducted a short-term observation mission (EOM) of the Norwegian parliamentary and Sami parliamentary elections in Norway. The observations took place in and around Bergen, Trondheim and Oslo. EDDA had a total of 53 accredited observers out on election day who were present during the opening, voting and closing procedures. Norway has a long early voting period before election day. EDDA also had a limited number of pre-election day observations of voting, handover and sorting of ballots and preparation of polling stations. The overall impression from these early observations corresponds well with the findings from election day that this report presents.

The EOM was led by one national Head of Mission and three local coordinators. Kaia Andrea Sølverød acted as Head of Mission, Vera Bachke was the local coordinator in Trondheim, Nora Loland was the local coordinator in Bergen, and Isabel Ivarsøy was the local coordinator in Oslo.

All observers completed the short-term election observation course made by the *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)* ahead of the elections. All EDDA's observers were thus internationally certified election observers. EDDA's observers did, in addition, complete the internal training in EDDA's election observation

¹ In Norway early voting was possible from the 11th of August until the 5th of September. During this period all eligible voters could vote early in all polling stations in the country. On election day voters have to place their vote in their local polling station and some local municipalities arranged election day on both the 7th and the 8th of September. It was also possible to vote early from the 1st of July for people not able to vote on election day or during the early voting period.

procedures. In the time leading up to the election, all observers also attended a meeting with the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. In this meeting, our observers received information about Norway's new election law and electoral procedures in Norwegian elections. The Ministry was also responsible for issuing the national accreditations.

Opening procedures

Voting procedures were evaluated on a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is very bad, 2 is bad, 3 is good, and 4 is very good. Our observers gave an overall high evaluation of all 24 polling stations with an average score of 3.8 out of 4.

On average, there were 12 polling station officials in the polling stations EDDA visited. The chairpersons of the polling stations were 58 percent women and 42 percent men during the opening procedures. All polling stations had the necessary voting materials available at the time of opening, but our observer only found multilingual voting information in 13 of 24 locations at opening. The tasks during opening were decided by random selection in 9 of 24 polling stations, and in 12 stations the tasks were observe divided in other ways. In 3 polling stations, the process was not observed. Our observers reported that 23 of 24 polling stations opened on time. All polling stations had properly sealed ballot boxes at the time of opening.

All observers reported that they had a clear view of the opening procedures, but there were 3 reports that there were some restrictions. Many polling stations in Norway use electronic protocols, while others are paper based. As a result, there are elements that can be challenging for observers to monitor. Our observers found that the number of eligible voters was not announced during the opening. Further on, there were differing procedures around the documentation of the ballot boxes' serial numbers. In 3 cases, it was observed that the number was written into the protocol, but in 21 cases, the process was not observed.

General observation of voting

In total, 153 polling stations were visited by EDDA's observers. Almost all of these observations were made on election day. EDDA's observers gave an overall high evaluation of the polling stations. On a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is very bad, 2 is bad, 3 is good, and 4 is very good, they received an average score of 3.9 out of 4.

On average, there were 11 polling staff officials present in the polling station. The gender balance when it came to the chairperson was 54 percent female and 46 percent male. All polling stations our observers had access to the information about had opened on time.

EDDA's observers reported campaigning in the vicinity of the polling station in 57 out of 153 observations. However, there were no observations of other forms of voter influencing. The observers reported that access to the polling stations and the voting booth was challenging for people with disabilities in 13 out of 153 locations. 108 out of 153 polling stations had had information materials in languages of national minorities. Almost all chairpersons and polling station officials asked, reported to our observer that they had received adequate training before election day.

Our observers reported calm conditions in and around the polling stations, that there were only authorized personnel present and that people who did not have the right to vote were informed and turned away in an orderly and calm fashion. Overall, almost all voting booths had adequate lighting and were designed in a way that ensured secrecy of the vote, but there were 9 reports where these factors could impede the secrecy of the vote. Observers also reported instances of family- or group voting in 14 polling stations, and there were 12 observations of open voting.

There were no unnecessary delays in the administration of voters and voting. There were also no reports of inappropriate behaviour from political candidates or parties. The polling station officials did, in almost all cases, perform their tasks without undue interruptions.

Closing procedures and counting

EDDA's observers were present at 24 polling stations at closing time. EDDA's observers gave an overall high evaluation of the polling stations. On a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is very bad, 2 is bad, 3 is good, and 4 is very good, they received an average score of 3.9 out of 4. There was an average of 13 polling staff officials present, and the gender balance for the position of chairperson was 50 percent men and 50 percent woman.

Our observers reported 9 cases of queuing at the time of closing. Out of these, one person was not permitted to vote. All ballot boxes were sealed when closing procedures began. There were different practices for announcing and documenting the number of eligible voters for the polling station in the 19 cases our observers were able to monitor the process. In 17 cases, invalid and ruined ballots were observed, documented and added to the protocol and in 13 cases, it was observed that these were put into separate envelopes.

In 19 cases, it was observed that invalid and ruined ballots were secured and sorted out after counting. In the 18 cases where a ballot was declared invalid, this was done in a responsible and orderly manner that could be double-checked. In the 21 cases where our observers could observe the process, the number of invalid ballots was not found to be unreasonably high. In 22 polling stations, the votes were observed sorted by party when counted. In all polling stations, the polling staff officials agreed on the procedure. The

process was transparent, and there was only one polling station where the observers reported not being able to observe the details on the ballots during counting. In 23 polling stations, our observers reported that the results from counting were documented. In 20 instances, these numbers were announced out loud in the polling station.

There were no observed instances of ballot box stuffing, undue invalidation of votes or multiple signatures on voting lists. All of EDDA's observers found that there was enough polling station officials present in the polling stations during counting and there were no reports of officials being excluded from the process. In only 1 out of 24 instances did our observers report not being able to see all details during counting, and there were not any instances of dishonest counting.

The counting process was undisturbed in all but one polling station. Our observers found that the polling staff officials followed their procedures in a satisfactory manner and that their behaviour was satisfactory. There was only one report of the transparency of the voting process not being satisfactory.

Summary of findings

European Dialogue and Democracy Association's observers gave an overall high evaluation of all polling stations and reported during the 2025 Norwegian parliamentary and Sami parliamentary elections. Our observers found that voting procedures were followed in a consistent manner throughout the polling stations.

There was an even gender balance in the role of polling station chairperson. Our observers found that it varied if there was information in the languages of national minorities in the polling stations on election day. There was also campaigning from political parties happening in close proximity to a substantial number of the polling stations.

A small portion of the polling stations had a layout that was challenging for some people with disabilities and/or other mobility challenges. Our observers found some polling stations where the design could influence the secrecy of the vote, but this was a limited number of locations. Our observers also observed a small number of family- and group voting, but also here, the amount was low. There were also differing practices for handling invalid and unused ballots after counting.