

# Norway

## State project model and quality assurance scheme



**TYPE OF TOOL**  
*Methodology/  
Guidelines/  
Requirements*



**MAIN SECTORS**  
*All sectors*



**INFRASTRUCTURE GOVERNANCE PILLARS**  
*Evidence-informed decision making;  
Fiscal sustainability, affordability and  
value for money*

### In a nutshell



**OBJECTIVE:** A two-stage quality assurance process can ensure that the political decision-making process for project selection and prioritisation is informed by robust, independent evidence-based analysis.



**Agency in charge**  
**Ministry of Finance**



**Levels of government**  
**National**



**Year of implementation**  
**2000**



**Current status**  
**Fully operational**

### Overview

In Norway, projects with estimated costs in excess of NOK 1 billion (threshold of NOK 300 million for digitalisation projects) are subject to additional scrutiny via a two-stage quality assurance (QA) process. The requirements for both planning and quality assurance in the Norwegian state project model are given in a concise document, “Circular R-108”. The responsible government agency prepares the appraisal documents that are subject to the QA while the Ministry of Finance and the responsible sector ministry are responsible for making sure that the QA is conducted as required. The QA process includes input from independent reviewers and was initially implemented to combat cost overruns. The process does not apply to the oil and gas sector, state-owned companies with responsibility for their own investments, and the hospital sector. Stage 1 focuses on QA of choice of concept. It is conducted prior to the government cabinet’s selection of projects. The central purpose of this analysis is to check, at a relatively early stage, that the project has undergone a process of “fair and rational” choice. The appraisal that is subject to the QA1 must include investigation of alternative solutions in a cost-benefit analysis (CBA), socio-economic impacts, and relevance of the project to needs. There is emphasis on environmental and social impacts, land-use implications, and regional development. This evaluation, inter alia, must include a “do-nothing” option (“zero option”) and at least two alternative and conceptually different options. The external reviewers’ role includes analysis as well as review of documents. Stage 2 focuses on QA of the management base and cost. It applies to projects that have yet to be submitted to parliament for approval and funding. The purpose of QA2 is to check the quality of the inputs to decisions, including the cost estimates and uncertainties associated with the project, before it is submitted to parliament to decide on funding allocation. It includes assessment of cost estimates derived from basic engineering work and assessment of at least two alternative contracting strategies. QA2 also includes revisiting and updating the CBA performed in QA1. In addition, QA2 focuses on project management in the implementation phase.

#### REFERENCES:

- Norwegian University of Science and Technology, *The Norwegian scheme for quality assurance of major public investments (the QA scheme)*, <https://www.ntnu.edu/concept/qa-scheme1>
- Ministry of Finance (2023), *Circular R-108*, [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fin/vedlegg/okstyring/rundskriv/faste/r\\_108\\_2023.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fin/vedlegg/okstyring/rundskriv/faste/r_108_2023.pdf)