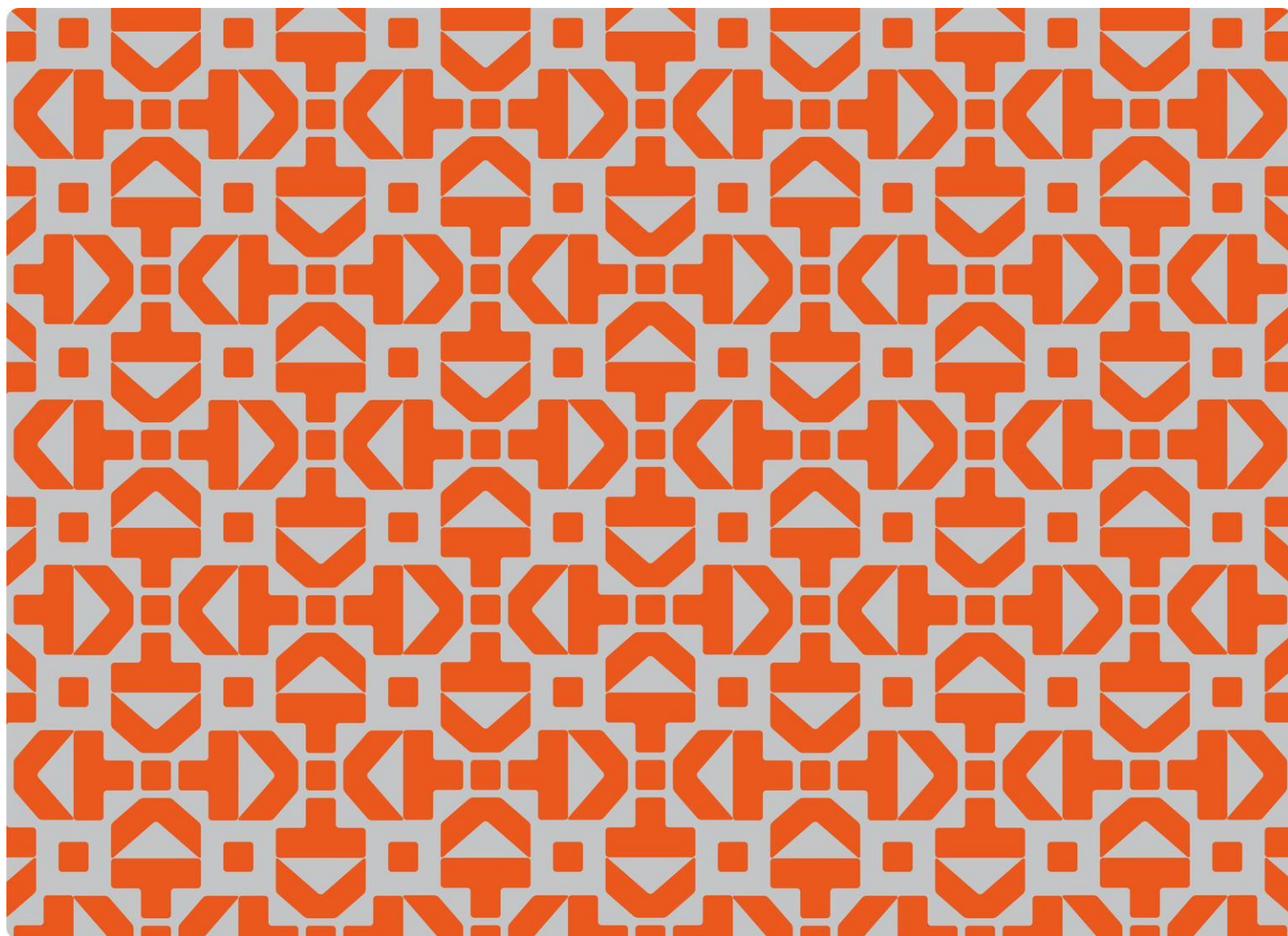

» **NORPART: The Norwegian Partnership
Programme for Global Academic Cooperation**
Annual report 2022



Content

Executive summary.....	2
Background.....	3
1 Introduction	5
1.1 The project portfolio	5
1.2 Partner countries and institutions.....	6
Norwegian partner institutions.....	6
NORPART partner countries	7
Partnerships	11
1.3 Academic disciplines	12
1.4 Synergies with other funding programmes.....	12
2 Programme objectives: Results 2022.....	14
2.1 Strengthened academic partnerships.....	14
2.2 Increased quality and internationalisation of academic programmes at participating institutions.....	17
2.3 Student mobility.....	19
Student mobility from Norway.....	19
Student mobility to Norway	20
South-South student mobility.....	21
2.4 Full degree-scholarships.....	23
2.5 Gender.....	23
2.6 Dissemination.....	24
2.7 NORPART and SDG.....	24
3 Assessment of risks and prospects	25
3.1 Self-reported results	25
3.2 Short-term results and long-term impact.....	25
3.3 Balance long-term and short-term mobility.....	25
3.4 Digital dimensions of the partnerships.....	25
3.5 Addressing access in higher education	26
3.6 Addressing geopolitical challenges.....	26
4 Programme administration	27
4.1 NORPART Seminar 2022	27
4.2 Project visits in 2022.....	28
Conclusion.....	30

Executive summary

Norwegian Directorate of Higher Education and Skills is pleased to present the sixth annual report of the NORPART programme. Notably, 2022 marked the launch of the third NORPART portfolio, including 28 new projects, totalling 74 active projects linking Norwegian institutions with over 300 partnerships across 33 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

The report presents different aspects of the projects' contribution to quality enhancement in higher education in Norway and the partner countries. The results of 2022 indicate that, on programme level, strengthening of partnerships, and the consolidation of educational and research collaborations between Norway and partner countries. Moreover, the reporting showed record-high student mobility, to and from Norway. Short-term outbound student mobility surged over 20%, and long-term inbound mobility to Norway by over 39 % compared with pre-pandemic levels.

The positive effects of the 2016 and 2018 project portfolios are further supported by additional reporting to HK-dir (see page 11), which aimed to capture projects' perspectives on impact, sustainability, and added value. These reports indicated positive outcomes across various aspects, including education, research, and mobility. Viewed collectively, these factors serve as indicators of the programme's development and relevance.

However, the year 2022 also brought forth challenges for the projects, such as political unrest, digital disparities, and a reduction in some mobility metrics. These factors have presented obstacles. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the majority of projects managed to maintain their progress and successfully execute their planned activities throughout the year.

Background

The Norwegian Partnership Programme for Global Academic Collaboration (NORPART) supports Norwegian higher education policy, and development policy in Norway and partner countries in the Global South.

Developed in 2016, NORPART was designed to address emerging priorities and opportunities in higher education collaboration with our partner countries. Recognizing the significance of global challenges, NORPART emphasizes the importance of shared responsibility, cooperation, and the exchange of knowledge and innovative educational practices.

The programme is funded through the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with administration handled by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir)

Purpose and objectives

The purpose of NORPART is to contribute towards enhancing the quality of higher education in Norway and selected partner countries, through academic cooperation and mutual student mobility.

To reach this overall purpose, the programme shall fulfil four objectives:

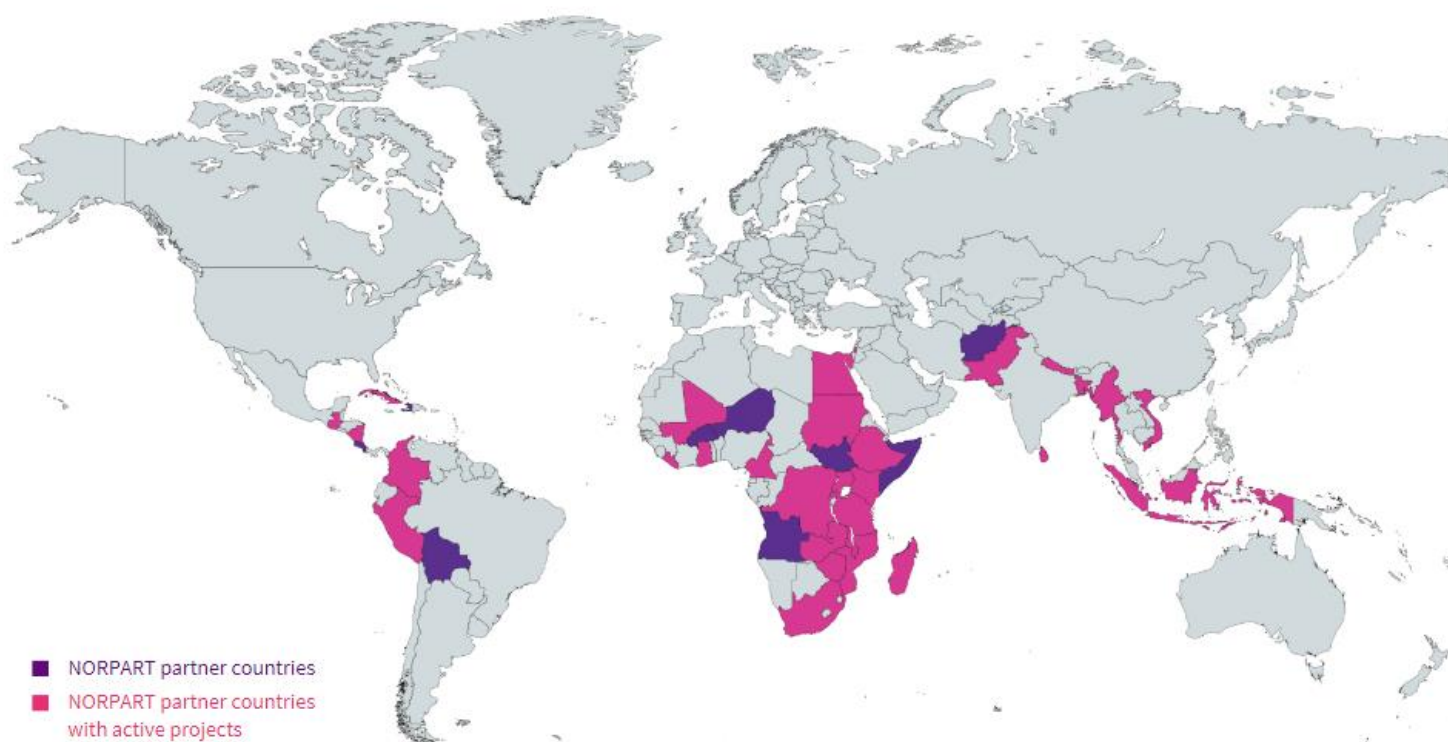
1. Strengthened partnerships for education and research between partner countries and Norway
2. Increased quality and internationalisation of academic programmes at participating institutions
3. Increased mobility of students from the partner countries to Norway, including mobility in connection with work placements
4. Increased mobility of students from Norway to the partner countries including mobility in connection with work placements

Data for the annual report is derived from the 74 submitted annual reports via Espresso, the directorate's platform. The annual reports are submitted by the project coordinators. These reports comprise self-reported progress updates and undergo a controlled audit of project-related cost activities from 2022. The data is both quantitative and qualitative, with varying report sizes based on project advancement within their five-year period. The quotes in this report are extracted from the projects coordinators descriptions.

The [NORPART programme document](#) contains more information about the background of the programme, the result framework and the allocation criteria.

NORPART 2022

Here are some of the key aspects of the NORPART programme.



1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a concise overview of the NORPART portfolio, financial allocations, active partnerships, academic disciplines, and synergies with other funding programmes in 2022

1.1 The project portfolio

Currently, NORPART oversees 74 active projects, extending from Norway to 33 partner countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These projects are categorized into three portfolios based on the years of their respective calls: 2016, 2018, and 2021. Each portfolio signifies the year when the call was made, and the projects commence the following year. The allocated funds for these projects are distributed over a period of five years, with 2017 marking the initiation of the first budgeted activities. The partnership projects encompass a wide range of academic disciplines and collaborations. For a complete list of the active NORPART-projects please visit the directorates [project database](#).

Portfolio	Number of applications	Number of projects	Allocation (%)	Approximate allocation* ¹
2016	114	21	18%	NOK 104 mill
2018	86	25	29%	NOK 123 mill
2021	150	28	19%	NOK 206 mill* ²
Total	350	74	21%	NOK 433 mill

Table 1: Overview of applications and allocations to be distributed over a five-year project period.

In 2021, the 2016 portfolio and 2018 portfolio could apply for one year no-cost extension, connected to COVID-19, consequently the first NORPART projects will finalize their project period by the end of 2023.

¹ *To be disbursed to the projects over the five-year project period.

² *Including NOK 39 million for full degree Master studies in Norway, for students from the partner countries.

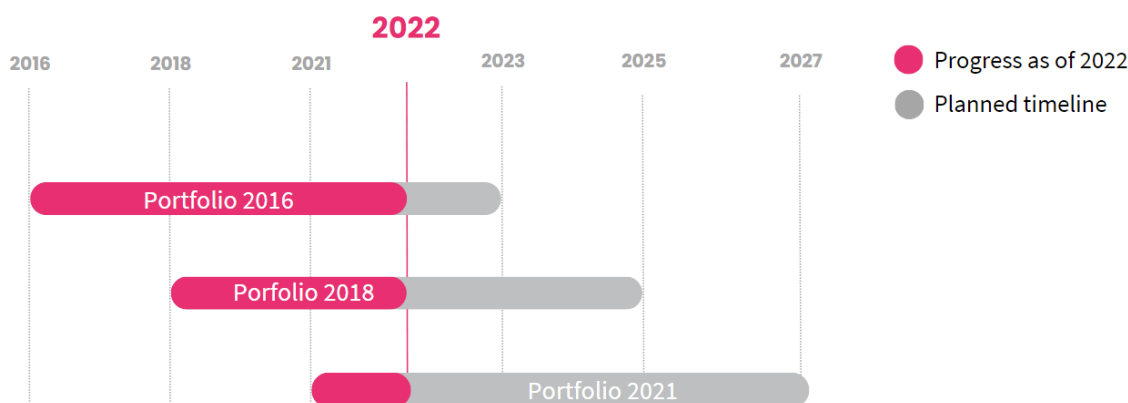


Figure 1: Timeline NORPART portfolios.

1.2 Partner countries and institutions

Partnerships form the cornerstone of the NORPART programme. To qualify for a NORPART project, the applicant must be an accredited Norwegian higher education institution. Furthermore, each application should incorporate at least one accredited higher education institution from a NORPART partner country.

Norwegian partner institutions

Currently, NORPART includes 16 Norwegian higher education institutions serving as coordinators. These partnerships are founded on shared academic interests and formal commitments to project execution.

Norwegian Higher Education Institutions with active projects

- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
- University of South-Eastern Norway (USN)
- University of Bergen (UiB)
- University of Oslo (UiO)
- University of Stavanger (UiS)
- University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway (UiT)
- Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)
- NLA University College (NLA)
- University of Agder (UiA)
- Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL)
- Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN)
- Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet)
- MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society (MF)
- BI Norwegian Business School (BI)
- VID Specialized University (VID)
- Nord University (NORD)

Notably, four of these institutions collectively host more than 50 % of the projects and student mobilities; NTNU (14 projects and 188 mobilities), UiB (10 projects and 114 mobilities), USN (10 projects and 105 mobilities) and UiO (10 projects and 93 mobilities). Furthermore, the distribution between the portfolios is as follows: seven institutions have NORPART projects in all three portfolios, four in two portfolios and five institutions have received projects in one portfolio. See figure 2 and 3 on the next page for an overview of the project distribution and hosted student mobilities.

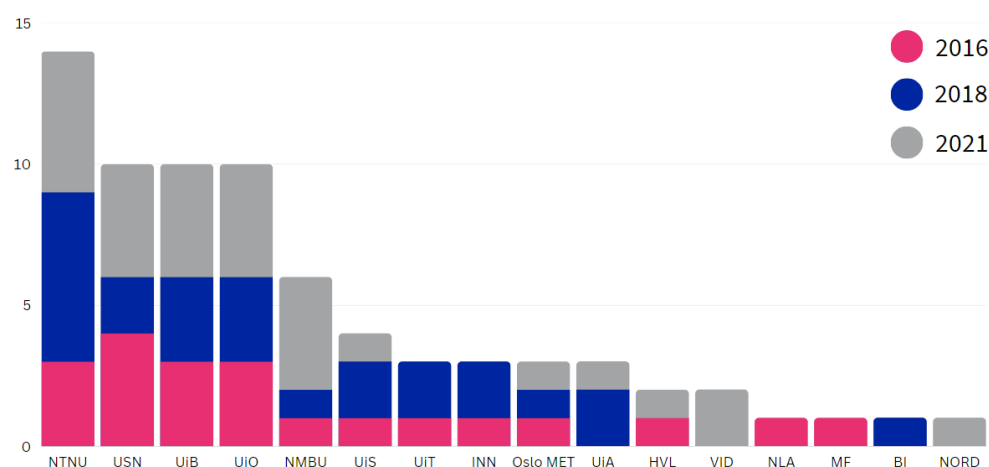


Figure 2: Distribution NORPART projects between the Norwegian institutions 2017-2022

Below, you will find an overview of hosted mobilities at Norwegian institutions. The pattern of hosted mobilities is correlated with the number of projects hosted at each institution.

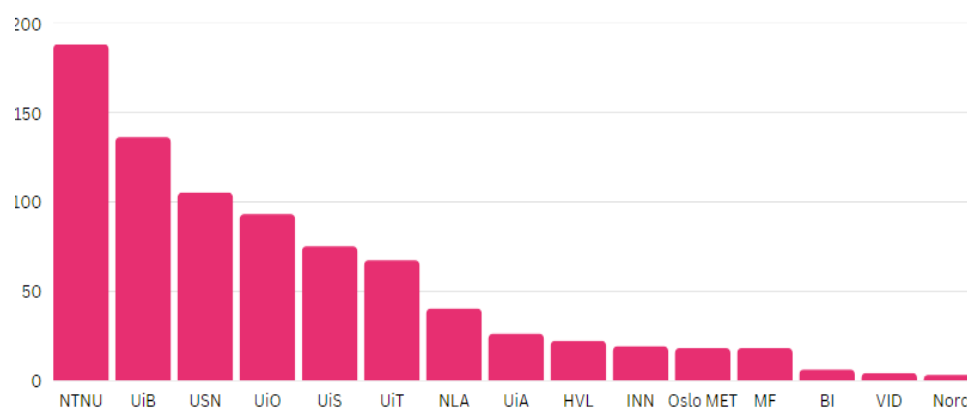


Figure 3: Distribution of student mobility to Norwegian higher education institutions 2017-2022.

NORPART partner countries

Partner countries in the NORPART programme have been selected and approved by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs based on specific criteria and requirements. The selection process considered

various factors, including historical collaborations, development aid priorities, and strategic objectives of the Norwegian government. The choice of partner countries and institutions aims to foster mutually beneficial academic cooperation and contribute to the development of higher education in the partner countries, as well as in Norway. These partnerships often align with Norway's development aid policies and focus on supporting sustainable development goals, capacity building, and knowledge exchange.

Here is the current list of the 33 partner countries that have active NORPART-projects in 2022. Please consult the [NORPART programme document](#) for a comprehensive list of all eligible partner countries.

NORPART partner countries with active projects

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| • Bangladesh | • Haiti | • Palestine |
| • Cameroon | • Indonesia | • Peru |
| • Colombia | • Kenya | • Rwanda |
| • Cuba | • Madagascar | • South Africa (HDIs) ³ |
| • Dem. Republic of the Congo | • Malawi | • Sri Lanka |
| • East Timor | • Mali | • Sudan |
| • Egypt | • Mozambique | • Tanzania |
| • Ethiopia | • Myanmar | • Uganda |
| • Ghana | • Nepal | • Vietnam |
| • Guatemala | • Nicaragua | • Zambia |
| | • Pakistan | • Zimbabwe |

The partner institutions that are participating in the highest number of NORPART projects, 56% of the complete portfolio, are all African universities; Makerere University, Uganda, (14 projects), Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (10 projects), University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (8 projects), Jimma University, Ethiopia (5 projects) and University of Zambia, Zambia (5 projects). And below in Figure 5, the partnering countries that send and host the most student mobilities are displayed.

³ Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) in South Africa represented in the NORPART-portfolio: University of Zululand (ZA), University of Western Cape (ZA) and University of Venda (ZA).

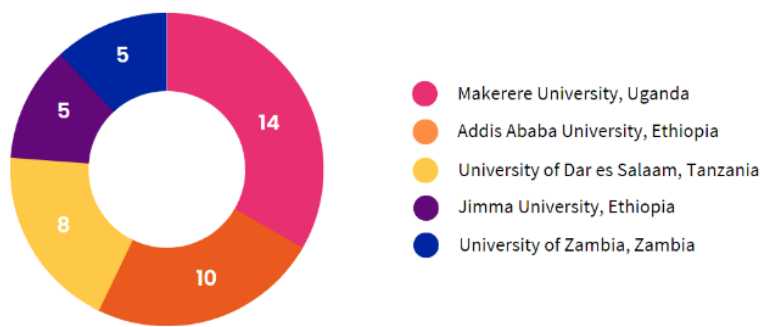


Figure 4: Distribution NORPART projects between the top five partner institutions

Top sending countries

Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Sri Lanka have the highest numbers of outgoing students between 2017–2022.

- From Ethiopia, a total of 157 mobilities. *“Enhancing Norway-Ethiopia relations in Journalism and Communication education and research”* has been particularly successful in sending 43 student mobilities, despite the political situation in the country.
- From Tanzania, 95 student mobilities, mainly centred around three projects related to teacher education, healthcare, and agriculture.
- From Sri Lanka, 90 student mobilities, the majority have participated in three projects linked to nanotechnology, human rights studies, and aquaculture.

Compared to Norwegian institutions, it’s noteworthy that both hosted and outbound mobility in partner countries are not solely connected to the main partnership institutions. This is connected to several of the project partnerships involving more than one higher educational institution. Furthermore, the clustering of projects in specific regions may also be linked to the presence of prominent universities in the Global South.

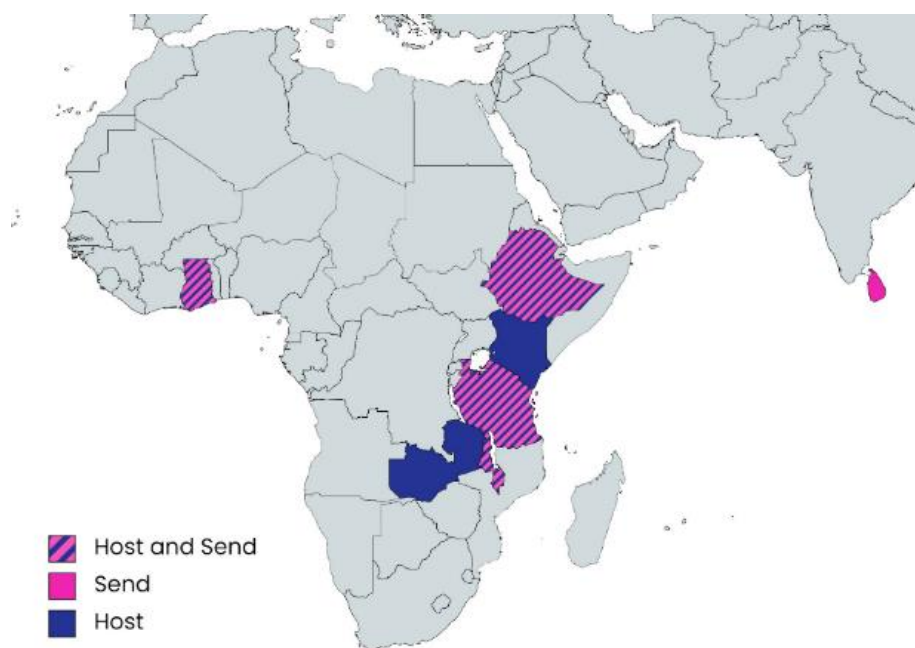


Figure 5: Distribution NORPART projects between the top five partner countries for student mobilities to and from Norway.

Below a detailed overview of the partner countries that send and receive student mobilities.

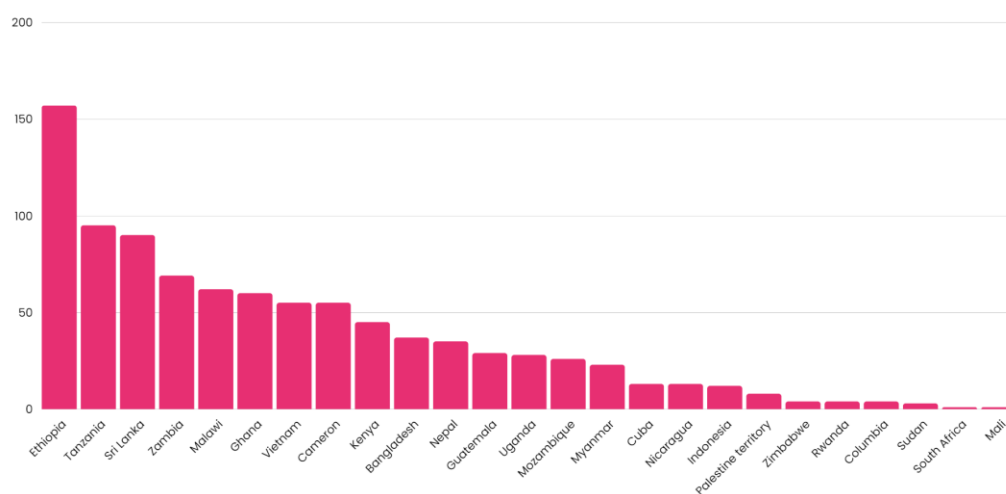


Figure 6: Student mobility to Norway from partnering countries between 2017-2022

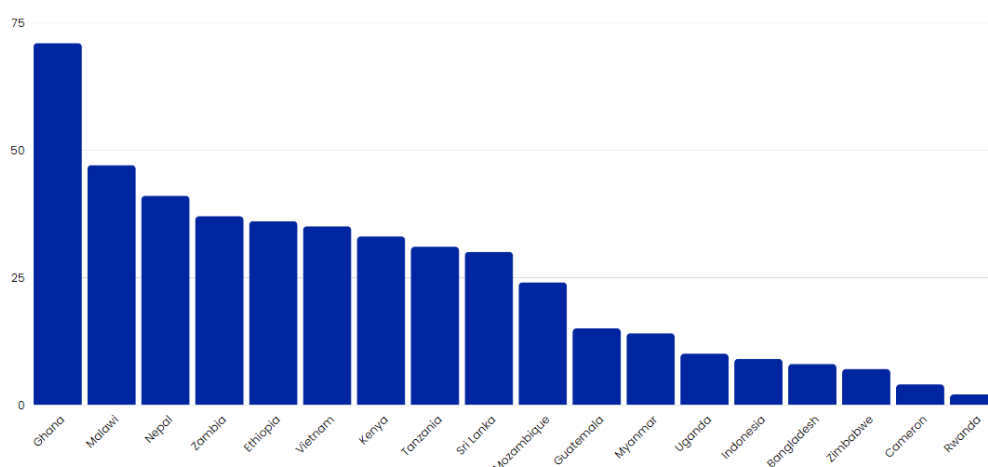


Figure 7: Student mobility from Norway to partnering countries between 2017–2022

Partnerships

Most projects within NORPART are rooted in well-established education and research partnerships, with a few newer collaborations. Several partnerships have signed bilateral Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), which strengthen the formal commitment between the partners. Regarding expanded partnerships, some projects involve two higher education institutions, but the majority of projects have several higher education institutions and/or network partners in multiple countries.

Network partners typically include research institutes, public agencies, private enterprises, hospitals, non-governmental organisations, and other associations. The purpose of their involvement can be to strengthen the collaboration, improve the quality of educational activities, or to offer work placement opportunities for students, at for instance schools or hospitals, as part of student mobility stays in a partner country. In total there are over 300 partnerships distributed over the 74 projects.

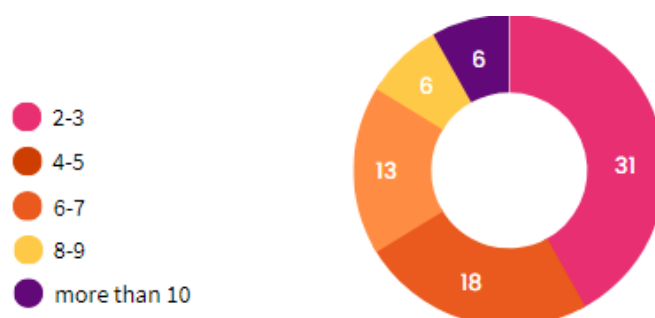


Figure 8: Distribution of number of partners per NORPART project

1.3 Academic disciplines

The NORPART portfolio continues to be diverse when it comes to academic disciplines. Figure 5 below gives a glimpse of the academic disciplines as represented in each of the 2016, 2018 and 2021 portfolios⁴. Compared with the two first NORPART portfolios, the new portfolio 2022-26 has a larger share of projects identifying within the academic disciplines of engineering and technology and agriculture, and a smaller share of projects within social sciences and pedagogy. However, please note that many of the projects are multidisciplinary.

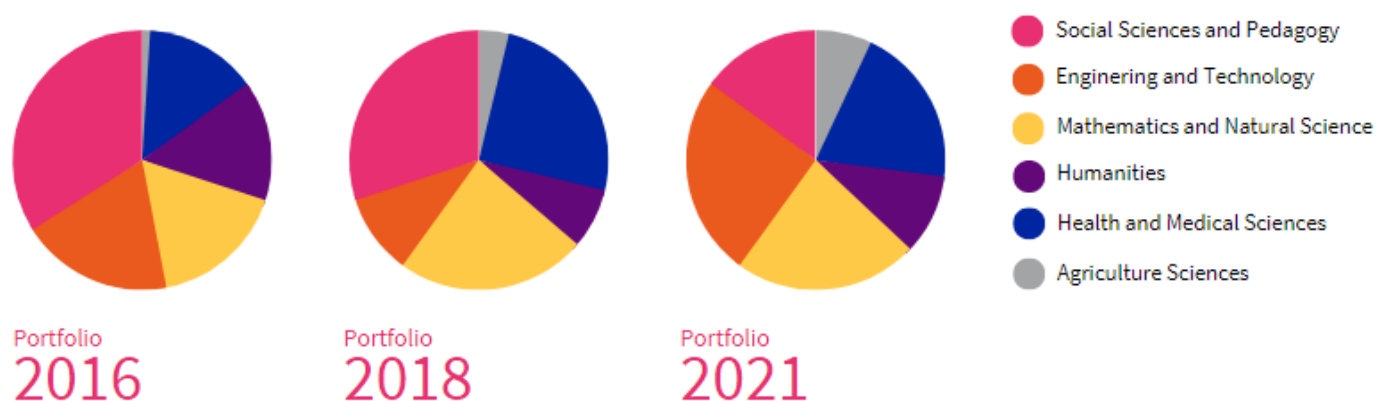


Figure 9: Academic disciplines in the NORPART portfolio.

1.4 Synergies with other funding programmes

Several NORPART partnerships have been established either as continuations of, or in synergy with, projects funded by other programmes. These cross-programme synergies have the potential to enhance project outcomes and impacts, while also fostering the sustainability of institutional partnerships. Moreover, such collaborations yield benefits for the participating students.

Notably, several projects within the NORPART programme benefit from a valuable synergy with NORHED II, which is Norad's platform for supporting North-South-South university partnerships. These partnerships focus on capacity development in higher education and research. By collaborating with, NORPART, NORHED II projects can leverage additional resources and expertise to enhance their efforts in capacity building and knowledge.

Furthermore, the current project portfolio showcases interlinked projects supported by various funding programmes including the HK-dir (Eurasia, INTPART and UTFORSK), The Research Council of Norway (NORGLOBAL), European Research Council (EU's Horizon Europe, Erasmus+), UNEP and UNICEF.

⁴ Academic disciplines for the projects are self-reported. Typically, one to three disciplines, sometimes four, are reported in the application.

Project impact – preliminary findings on educational quality and student mobility

An additional survey was distributed to the 2016 and 2018 portfolios. The purpose was to gain insight into potential impact of project activities related to student and staff development, educational quality, and strengthened partnerships. Project coordinators were asked to indicate the areas outcomes where they believed students and staff had improved as a result of the collaboration. The numbers here are based on the projects' self-evaluations⁵ Furthermore, the sample size includes 18 out of 45 NORPART projects, resulting in a response rate of 40%. However, we find that the narrative reports generally overlap with findings in the survey.

- **18 of 18** projects report that their staff have expanded their professional networks.
- **17 of 18** projects report that their staff have witnessed an enhancement in sector and field-specific competence.
- **17 of 18** projects report increased subject expertise for students
- **14 of 18** projects report enhanced critical thinking & problem-solving skills among students.
- **13 of 18** projects report higher student engagement in research

Furthermore, certain projects detail activities that have not only improved education and advanced educational institutions but have also had society-changing significance and impact. Two examples of such projects are highlighted in "*Project example: ALL4WASH*" on page 22, which centers on water sanitation, and "*Project example: LEMS*" on page 18, dedicated to language in a multilingual setting.

It is also noteworthy to consider aspects of the programme that project coordinators emphasize as areas for to enhance the projects' impact. These areas encompass the recruitment of students from marginalized groups, challenges concerning Norwegian students' ability to undertake long-term mobility, administrative burdens associated with short stays, and digital barriers. Further discussion of these aspects can be found on page 24

While further data collection over time is necessary to capture and validate significant trends, these findings already provided valuable insights into initial evaluations and tangible impacts of NORPART.

⁵ Please note, the answers may not be used to assess the scope of change..

2 Programme objectives: Results 2022

This chapter delves into the activities, results, and impacts of the NORPART programme in 2022. It is organized to provide insights into the programme's core objectives, namely achieving impactful partnerships between higher education institutions in Norway and partner countries, fostering academic cooperation and internationalisation, as well as promoting mutual student mobility. It is important to note that these objectives interact with one another in a mutually reinforcing way. Throughout this chapter, various elements will be highlighted that illustrate how the programme works to achieve these objectives.

By evaluating annual project reports this assessment examines critical aspects such as structural elements, quality improvement, mobility patterns, and gender balance within the programme. To provide the most accurate assessment of progress, the analysis of mobility in 2022 uses 2019 as the baseline for comparison rather than 2021, demonstrating advancements from pre-pandemic conditions. Please note that the development also has to be seen in light of NORPART consisting of three portfolios in 2022, compared to two portfolios 2019.

2.1 Strengthened academic partnerships.

Higher education institutions are strengthened by having highly qualified students and staff, as well as updated and relevant courses and degrees. These trends can be partially assessed through staff mobility and course development. Firstly, to facilitate academic collaboration, NORPART supports staff exchange of both academic and administrative personnel. Staff mobility is a useful indicator of the strength of partnerships; it also serves as an indicator of the commitment and complementarity among partners. The 2022 annual reports show an overall decrease in staff mobility (-10%) compared to pre-pandemic levels, primarily due to the reduction in staff mobility from Norway.

- From Norway: 124 staff mobility, down 31% from 2019
- To Norway: 110 staff mobility, up 15% from 2019
- South-South: 41 staff mobility, up 46% from 2019

In 2022, 275 staff mobilities were conducted. From the start of the programme in 2017 there have been a total of 906 staff mobilities.

For more detailed figures and trends, please see the overview below.

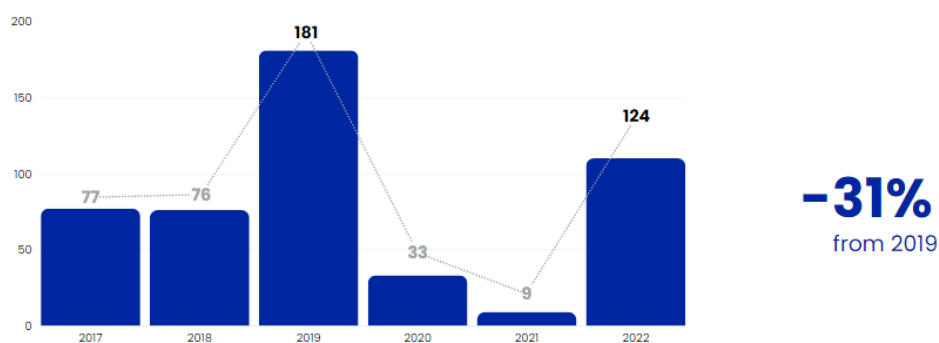


Figure 10: Development of staff mobility from Norway from 2017 to 2022

The decline in staff mobility from Norway needs to be considered in light of 2019 being a particularly active year for staff mobility from Norway (181 mobilities). However, when compared to 2017 (76 mobilities) and 2018 (77 mobilities), the 2022 figure (124 mobilities) can still be seen as a healthy development. The development might indicate the time required for new projects to establish structures and collaborations for mobility at partner institutions.

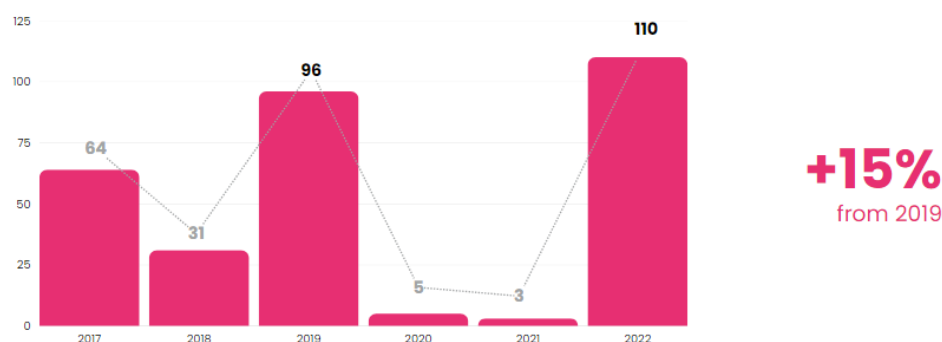


Figure 11: Development of staff mobility to Norway from 2017 to 2022

As demonstrated in the figure above the there is a 15% increase in staff mobility to Norway from partner countries compared to pre-pandemic levels.

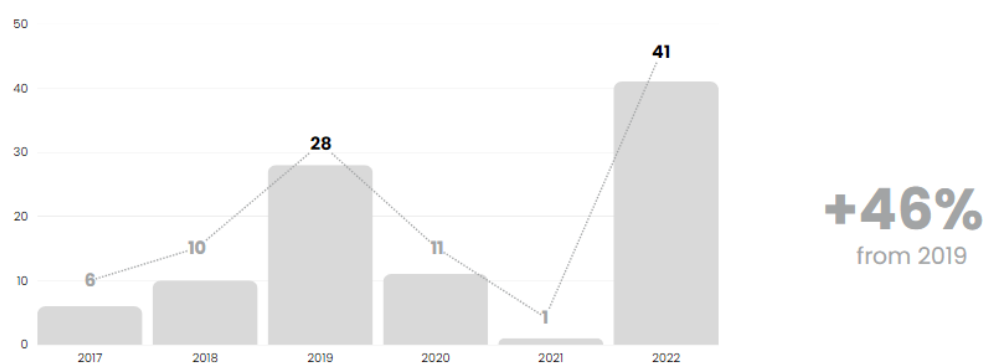


Figure 12: Development of South-South staff mobility from 2017 to 2022

South-South staff mobility has almost doubled since 2019. The project reports emphasize the intrinsic value of South-South mobility within the programme. This form of mobility serves as a catalyst for unique knowledge exchange, collaborative problem-solving in the face of similar challenges and reinforced regional cooperation.

The overall development in staff mobility indicates heightened project activity. Staff mobility to and from Norway primarily involves participation in project-related activities such as attending project meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, and engaging in course development. Norwegian scholars and staff tend to engage more in guest lectures during their mobility. On the other hand, scholars and staff from partner countries have a higher proportion of study visits as part of their mobility experiences.

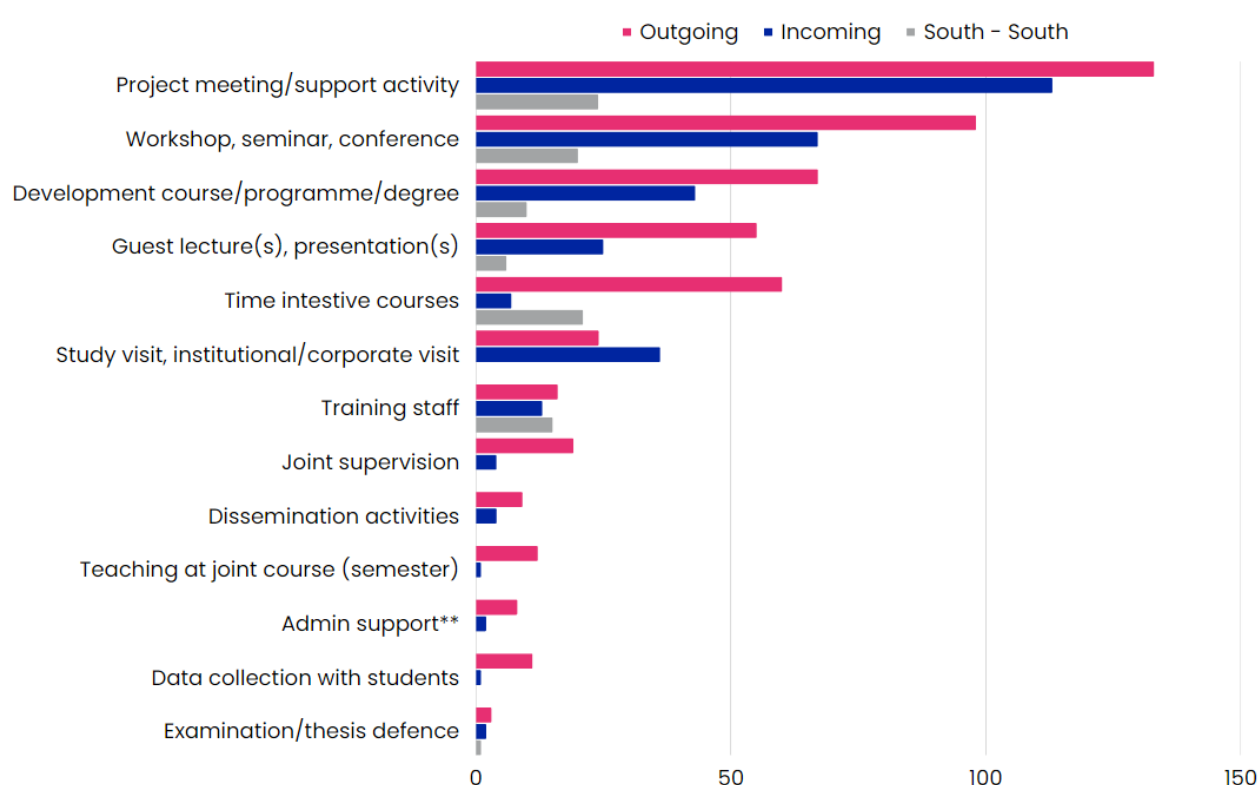


Figure 13: Purpose of staff mobility to and from Norway, and South-South mobility 2017-2022.

Furthermore, in 2022, 30 new courses were established, bringing the total number of courses to 204 since the beginning of the programme. Approximately 50% of these courses (97 courses) were developed, established, and offered at partner country institutions, including most of the master's degree programmes. This indicates that the need and desire for new courses and capacity building is larger in the partner countries.

However, there is also a substantial number of joint courses (34) and courses established at Norwegian institutions (73), highlighting the mutual benefits of collaboration. Moreover, these courses also contribute to internationalisation by providing new learning opportunities and perspectives to students who may not have the chance to travel abroad for various reasons.

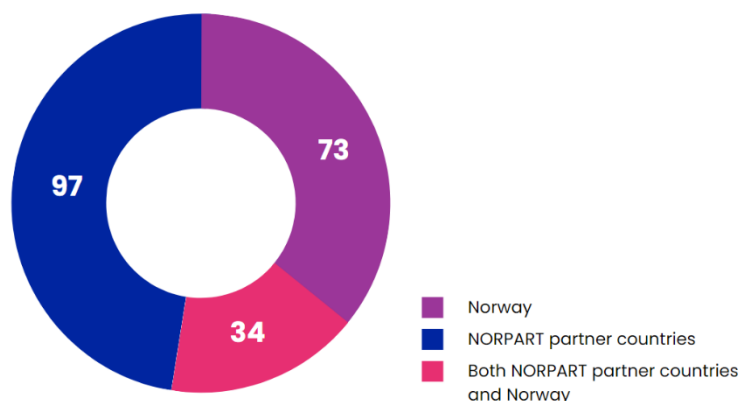


Figure 14: Development of courses from 2017-2022

The connection between education, research, and the job market is also a central element in NORPART partnerships. Work-life partners in Norway and partner countries participate in several of the projects, and a high percentage of projects with such partners report that it has led to increased relevance in courses and study programmes, enhanced learning outcomes for students, and opportunities for students to engage in projects and internships with partners from the labour market, both in partner countries and in Norway.

In total, the development in staff mobility indicate that mobility has at large rebounded to expected levels after two challenging years. Furthermore, the focus on development of new and relevant academic courses and collaboration with network partners, shows how higher quality of education should benefit not only the individual student, but also the institution. All in all, these findings indicate that there is still a strong commitment to the NORPART projects and objective of strengthening education and research between Norway and partner countries.

2.2 Increased quality and internationalisation of academic programmes at participating institutions

Aligned with the goals outlined in White paper "[Meld. St. 16 \(2020-2021\) - Education for Transformation — Increased Workplace Relevance in Higher Education](#)", the NORPART programme prioritizes research-based, student-centered, and globally oriented education. With this focus, higher education institutions in both Norway and partner countries widely recognize that collaborating with global partners heightens student involvement in research.

“NORPART has been crucial to involve students in the projects, and to disseminate research findings in ongoing courses at both universities. In addition, NORPART has provided us with the necessary funds to have longer stays in the partner country to support research and student trainings.”

Almost 70% report that the project has had an impact beyond academic collaboration and that the partners will continue with joint research activities and student exchanges after the project period ends. 50-60% also intend to continue with joint publications, staff exchanges, and guest lectures. More than half of the projects report that they have adopted new curricula, educational tools, materials, and assessment methods as a result of the international partnership.

In terms of Internationalisation, numerous projects employ funding to facilitate joint supervision of research projects for master's and Ph.D. students. Some students undertake fieldwork in partner countries as part of their theses. Such initiatives effectively bring Internationalisation to the home institution. New courses and guest lectures at partner institutions also contribute to enriching the learning environment, elevating quality standards, and fostering diversity on campuses.

The collaboration on new digital platforms appears to have strengthened and expanded the partnerships. However, varying quality in ICT infrastructure continues to pose challenges in some of the projects.

Project example: LEMS

In a collaborative effort spanning continents and cultures, the University of Zambia (UNZA) and Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN) have joined forces to create the Literacy Education in Multilingual Settings (LEMS) project. Multilingual settings are characterized by the coexistence and use of multiple languages, and they often require strategies and policies to manage linguistic diversity, promote effective communication, and ensure equal access to opportunities for speakers of different languages.

“NORPART initiative is contributing to reshape the landscape of literacy education by harnessing the power of multilingual settings, offering opportunities for academic cooperation, internationalisation and personal growth. One tangible outcome of their collaboration is the [‘Storybooks Zambia’](#) website, a resource offering reading materials in the official regional languages of Zambia for initial reading instruction. This achievement embodies the project's ambition to enhance educational resources and accessibility, offering an important example of the project's ongoing impact”.

Anne Marit V. Danbolt, professor and project coordinator
NORPART-2016/10026

2.3 Student mobility

All NORPART projects facilitate student mobility, ranging from shorter to longer durations, in both directions – to and from Norway. Mobility is a core element of every NORPART-funded project.

“The student mobility is a fundamental added value. Students in their evaluation of the program are extremely positive. This program gives the possibility to the incoming students to broaden their horizons and develop different teaching practices based on the experiences they had in Norway. Moreover, the studying conditions are giving them the best outcomes in terms of finishing their studies on time. Moreover, while Norway might be funding the programme, the bilateral nature of the collaborations put partners to a more horizontal relationship status, which makes it more dynamic and inspiring.”

Positive trends from the 2022 annual report include a record-high level of the overall student mobility, 420 mobilities, up 14% compared to pre-pandemic levels.

- From Norway: 134 student mobility, up 20% from 2019
- To Norway: 255 student mobility, up 39% from 2019
- South-South: 31 student mobility, down 56% from 2019

Total of 1554 student mobilities from 2017 to 2022.

The general trend in 2022 indicates an overall increase, this can be attributed to the relaxation of travel restrictions and the development of projects, leading to the establishment of new mobility structures. Higher education institutions also largely believe that collaboration with global partners leads to establishment of new mobility structures and mobility windows in specific study programmes. However, it is important to note that South-South student mobility have encountered declines.

Student mobility from Norway

In 2022, NORPART experienced its highest number of Norwegian students, 134 students (20% increase), engaging in exchanges compared to pre-pandemic levels. The preference among both Norwegian students tends to lean towards short-term stays (107 students) at partner institutions, with only a small number (27 students) opting for longer semester stays.

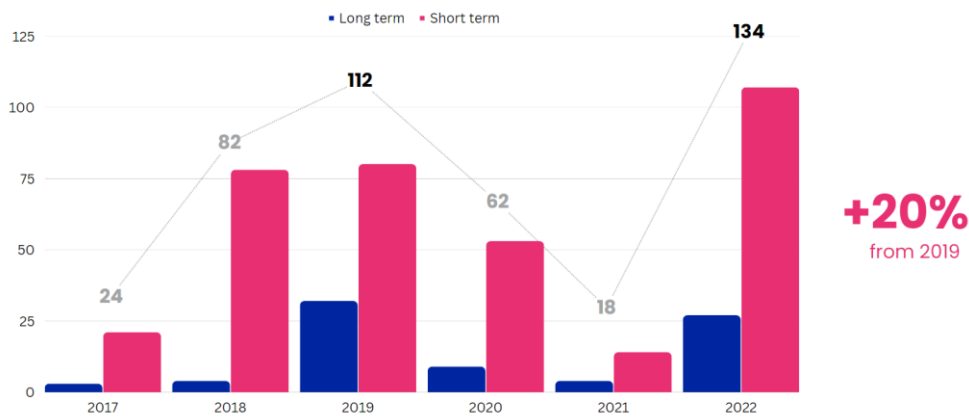


Figure 15: Development of student mobility from Norway between 2017 -2022

Student mobility from Norway frequently involves activities like data collection, participation in time-intensive courses such as field courses, research schools, summer schools, or work placements. Evidence from evaluation of project reports indicate that short-term exchanges happen where there is a close link between education and research. This trend may also be influenced by various factors, including the availability of suitable courses for exchange students, challenges in establishing credit transfer systems, and differences in academic calendars among institutions.

The increase in the overall outgoing student is an indication of the programme's relevance in encouraging and facilitating international experiences for Norwegian students.

Student mobility to Norway

Similarly, student mobility to Norway saw a rise in the number of students in comparison to pre-pandemic levels. Specifically, 255 students (a 39% increase) participated in student mobility from partner countries.

In contrast to Norwegian students, students from partner countries tend to favour long-term stays (227 students), with only a few traveling for short semester stays (27 students). This distribution reflects NORPART's focus on emphasizing long-term stays (more than 3 months) for incoming students. Student mobility to Norway primarily involves semester exchanges, with a smaller percentage engaging in joint study programmes and time-intensive/short courses.

The increase in overall incoming student mobility from partner countries indicate that mobility has rebounded to expected levels after two challenging years and that there is still a strong commitment to the NORPART projects and objectives.

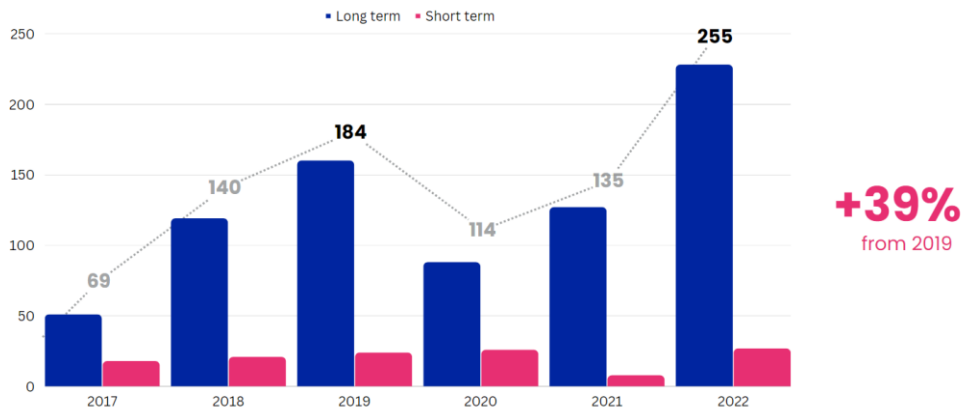


Figure 16: Development of student mobility to Norway between 2017 –2022

South-South student mobility

In 2022, South-South mobility exhibits a relatively balanced distribution, with 31 students and 41 staff participants. However, a comparison to 2019 data reveals a 56% decrease in student mobility, the majority short-term mobility. This decline is difficult to explain, partially due to a limited sample size. However, it will be interesting to monitor this in the years to come as south-south mobility is an important dimension of the programme.

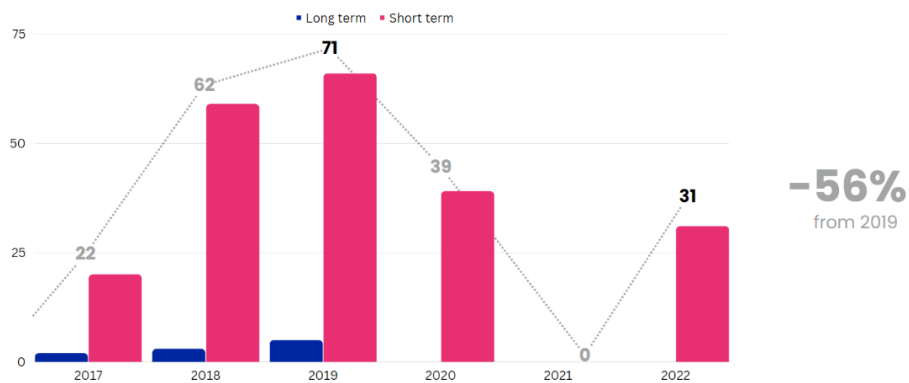


Figure 17: Development of South-South student mobility from 2017–2022

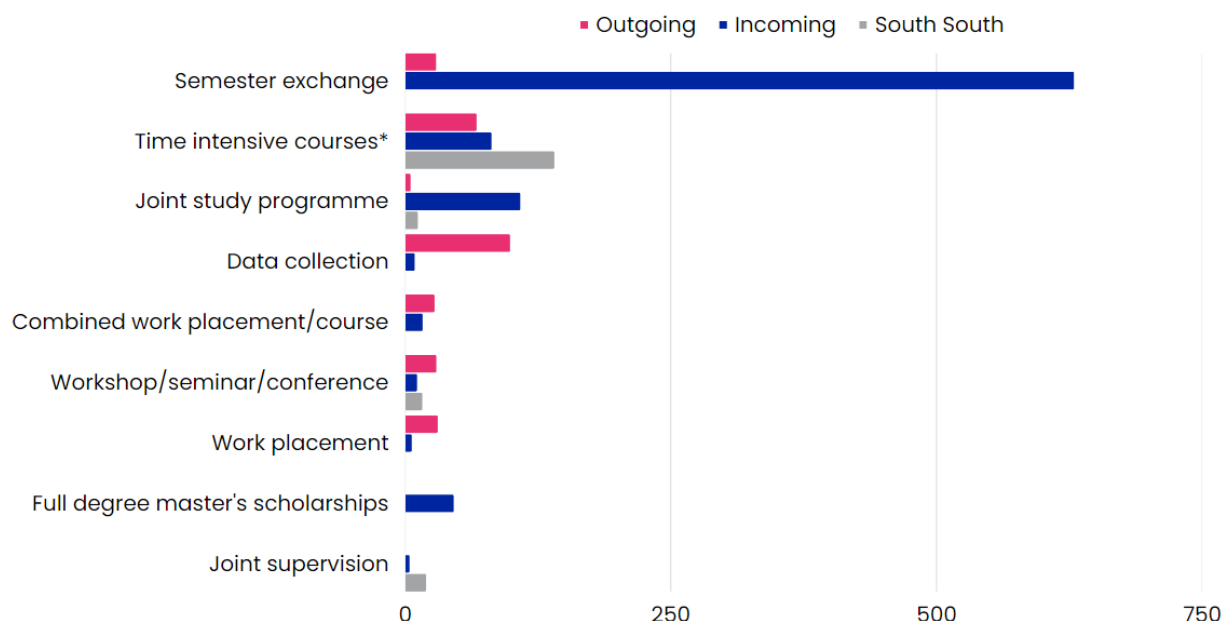


Figure 18: Purpose of student mobility to and from Norway, and South-South mobility.

Project example: ALL4WASH

The project consortium, 'North-South-Alliance for inclusive water, sanitation, and hygiene' (ALL4WASH). The alliance includes NTNU, three African Centers of Excellence in water and sanitation based in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Tanzania and their alliance Universities in Mali, Uganda, and South Africa. Through co-curriculum development, student and academic staff exchange, joint research projects, and co-supervision, the alliance seeks to strengthen inclusive education and research in sustainable water supply.

"Students' mobility is key to reaching the goal of sustainable water supply. Through mobility, students can build their capacity by learning from other cultures, share and cross-fertilize ideas on sustainable technologies & practices in the water sector for advancing the SDGs in their respective countries. Furthermore, students through mobility will enhance their transversal skills and will develop requisite knowledge from an international perspective to be active participants in the knowledge economy of sustainable water and sanitation. For this reason, the All4WASH project prioritises North-South, and South-South mobilities where students get the opportunity to work on joint projects, and by extension build their capacity in sustainable water and sanitation practices for application in their home countries."

Razak Seidu, Professor and project coordinator
NORPART-2021/10027.

2.4 Full degree-scholarships

The full-degree scholarship provides vital financial backing for students from Global South institutions actively involved in NORPART projects, enabling a two-year master's degree. These scholarships are meant to target students without prior master's degrees and those from underrepresented or marginalized groups. They also extend to partner institution staff seeking academic advancement.

Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this initiative gained momentum in the third NORPART portfolio, with 25 out of 28 projects securing full-degree master's scholarships. A total of 112 such scholarships were granted to projects, with prospective students anticipated to commence their Norwegian studies in 2022 or 2023.

"The access to full degree scholarship, which is not available in other programs, is essential for long term collaboration and is more beneficial for both partners."

The recipients of full-degree scholarships are currently in the process of completing their degrees, with the initial candidates expected to graduate in 2023. As a result, both result and impact analyses are pending.

2.5 Gender

Aligned with Norway's commitment to gender equality as outlined in the Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Foreign and Development Policy 2016-2020, NORPART aims to promote equal opportunities in vocational training and higher education.

Gender balance within the NORPART projects reveals a relative balanced distribution among students from 2017-2022, with roughly 48% female and 52% male participants. However, among staff, the gender distribution leans towards males, comprising about 64% of the total, while females account for approximately 36%. It is worth noting that there is more female mobility from Norway to partner countries, whereas more males travel to Norway.

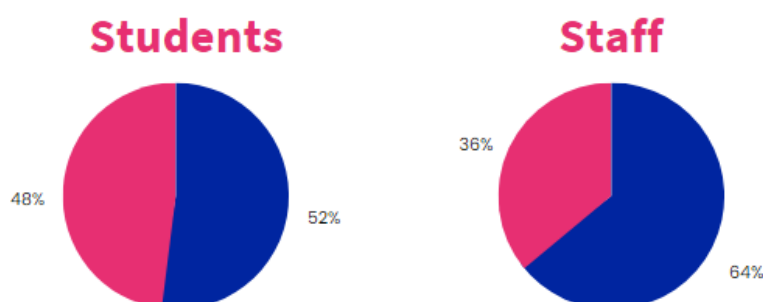


Figure 19: Gender balance within the NORPART projects from 2017 to 2022, students and staff.

Several projects have strived to ensure gender equality among students and staff selected for mobility. This pattern is often influenced by the composition of student and staff populations in the respective countries. However, the commitment to equality still entails further work, especially as it can have significant effects both for institutions and individuals.

“Many of the female students(/staff) from Ethiopia has gained more self-confidence, in parts because they are away from their husband and children for the first time and in parts because they see and feel the respect and equality females are treated with in all aspects of life in Norway.”

2.6 Dissemination

Dissemination of project results plays a crucial role in the NORPART programme, ensuring that the knowledge, experiences, and outcomes gained from collaborative efforts reach a wider audience and have a lasting impact. Many projects report that master and Ph.D. students are involved in activities related to research projects and disseminations, such as conferences, seminars, and workshops, as part of the NORPART project. Research collaborations in NORPART projects have so far resulted in several journal articles, papers, and other research publications, as well as development of teaching curricula.

Through effective dissemination strategies, the valuable insights, best practices, and innovative approaches developed within the projects are shared with relevant stakeholders, both within Norway and partner countries.

2.7 NORPART and SDG

The programme seeks to promote transparency and accountability and aims to actively aligns with the global discourse on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with particular emphasis on Goal 17, "Partnerships for the goals," and Goal 4, "Quality education" (refer to findings in chapters 2.1 and 2.2). Moreover, the report addresses Goal 5, "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," through the presentation of gender balance statistics (see findings in chapter 2.5). It's important to note that the 74 projects supported by the programme contribute significantly to a variety of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through their research and specialized focus areas.

However, it's important to acknowledge that measuring and reporting on SDGs can be intricate due to various contextual factors and complexities. This is an ongoing process of development and learning for both the specific projects and the overall NORPART programme.

“I think the SDG motto: leave no-one behind is realized in the NORPART programme”

3 Assessment of risks and prospects

In this chapter, is a short evaluation of the NORPART programme's potential risks and prospects based on the findings in the previous chapter.

3.1 Self-reported results

The annual report relies heavily on self-reported results, which could potentially introduce biases or inaccuracies. To ensure the validity and reliability of data, the directorate and the projects should attempt to complement self-assessment with more external verification and objective evaluation methods when possible. It's worth noting that the programme underwent an external evaluation by [Ideas2evidence](#) in 2020, which contributed valuable insights into the programmes operations and impact.

3.2 Short-term results and long-term impact

One of the challenges of measuring impacts in the higher education sector is the complexity of individual educational paths: results often do not emerge in a linear way, but progressively; in many cases, they may be observed only after a period of time has passed. It is not uncommon for results to occur after funding has ended, which makes monitoring within an established reporting system even more challenging. In the case of programmes, such as NORPART, that provide funding for partnerships in emerging economies and developing countries shows that long periods often elapse between the completion of the project, and measured effects and impacts. Therefore, reliable data on results and impact, can often be collected only after a lengthy delay.

3.3 Balance long-term and short-term mobility

One of the aims of the NORPART programme is to facilitate long-term mobility spanning over 3 months. However, a recurrent trend, including in 2022, is that partner country students tend to stay for a longer term, while Norwegian students opt for shorter stays. This pattern is often attributed to challenges faced by Norwegian students in integrating longer periods of mobility within their study plans, given mandatory courses and attendance requirements.

However, it's worth emphasizing that another aspect of the NORPART programme is its involvement in research, and shorter mobilities often align with research projects. This highlights the interconnected nature of NORPART's objectives.

3.4 Digital dimensions of the partnerships

The projects report on the significance of incorporating digital dimensions into the partnerships. Leveraging technology can strengthen collaboration, facilitate

virtual mobility, and enhance communication between institutions, especially during uncertain times like the pandemic. However, it's essential to acknowledge the varying capacities of institutions. Some partners, especially in certain partner countries, encounter challenges due to unstable internet connections, inadequate digital facilities, or limited equipment. This could potentially hinder or reduce the efficiency of specific project activities and can be challenging to anticipate in advance.

3.5 Addressing access in higher education

The review on page 21 highlights another significant challenge in higher education, extending beyond the scope of the NORPART program: the issue of access for disadvantaged students and those from marginalized groups. This concern is shared by both universities and project coordinators.

“One weakness of the funding structure is that, although one of the aims is to empower disadvantaged learners, it is mainly learners from well to do families benefit from the funding. NORPART provides funding only for fieldwork and laboratory work, and students must pay tuition. Majority of students from disadvantaged families can't afford payment of tuition fees. Many eligible students fail to get onto the programme because of this.”

Although not a new trend and without easily identifiable solutions, it emphasizes the importance of initiatives like full-degree scholarships that prioritize disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

3.6 Addressing geopolitical challenges

The assessment acknowledges that the NORPART programme has been affected by geo-political tensions in partner countries, which have presented obstacles to student mobility and collaborative engagements. Adapting to and effectively navigating these intricate geopolitical dynamics is paramount for the programme's continued success.

In 2022, the projects have confronted difficulties arising from political unrest in Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, and Palestine, affecting student mobility and collaborative initiatives. The Ethiopian situation has had a substantial impact, affecting 17 NORPART projects engaged in partnerships within the country.

4 Programme administration

HK-dir typically monitors progress through annual reporting and project visits, as well as through continuous dialogue with projects that experience different challenges.

4.1 NORPART Seminar 2022

The big event in 2022 was the NORPART seminar. This two-day project seminar, organized by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills in collaboration with Oslo Metropolitan University, took place on September 21-22, 2022. The seminar was a platform that featured a range of activities including lectures, discussions, debates, and networking opportunities for project coordinators, project members, institutional contacts, administrative staff, and students associated with NORPART projects.

The seminar's focus was on partnership building, effective communication, dissemination of knowledge, and exploring synergies among participants. The opening of the seminar featured remarks from OsloMet's rector Christen Krogh and Edle Hamre from the Foreign Ministry (UD)



The five NORPART students arrived in Oslo in August to take their MA degree at the Department of Journalism & Media Studies. They are Christine Kabazira & Nelson Bahati (Makerere University, Uganda), Theodora Theodory, Caroline Malewo, & Theodorah Munisi (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania). They were joined by professors Roy Krøvel & Kristin Skare Orgeret.

One of the highlights of the seminar was a segment titled 'Global Academic Cooperation Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education: The Importance of Exchange and Multiple Perspectives in a Rapidly Changing World.' In this segment, five NORPART MA students had the opportunity to share their valuable experiences. The students discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with student exchange and offered personal insights into the differences and similarities between studying in Uganda, Tanzania, and Norway. This segment provided a rich perspective on the impact of international academic collaboration within NORPART.

4.2 Project visits in 2022

In the call for funding launched in 2021, South Africa's eight historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) were included as potential partners in NORPART. 10 of the 150 applications received including a South African partner, and three of these were awarded funding. In December 2022, a group from HK-dir visited South Africa. The visit included the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Embassy and attended the Sanord conference. But most importantly, we visited six of HDI's including three project visits at University of Zululand, University of Venda and University of Western Cape.

University of Zululand is one of 10 partners in the new project ["BIOCOVE, Building knowledge for sustainable biodiversity conservation, from virtual learning to hands-on experience"](#). The project coordinator, Professor Charlotte Sletten Bjorå, is based at the University of Oslo. The broad approach is to improve the quality of plant biodiversity education at UiO and the 10 partner institutions, including combining international mobility for young biodiversity researchers with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge in plant biodiversity, lab, and fieldwork.

At our visit we managed to combine a project update with a meeting with Professor Nontuthuko Rosemary Ntuli at Department of Botan and Godfrey Elija Zharare from Department of Agriculture from the NORPART team, with a meeting at the International Office and the Vice Chancellor and Deans.



Godfrey Elija Zharare, Laila Linde Lossius, Nontuthuko Rosemary Ntuli, Khoboso Lehloenya, Zenzele Mdletshe, Nokuthula Kunene

University of the Western Cape has longstanding relationships with many Norwegian universities and is partner in the NORPART project ["Malawi, South Africa and Norway mobility programme in Sustainable Community Development and Eco-Social Change."](#)

The aim of this project is to develop a sustainable network for cooperation in master education in community development and eco-social change studies through mobility of students and staff. In addition to travel exchanges at the different universities, the project will also base its activities on different forms of virtual collaboration that also aims at transferring e-learning and digitalization knowledge through guest lecturing and staff mobility. The coordinator for this project is Associate Professor Memory Jayne Tembo at VID, Campus Stavanger. In Cape Town we met with her project partners John Klaasen og Tiana Bosman from Department of Religion and Theology and received an update from them.



Laila Linde Lossius, Trude Holme, Tiana Bosman, John Klassen

Last but not least, we went up north to visit University of Venda, situated in the province of Limpopo. University of Limpopo was the annual host for the [SANORD](#) conference of 2022, so we found it an excellent opportunity to visit both institutions.

University of Venda is one of eight institutions collaborating in the project [“All4WASH, North-South-Alliance for inclusive water, sanitation, and hygiene”](#). In short, this overarching and vast project addresses inadequate water supply and sanitation, and how this remains an intractable challenge with dire consequences on the environment, livelihoods, and public health. Addressing these challenges requires an expansion and revitalization of international cooperation, and capacity building to support water and sanitation related activities and programs. The project coordinator, Professor Seidu Razak is based at NTNU, at Department of Ocean Operations and Civil Engineering.



Professor Natasha Potgieter with her team and students, Hilde Kramer and Ingvild Hope from HK-dir

For more information on these and other NORPART project please visit our [project database](#).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings and insights from the annual report of 2022 demonstrate the progress and impact of the NORPART programme.

The record-high student mobility, strengthening of partnerships through mutual staff mobility and course development, and the continuous development of educational and research collaborations between Norway and partner countries are all testament to the programme meeting its relevance.

The directorate and the projects will continue to explore ways to evaluate, report, and communicate the results of the programme and the projects contribution.

With these valuable insights, NORPART continue building on the programme's advances in achieving its objectives and make meaningful contributions to the development of higher education and research in Norway and the partner countries.

