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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

Updated with all amendments enacted up to 7 January 2005

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Cf. Act No. 11 of 17 July 1925 (Svalbard Act). Cf. *earlier* Acts of 14 Jan. 1837 (with supplementary Acts of 11 Feb. 1860, 14 June 1879, 27 July 1896, 11 April 1900, 29 May 1901, 9 June 1903, 17 May 1904, 12 June 1906, 7 June 1910), Nos. 2 and 3 of 30 Sept. 1921 (with supplementary Acts No. 2 of 12 May 1922, No. 1 of 2 June 1922, Nos. 7 and 8 of 10 July 1925, No. 10 of 22 June 1928, No. 5 of 26 June 1929, Nos. 1 and 2 of 24 June 1932, Nos. 2 and 3 of 24 March 1933, Nos. 4 and 7 of 24 June 1933, Nos. 7 and 8 of 7 June 1935), Nos. 5 and 6 of 10 June 1938 (with supplementary Acts Nos. 8 and 9 of 28 June 1946, Nos. 4 and 5 of 4 July 1947, No. 1 of 18 June 1948, Nos. 3 and 4 of 18 March 1949, Nos. 7 and 8 of 30 June 1949, sections 15 and 16 of No. 8 of 15 December 1950, Nos. 5 and 6 of 19 December 1952), No. 1 of 12 Nov. 1954 (Municipal Authorities Act), No. 1 of 16 June 1961 (County Authorities Act), No. 85 of 21 June 1985 (pilot scheme for new form of administration), No. 16 of 2 May 1986 (extended pilot scheme activity).

Chapter 1

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ACT. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING

§ 1. The purpose of the Act

The purpose of this Act is to make provision for functional democracy in local government and for efficient and effective management of the common local government interests within the framework of the national community and with a view to sustainable development.

§ 2. *The scope of the Act*

This Act applies to the activity of local authorities including local government activity in pursuance of other Acts.

§ 3. *Structure of local government. Names of local authorities. Town*

1. Each municipality belongs to one county. Each county except Oslo forms a county authority.
2. Any change in the structure of local government is to be decided pursuant to statutory provisions.
3. Any change of name of a municipality is to be decided by the King.

Before the question of the name is decided, a statement or statements shall be obtained from the municipal authority or authorities concerned.

4. The county authority shall have the same name as the county.
5. Any municipality with a population exceeding 5000 may use the designation “town” provided that the municipality has an area of dense population characteristic of a town with trade and service functions and a concentration of buildings.

The Ministry may depart from the provision of section 3(1) of this Act where weighty grounds so indicate.

§ 4. *Information concerning the activity of the local authority*

Any municipal authority and any county authority shall promote the active provision of information concerning its activity. The best possible provision shall be made for public access to information in local authority management.

§ 5. *Local authority planning*

1. The municipal authority shall produce a co-ordinated plan for municipal activity. The county authority shall produce a county plan. The county plan shall co-ordinate the activity of the state, of the county authority and of the municipal authorities in the county.
2. Local authority planning shall be based upon a realistic assessment of the anticipated development in the local authority area and of the financial resources that will be available as indicated in the finance plan.
3. Further provisions concerning local authority planning are issued by statute.

Chapter 2
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES

§ 6. *Municipal council and county council*

The municipal council and the county council are the highest municipal and county bodies. They pass resolutions on behalf of the municipal authority or the county authority unless otherwise provided by statute or by resolution to delegate authority.

§ 7. *The composition of the municipal council and of the county council*

1. The municipal council is elected by the inhabitants of the municipality who are entitled to vote pursuant to statutory provisions. The members of the county council are elected by the inhabitants of the county who are entitled to vote pursuant to statutory provisions. The term of office is four years.
2. The number of members of the municipal council shall be an uneven number, which is determined thus for municipalities with:
 - a) not more than 5000 inhabitants, no fewer than 11
 - b) more than 5000 but not more than 10,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 19
 - c) more than 10,000 but not more than 50,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 27
 - d) more than 50,000 but not more than 100,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 35
 - e) more than 100,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 43.

The number of members of the county council shall be an uneven number, which is determined thus for counties with:

- a) not more than 150,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 19
 - b) more than 150,000 but not more than 200,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 27
 - c) more than 200,000 but not more than 300,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 35
 - d) more than 300,000 inhabitants, no fewer than 43.
3. Any change in the number of members is to be resolved by the municipal council or the county council itself in the course of the first three years of its term of office with effect from the next election.
 4. Decisive for the minimum lawful number of members is the number of inhabitants in the municipality or the county at the end of the penultimate calendar year before the election. If it is shown to be the case that the number of members at this point of time is too small in proportion to the number of inhabitants and no resolution for enlargement has been passed, the number of members is to be increased to the statutory minimum at the next election.

§ 8. *Municipal board of aldermen. County board of aldermen*

1. The municipal council and the county council themselves elect the municipal board of aldermen and the county board of aldermen respectively with a minimum of 5 members. Nevertheless this does not apply to any municipal or county authority that has introduced a parliamentary form of government.
2. Members and alternates are elected for four years to the municipal board of aldermen or the county board of aldermen by and from among the members of the municipal council or the county council. The election is conducted as a proportionally representative election where at least one member so demands and otherwise as a majority ballot.
3. The municipal board of aldermen and the county board of aldermen consider proposals for the finance plan, annual budget and tax resolutions. Otherwise the municipal council and the county council themselves lay down the area of activity for the municipal board