

Patents and Trademarks

It is recommended that manufacturers wishing to export goods to Norway, patent their inventions and register their trademarks before entering the market. Patent and trademark registration should be made through a local patent or trademark agent.

Patents are granted for a term of 17 years from the date of application subject to the payment of annual renewal fees. An application for a patent should be made before it has been generally accessible in any country, whether by means of a written or oral description, by use, or in any other manner prior to the filing date or convention date. A patentee may be required to grant a licence if his invention is not worked in Norway within three years of the grant of the patent, or four years from date of application, whichever is the longer. The marketing Control Act has been extended to protect copying beyond the scope of patent law.

The first applicant is entitled to registration and exclusive use of a trademark, but a prior user may oppose the registration within a period of five years. The life of a trademark is 10 years and it is renewable for additional 10-year periods. Application for renewal must be made not earlier than one year before and not later than six months after the expiration of the previous period.

Technical Assistance Contracts and Joint Ventures

Norway's industrial trade policy is based on the liberal principal of a "free market economy", and Norwegian industrial firms are at liberty to negotiate technical assistance contracts, licensing agreements or joint ventures with foreign firms or businessmen without state supervision and without limitation of foreign exchange transactions. However, the export of capital is subject to government approval.

Although many Norwegian firms have extended their business activities to foreign countries under such agreements, foreign firms are also very active in Norway, and Canadian companies interested in finding partners for joint ventures may expect to meet heavy competition from the United States, and from British and other Common Market firms.