As one of three counties in Northern Norway, Troms includes 24 municipalities and covers an area of almost 26,000 km² (10,000 square miles).

Troms has a population of almost 164,502 inhabitants (2016), and its three towns are Tromsø (73,556), Harstad (24,729) and Finnsnes (11,646, incl. Lenvik Municipality).

Did you know...

• that there are more than 144 nationalities living in Troms?
• that Troms County borders on Sweden and Finland?
• that historically there were three main nationalities in Troms: Norwegians, Sámi and Kven?
• that the Sámi are the largest group of indigenous peoples in the Barents Region (Sweden, Finland, Russia and Norway)?

Scan the QR code and watch a fantastic video about the charming Troms County...

More about Troms
http://foto.nordhorge.com
City life in Tromsø. (Photo: Svein Petter Aagård / www.visitnorway.com)

Skiing in Lyngen. (Photo: CH / www.visitnorway.com)

Enjoying the Sommarøy Island. (Photo: CH / www.visitnorway.com)
VISION AND FUNCTION

The key is tolerant, innovative and solution-oriented regional governance.

Vision
Troms County Council constantly aims to develop an even better region to live in. It is important to make the High North more visible as an attractive part of the world for people and business.

County Council tasks and responsibilities
The Troms County Council is responsible for certain cross-municipal tasks and initiates and coordinates regional political and administrative activities. Some of the Council’s tasks include:
- Management of secondary and continuing education
- Public and school transportation
- Management of some 3,000 km county roads
- Cultural heritage, public health and wellbeing
- Dental health service
- Support of business, social and economic development
- Administration of regional project funds

The County Parliament
The highest political body in Troms consists of 37 members elected by the people every four years. The councilors make up committees, which process all matters relating to County Government.

The County Governor
The County Governor of Troms is the County chief representative of the King and Government, and works for the implementation of parliamentary decisions, goals and guidelines for the benefit of the population. A key task is to take part in the coordination and rationalization of governmental operations in Troms.
US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Tromsø in June 2012. (Photo: Andrea Gjestvang, Utenriksdepartementet)

Governance Structure

We have a three-level governance structure in Norway:
- The National Assembly (Stortinget)
- 19 administrative regions (county councils)
- 428 municipalities

Troms County Government

The County Government is an elected body governing the county, dependent on the direct or indirect support of the County Parliament. The County Government is responsible for the council administration, and each executive councilor is a portfolio holder and carries responsibility for one or more departments.

The Office of the Chief of Staff

The office provides administrative support to the Chair of the County Government and assists with the coordination of the County Government’s daily tasks as well as the coordination of the following areas between political and administrative levels:
- International relations
- High North affairs
- Regional affairs
- Information and PR
- Strategic planning
It is important for the County Council to contribute to international co-operation.

Troms County Council is represented in a number of international organizations and networks (like for example the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas Network (NSPA)) to contribute to and to influence political and economic decisions and programs relevant for the development of the region.

The North Norway European Office

- Is located in Brussels and owned by the County Councils of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark
- Operates as a link between Northern Norway and relevant partners and institutions in the EU and EEA
- Provides information and expertise and works in association with EU and EEA networks
- Visit northnorway.org for more information

European Arctic Oil and Gas seminar in the European Parliament. (Photo: Andreas Østhagen)

The High North

This has for centuries been a region for peaceful co-existence and mutual partnership between neighboring countries.

Climate change and the High North’s abundant natural resources have contributed to a shift in national and international politics when it comes to the challenges and the possibilities of the High North. The region attracts growing attention from all stakeholders involved.

A major objective of Troms County Council’s international work is to enhance the county’s potential for economic growth and competitiveness. The Council aims to secure its environment, settlement, culture and business development in a modern, global context. An important strategic element in our work is to participate in relevant programs and networks, like the Barents programs, the North Calotte programs, the EU Territorial Co-operation programs/Interreg as well as other EU and EEA programs and networks.
THE BARENTS REGION

Troms County Council is an active member in the Barents Regional Council and participates in a wide range of networks in the Barents Region.

The Council is also a co-owner of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat, a cross-border competence centre on Norwegian-Russian relations.

International bilateral co-operation
Troms County Council has signed formal agreements of political, economic and cultural co-operation with four Russian regions: Arkhangelsk Oblast, Murmansk Oblast, Republic of Karelia and Republic of Komi, as well as with the Swedish county of Norrbotten.

Facts about the Barents Region

- 13 administrative units within Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway constitute the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (www.barents.no) and the Barents Regional Council (www.beac.st)
- 5.5 million inhabitants
- 1.7 million km² (656,000 square miles) – larger than Italy, France and Spain in total

International exchange is important for the County Council. Our co-operation with Gymnasium No. 1 in Murmansk makes it possible for Norwegian 17-18-year-olds to study in Russia for a year. (Photo: Bjarne Berg)
Tromsø International Film Festival has become popular among film lovers and is also an important meeting point for Norwegian and international film industry. From a gentle start in 1991, this year’s ticket sale was incredible 60,000 (2016). And the outdoor Snow Cinema is free for everybody during the whole festival week. (Photo: Ingun A. Mæhlum/TIFF)
Participants of the International Amateur Theater Festival, Tromsø Dialog 2011, parade through the streets of Tromsø. *(Photo: Gatemagasinet Virkelig)*

Riddu Ridđu is an annual, international indigenous festival in the coastal Sámi village Kåfjord in Northern Troms. *(Photo: Ørjan Bertelsen)*

**FACING THE FUTURE**

Our goal for regional business development is to create innovative and future-oriented activities and to generate job opportunities.

**Festivals**
Festival tourism is an exciting, growing industry attracting visitors from all over the world throughout the whole year, and to every corner of the county. Key festival themes are films, various types of music and literature.

**Nature**
The county’s scenic beauty brings thousands of tourists to Troms every year, and the tourism industry continuously develops and grows.

**Cultural diversity**
Our multicultural region is influenced by the Norwegian, Sámi and Kven cultures as well as cultures from other parts of the world.

The County Council is responsible for development and preservation of local culture, cultural heritage and heritage sites. Combining culture and business is a strong trend and an important feature of the economic development and sustainable living in the region.
New transport corridors in the North
The County Council aims to develop the infrastructure along our East-West transport corridors. Maritime logistics provides an important element in the development of the region, as the expected increase in cargo demands an efficient and environmentally friendly sea route between Europe, via Northwest Russia, and the Far East.

Competence for future development
The University of Tromsø is the world’s northernmost university and a key institution in Troms, attracting research and teaching competence as well as 10,000 students from 67 countries around the world. The University of Tromsø also has partnership agreements with a large number of national and international universities.

Education and research play important roles in the business development in Troms. Impressive results in marine biotechnology and satellite and space technologies are examples demonstrating this. Businesses are more integrated in the global economy and, consequently, more interdependent on global markets and international cyclical fluctuations than ever before.
The Polar Pioneer platform anchored in Tromsø in 2011 for technical maintenance. Troms County is rich in natural resources, and its unique location offers great advantages when it comes to energy production, fisheries, aquaculture and tourism. We focus on utilizing natural resources in a sustainable manner. (Photo: Yngve Olsen Sæbbe)
This brochure is published in Norwegian, English and Russian.

Publisher: Troms County Council
Design: Rød Tråd AS

Troms County Council coat of arms is an expression of local self-governance. It depicts the griffin, a legendary creature, half lion and half eagle. During the 13th and 14th centuries it was adopted by the Bjarkøy clan, of ancient lineage since the Viking times, one of the richest and most powerful in Norway at that time. Their lands covered much of what we call Troms today. The griffin represents the lion's strength and the eagle's courage.

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