

# Geopolitics exercise

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## Introduction

This document is written as an answer to "Working the margins", an article discussing the geopolitical history and status quo of Italy. The task is to compare the aforementioned aspects, relative to one's own country of origin and its identity-formation process. For this submission Norway will be the compared country.

## The Europe-Africa axis and the North south duality.

True for both countries is that the division between north and south also includes an economic difference, although the direction is reversed (and less extreme) for Norway, as the north is considered as remote and with a rougher climate and sparse resources with the exception of fish and renewable energy. Whereas the division in Italy has occurred due to cultural differences in people, the division in Norway is largely credited to the difference in terrain, centralization in the south, and unevenly distributed resources. Depending on who one might ask in Italy, the identity imposed upon another individual is dependant on whether or not you're in the north or south. In Norway, the identity is not as ambiguous.

Similarly as with Lega Nord, the northerners of Norway has coined the term "søring" which is slang for "southerner". This term is widely used as a response to people from the south complaining about something of little consequence. Although this is used with a humorous tone instead of a condescending one, it clearly outlines the different day-to-day differences and difficulties a southerner and northerner might experience. As an example a southerner might consider a ten minute drive to a friend a long one, a typical northerner might consider 40 minutes a short one. These kinds of problems contribute to a social division where a brute north considers a very posh south as "weak" and in some cases whimsical, oblivious to their privileges.

## Occupation and nature

Part of being a Norwegian is embracing the rough terrain and being a national romantic. This phenomena can be credited of course to the sheer beauty of the country, but also partially to the occupation under the second world war. Being a small country in terms of population (just shy of three million people in 1937\*), a war with a Germany equipped with a population of approximately 65 million in 1933\* is a daunting situation. Norway still refused to surrender to Germany and continued to resist. This decision has shaped the Norwegian identity into what it is today. Being proud of the heritage and loving the country that has been fought for is a very defining trait of the Norwegian identity.

Also from the independence of Sweden in the early 19th century a romantization of nature rose in Norway. Valuing nature and landscape became a central topic for important composers and artists from Norway such as Henrik Wergeland and Hans Gude. This reflects not only on Norwegians as a group of people, but often within individuals. Norwegians are often thought of as reserved, calm and independent people thriving in rugged terrain. One could argue that the rough terrain alongside the need to reside in it makes personality traits such as self-reliance, independency, and calmness almost a necessity.

\* Source for Norwegian population [https://snl.no/Norge\\_-\\_befolkningsutvikling](https://snl.no/Norge_-_befolkningsutvikling)

\* Source for German population [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census\\_in\\_Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Census_in_Germany)