

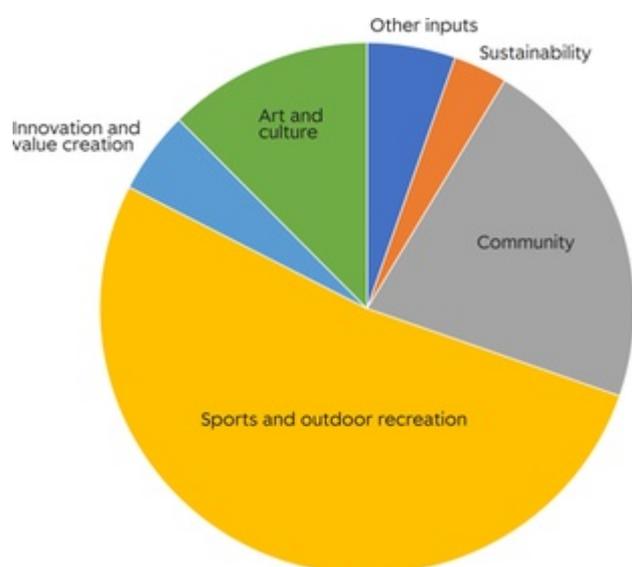
## Community dividend

### Community dividend raised to a new level

The Mid-Norwegian community is the largest single owner of SpareBank 1 SMN. The community's share of the bank's net profit is termed the community dividend. The dividend funds go to supporting good projects that build and develop Mid-Norway and make the region a better place to live and work.

#### More than 10,000 suggestions on how the community dividend should be invested

In 2021 the community dividend totalled NOK 323m. Of this, NOK200m was allocated to investments in various projects in the region. A further NOK 123m was transferred to the foundation Sparebankstiftelsen SMN, which is the community's 'savings box'. This represents a substantial strengthening of the ability to support local communities in Mid-Norway. A new strategy has been formulated for how the dividend moneys should be deployed in order to ensure the greatest value for the regional community.



*10,124 persons and more than 100 key individuals and partners voiced their opinion*

In spring 2021, as a step in this process, SpareBank 1 SMN asked the Mid-Norwegian community for inputs. Individuals and organisations got the chance say how they thought the community dividend should be invested. A good 10,000 responses from individuals and more than 100 from meetings with organisations and resource persons provided valuable direction.



“As expected, the sports and outdoor recreation category drew much support. There was also a clear recommendation to contribute to living local communities, to work to ensure equal rights and opportunities for children and young people, and to contribute to green innovation and value creation. The inputs received will underlie the choice of measures and direction for the community dividend in the next few years,” says Eli Arnstad, bank manager at Community Dividend.

**Community response to Covid-19 and reopening of society**

When the pandemic broke out 2020, community dividend worth NOK 100m was earmarked for Covid-related support to the voluntary sector, cultural life and local communities. SpareBank 1 SMN called this the 'communal Covid response effort'.

Through various support schemes the funds were directed at initiatives that eased the situation for organisation, cultural life and local communities. The goal was to secure the voluntary sector and bolster solidarity and activity during an abnormal period. This work carried on in 2021 when Covid continued to create uncertainty for cultural life, clubs and organisations.

When the outlook brightened and reopening approached, NOK 100m was allocated to help the community get up to speed again. In autumn 2021 support was provided to several hundred activities in a bid to invigorate our local communities and help actors that had faced the toughest challenges during the pandemic to find work once again.

The initiatives were met with immense commitment and sparked great activity. Activity was greatest in Trondheim where more than 115,000 persons participated in almost 300 events large and small.

At the end of 2021 the group is again prepared to be a mainstay should new mutations of the corona virus pose challenges for local communities in Mid-Norway.

SpareBank 1 SMN's public input campaign and support arrangements achieved a broad outreach in the communal Covid response effort, in traditional and social media alike. For the group this type of visibility is important in building awareness and knowledge of the significance of the community dividend and of the power intrinsic to the ownership model.

**Other major activities in 2021:****■ Establishment of a sustainability programme with SINTEF**

Over the course of 2021 a programme was initiated in collaboration with SINTEF designed to assist Mid-Norwegian businesses' green transition. Together we shall help established small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) in Mid-Norway to digitalise, automate and become more sustainable. This is a unique opportunity to draw benefit from SINTEF's expertise at the same time that the community dividend covers half the participation fee for businesses, thereby giving more SMBs the chance to take part.

**■ SpareBank 1 SMN Talent Grants**

NOK 1.2m was handed out in grants to talented individuals. This sum was distributed among 30 young talents in the fields of culture, sports, and business and social development in Mid-Norway.

**■ Summer jobs for young people**

SpareBank 1 SMN contributed financial support for 633 summer jobs for young people in another summer marked by Covid restrictions. The summer-job project was carried through in collaboration with the foundation Sparebankstiftelsen SMN.

**■ Community portal launched**

In 2021 the group launched a webpage providing an overview of all projects that have received support

from Community Dividend. In the first instance the story extends back to 2007. The plan is to develop the overview further to provide a virtually complete overview of all awards made throughout the bank's history in time for the anniversary in 2023. See the community portal at [samfunnsutbytte.smn.no](http://samfunnsutbytte.smn.no).

Over the course of 2021 SpareBank 1 SMN received 2,934 applications for support, of which 1,293 were granted. The total amount applied for was NOK 286,924,715, and the total amount of support awarded from the bank's community dividend came to NOK 163,866,599.

### **Together we make things happen**

“By virtue of our ownership model we have close and tight links to the community around us which have endured for close to 200 years. The community dividend enables us to invest non-profit funds in a way that builds and develops our region into a better place. We look forward to continue to do so ahead, together with enthusiasts, competence institutions and everyone else who makes things happen in Mid-Norway,” says Eli Arnstad.