

## Community dividend

The Mid-Norwegian community is our largest single owner, and local communities' share of our net profit is termed the community dividend. Community dividend has long traditions; ever since 1847 parts of the net profit have gone to non-profit and charitable causes which build and develop the region.

As the region's leading financial services group we live in close proximity to the people in the region of which we are a part. We are passionately devoted to the development of the entire region, from Rørvik in the north to Førde in the south, and have a big heart for the local communities. We applaud all the wonderful things happening around us – ranging from voluntary sector activities, fostering of talented individuals and cultural events, to creating an attractive place to live and caring for the community.

In particular we attach much importance to future generations and, for that reason, to initiatives and activities that benefit children and young people.



The community dividend moneys go to supporting worthy projects that build and develop Mid-Norway and make the region a better place to live and work.

We aim to strengthen social and business development through building knowledge, an innovation culture and capital. That will enable new investments to be made and a basis for new jobs to be laid.

### One of the largest private contributors in our region

In 2022 the community dividend totalled NOK 547m. Of this, NOK 250m was allocated to investments in various projects in the region. A further NOK 297m was transferred

to the foundation Sparebankstiftelsen SMN, which is the community's 'savings box', representing a substantial strengthening of our ability to support Mid-Norway's local communities.

In December 2021 a new interim strategy was adopted for the community dividend in which the regional community, sports and outdoor recreation, art and culture along with innovation and value creation were defined as focal areas in their own right.

The aim of the new interim strategy is to contribute to Mid-Norway leading role in sustainable innovation and green transition. Four strategic roles are defined – as arena builder, innovator, investor and driver of green transition.

In 2022 we sought good partners and relevant initiatives, bringing both strengthened and new collaborations. In the period ahead we will become an even larger and more important actor for entrepreneurs in Mid-Norway – ranging from budding entrepreneurs at upper secondary school to more established entrepreneurial entities in Ålesund, Molde, Åndalsnes, Trondheim, Verdal and Steinkjer. In addition, we collaborate closely with business associations and similar organisations throughout the region. This will all help to ensure that Mid-Norway has ample, and good, workplaces in the future.

**People in Mid-Norway wished for living neighbourhoods**

In 2021 we received a good 10,000 responses on how people thought the community dividend should be invested. Many were as expected preoccupied with the voluntary sector and recreational and cultural offerings, but we also received clear feedback on the importance of more informal community activities. In 2022 we therefore wanted to create further warm meeting places, with an increased focus on the neighbourhoods in which people live. We termed this venture “Living Neighbourhoods”, and conceived a number of support schemes enabling housing cooperatives, residents associations and organisations to apply for financial support for their neighbourhoods. Through collaboration with EiendomsMegler 1 Midt-Norge we also issued invitations to neighbourhood parties across the entire region.

One hundred neighbourhoods were supplied with specially developed ‘gapahuk’ shelters, fire pans and/or flower cribs and benches (429 applied for these equipment packs).

- In addition we received 553 applications for monetary support. More than NOK 16m was granted to causes focused on stimulating activity and wellbeing in local neighbourhoods.
- 2,000 people participated in neighbourhood events under our auspices.

**Larger initiatives in 2022:****▪ Young voices**

In collaboration with the LO and the NHO we have established a programme for talented young people in the region. We wish to help to build, develop and ensure a diversity of talented young managers and employee representatives in the region, with the aim that more of them will contribute to the social debate on the business and industry of the future, and make their voices heard in national arenas. Fifteen young people from various industries attended the first round of the programme.

**▪ Talent scholarships**

NOK 2m was distributed in talent scholarships to 40 talented young people in the fields of culture, sports and business and social development in Mid-Norway.

**▪ Summer jobs for young people**

We granted wage subsidies to small and medium size businesses to take on youngsters in summer jobs. The subsidies totalled NOK 4m and enabled SMBs to employ a total of 633 youngsters in the summer months.

**▪ Heart-warming initiatives**

We are concerned with caring about other people, especially in demanding times. That is why in the spring we donated NOK 1m to four different organisations for their work in war-torn Ukraine, at the same time as we established a support scheme for those wishing to take positive action for refugees in our region. Ahead of Christmas we engaged employees in the concept of “Christmas heartwarming” where we devoted NOK 1.5m to help organisations that do good deeds for the poorly off and/or those facing challenges related to social exclusion and mental health. We also set up a ‘Spleis’ (a digital fundraising service) in favour of UNICEF’s work for children in Ukraine where we matched the sum donated by private individuals. A total of just under NOK 400,000 was raised for UNICEF’s work for children in Ukraine.

**■ Competence as the key to green transition**

The green transition is here, and we wish to invest community dividend in causes that help to hasten the transition in Mid-Norway. As a driver of green transition for business and industry, we wish to collaborate with competence and development entities on competence-building measures for small and medium size businesses. In 2022, two sizeable collaborations were in focus:

**■ Collaboration with SINTEF on offering expert assistance to companies intending to develop green ideas**

This collaboration was launched in autumn 2021, and was wound up a year later after an evaluation. We wish to continue our collaboration with SINTEF in other fields, but will focus initiatives on more concrete issues and industries aspiring to green transition.

**■ Collaboration with Æra on an innovation course for SMBs in Mid-Norway**

The innovation course was launched in January, and so far 32 businesses in Trøndelag and in Sunnmøre have participated. The course comprises four seminars and offers an introduction to strategic innovation methodology as a tool for identifying growth potentials in the green transition. This initiative continues in 2023.

**Applications and allocations**

Allocations of community dividend increased from NOK 200m in 2021 to NOK 250m in 2022. A total of 4,143 applications were processed in 2022, amounting in all to NOK 360m. Of these, 2,042 applications were granted. NOK 168m was allocated to non-profit causes in 2022.