

Licensing Cadastral Surveyors in Norway: An Operational Perspective from the Norwegian Mapping Authority

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SUMMARY

This paper presents an operational perspective from the Norwegian Mapping Authority (Kartverket) on how Norway licenses cadastral surveyors under a governance model that treats cadastral surveying as a public service rather than a market activity. Municipalities are exclusively mandated to initiate and approve cadastral cases and are responsible for updating the national cadastre—the property register. For each case, an authorised, licensed surveyor—whether a municipal employee or an external consultant—is designated by the municipality and operates under the same professional rules. This approach aims for national consistency in decisions and register updates, while allowing for local organisational flexibility.

The legal framework, comprising the Cadastral Act and the Regulation, defines competence requirements, case procedures, documentation standards, and rules for submitting data to the cadastre. Licensing is personal and national in scope: successful applicants obtain a one-time licence to practice cadastral surveying, which may be revoked in cases of serious misconduct. Kartverket oversees the entire licensing process, including application assessment, examination organisation, maintenance of the public register of licensees, approval of study programmes against defined learning outcomes, issuing of guidance, and ensuring that appeals are handled by an independent review process.

Introduced in 2021, the scheme features two pathways: a transitional pathway for experienced practitioners (running until 31 December 2025) to facilitate a smooth transition—under which most licences to date have been granted—and a permanent, education-based pathway. From 1 January 2026, the education-based pathway becomes the primary route to licensure, alongside the experience requirement and exam.

By sharing observations from daily operations— what works well, where friction remains, and ongoing improvements—this paper illustrates how licensing, municipal responsibility, and continuous quality assurance together aim to ensure reliable data in the property register, a function critical to society. As of the latest update, approximately 600 licences have been issued, mostly through the transitional pathway, with totals approaching the previously estimated practitioner base of 750–900 surveyors.