




Handlehvitt.no website ("Buy declared")

Norway

	<p>Summary</p> <p>The Handlehvitt.no ('Buy declared') website was initiated by an alliance of key players in the labour and business community called Cooperation Against the Black Economy (SMSØ). The website provides a guide for private citizens on how to purchase services legally from seven sectors including craftsmen, construction work, small jobs, house cleaning, sale and rental of houses, car repair and cleaning, rental of private goods and taxi services.</p>
<p>Title of the practice in original language</p>	<p><i>Handlehvitt.no</i></p>
<p>Name(s) of authorities/bodies/organisations involved</p>	<p>Cooperation Against the Black Economy (<i>Samarbeid mot svart økonomi, SMSØ</i>) is made up of seven social partners and was established in 1997 with one central forum and 16 regional forums;^{i, ii}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Norwegian Tax Administration (Skatteetaten); ▶ The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS); ▶ The Norwegian Confederation of Business (NHO); ▶ The Main Organisation for the Trade and Service Industry (Virke); ▶ The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO); ▶ The Confederation of Unions for Professionals (Unio); ▶ The Confederation of Norwegian Vocational Organisations (YS).
<p>Sectors</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Target groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consumers of goods and services (directly targeted); ▶ Companies engaging in undeclared work (indirectly targeted).

Purpose of measure

Prevention



Aims and objectives

The Handlehvitt.no website offers guidance for private citizens on how to go about buying services legally in seven sectors outlined. It provides information to make it easier to shop for declared goods, explaining why it's a good idea, and how to do it, for example, when renovating, hiring cleaning help, or looking after children.^{iii, iv}

Background context

- ▶ Surveys showed that over 92 % of the Norwegian population state that they buy services legally, but that they are uncertain about the regulations and how to make the right decisions.^v Research shows that an effective measure to influence consumers to act legally is to focus on the majority who want to buy services legally instead of focusing on the minority who buy services illegally;^{vi}
- ▶ The main goal of the Handlehvitt.no website initiative, launched in 2011, is to put consumers in the private market in a better position to make informed decisions and contribute to more compliance in the long term;^{vii}
- ▶ The Handlehvitt.no website initiative is a result of the collaboration among the parties involved in the Cooperation Against the Black Economy (SMSØ). Their initiatives are based on SMSØ's action plan. Apart from the tax administration, the partners that make up SMSØ are six organisations working on behalf of employees and employers (i.e. social partners).

Key objectives of the measure

General objective:

- ▶ To make it easier for consumers to avoid buying undeclared goods and services.

Specific objectives:

- ▶ To put consumers when purchasing goods and services in a better position to make informed decisions;
- ▶ To contribute to more compliance among businesses and consumers in the long term.

Main activities

- ▶ The Handlehvitt.no webpage is an initiative by the Cooperation against the Black Economy (SMSØ) alliance;^{viii}
- ▶ The website provides a guide for citizens who want to purchase services legally in seven different sectors, providing clear,

	<p>accessible, easily understandable, and relevant information on how to buy services legally, focusing on typical markets for the private consumer;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The website is promoted in social media through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. SMSØ have carried out campaigns together with the Norwegian Inspection Authority (Arbeidstilsynet, https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/en/) on the car care and repairs sector. Advertising has also been purchased on google via relevant search terms. SMSØ participated at the Housing Fair (Boligmesse) where consumers meet craftsmen and others who offer services in renovation and construction; ▶ A working group in the Norwegian Tax Administration is responsible for the maintenance and development of the content on the website. Via Google Analytics this group receives data about the traffic on the website. The same group receives feedback from users of the website who submit questions and comments via e-mail under the “contact us” function at handlehvitt.no; ▶ The member organisations of SMSØ contribute to promoting and advertising the Handlehvitt.no website via their own websites.
<p>Funding/organisational resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2011 the Norwegian Tax Agency initially created the content for the handlehvitt.no website while a media agency was responsible for its technical development. In 2021 and 2022 the website was upgraded (NOK 200 000, or around EUR 17 446) and user testing carried out (NOK 60 000, around EUR 5 234), respectively. Annual costs for operation and consultancy (Media agency) are approximately NOK 150 000 (circa EUR 13 084) with additional annual promotional costs of around NOK 50 000 (circa EUR 4 361); ▶ An external media agency is responsible for the operation of the website on a daily basis. Two to three people from the Norwegian Tax administration help to maintain, develop, and market the website, with their time amounting to around 40 % of a full-time equivalent position.



Outcomes

Surveys show an increasingly large part of the population indicate that they do not want to use undeclared work.^{ix} While it is not possible to estimate if this is directly linked to the



	<p>Handlehvitt.no website, SMSØ assumes that the initiative has been successful and has had some bearing on this outcome.</p>
<p>Achievement of objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ When being promoted with the help of a paid subscription to Google’s keyword advertising service (costing NOK 1 000 per day), visitors to the handlehvitt.no website reached 15 000 per month. Without this service, the page now receives about 4 000 visitors per month; ▶ While an evaluation of the measure has not been carried out, user tests reveal that consumers believe there is a need for such a website. A 2022 report (for internal purposes only) on user testing showed that users found the information they were looking for. Users also reported that Handlehvitt.no website was easy to use and the content was easy to understand. The embedded links to external websites were a popular feature with users of the website; ▶ There are positive developments in the general attitude of the population in the sense that fewer and fewer consumers say that would use undeclared work (see 2022 surveys already cited); ▶ The Norwegian Government have endorsed the website in their Action plan against undeclared work, stating that they will <i>prioritise measures that enable consumers to make informed choices. The website handlehvitt.no will be further developed as a portal to convey information and guidance to consumers.</i>^x
<p>Lessons learnt and success factors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Make the website user-friendly; ▶ Focus on the average customer, that is, those with the intention to buy declared goods and services, while being careful not to use a moralising tone such as “Illegal labour is a thief”; ▶ Provide links to the webpages of other partners/stakeholders on the website as well as other useful weblinks; ▶ Use of continuous promotional advertisements (in social media) makes the website more visible. Visits to the website almost quadrupled when SMSØ paid for advertising linked to search terms. It is important to find the right keywords that increase traffic on the website.
<p>Transferability</p>	<p>This practice is easily transferrable to other Member States. Key to the success of similar campaigns in other Member States is working with the government to gain legitimacy for the initiative. Also, in any alliance formed to drive the initiative, it is crucial to get organisations involved in working life on board. The</p>



cooperation and collaboration of relevant parties (e.g. tax authorities and social partners) on awareness raising measures in relation to the legal purchasing of goods and services by private citizens is another key factor.

Further information	
Contact	Sven Erik Husøy, senior adviser, Norwegian Tax Administration. E-mail: sven-erik.husoy@skatteetaten.no
Useful sources and resources	<p>Handle hvitt (Buy declared) website: https://handlehvitt.no/</p> <p>Video link about the Handlehvitt.no website: https://youtu.be/u_YitgX8ZNA</p> <p>Cooperation against the black economy (SMSØ) website: https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/</p> <p>Norwegian Government's Action Plan Against Social Dumping and Work-Related Crime weblink: https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/test/id2928944/</p>

ⁱ The Cooperation Agreement was originally signed on 1 September 2008. See the following links for more information: <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/om-smsso/samarbeidsavtale/> and <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/om-smsso/historikk/>

ⁱⁱ See Handlehvitt.no website and the government's action plan against social dumping and work-related crime (<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/test/id2928944/>).

ⁱⁱⁱ See https://www-skatteetaten-no.translate.google.com-skatteetaten/om-oss/forebyggende-arbeid/?x_tr_sl=no&x_tr_tl=en&x_tr_hl=en&x_tr_pto=sc

^{iv} See <https://www.unio.no/handle-hvitt/>

^v See the following survey's (in Norwegian) from 2022: Qualitative research among buyers of undeclared work August 2022, available at <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/rapport-svart-arbeid-kvalitativt-uten-forslag-til-tiltak.pdf>, and Survey on undeclared work carried out for the Swedish Tax Agency June 2022, available at <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/undersokelse-om-svart-arbeid-2022-final-kvantitativ.pdf>

^{vi} Brylka, A., Jaskinskaja-Lahti, I., and Mähönen, T., (2016), The majority influence on interminority attitudes: The secondary transfer effect of positive and negative contact, in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Volume 50, January 2016, pages 76-88. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0147176715301826#preview-section-abstract>

^{vii} See <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/?s=handlehvitt>

^{ix} Fewer people than ever say they buy black. See, <https://www.samarbeidmotsvartokonomi.no/faerre-enn-noengang-sier-at-de-kjoper-svart/>

^x See government's Action plan against social dumping and work-related crime, available at <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/test/id2928944/>