

Norway's digital Higher Education Landscape – a Sikt perspective

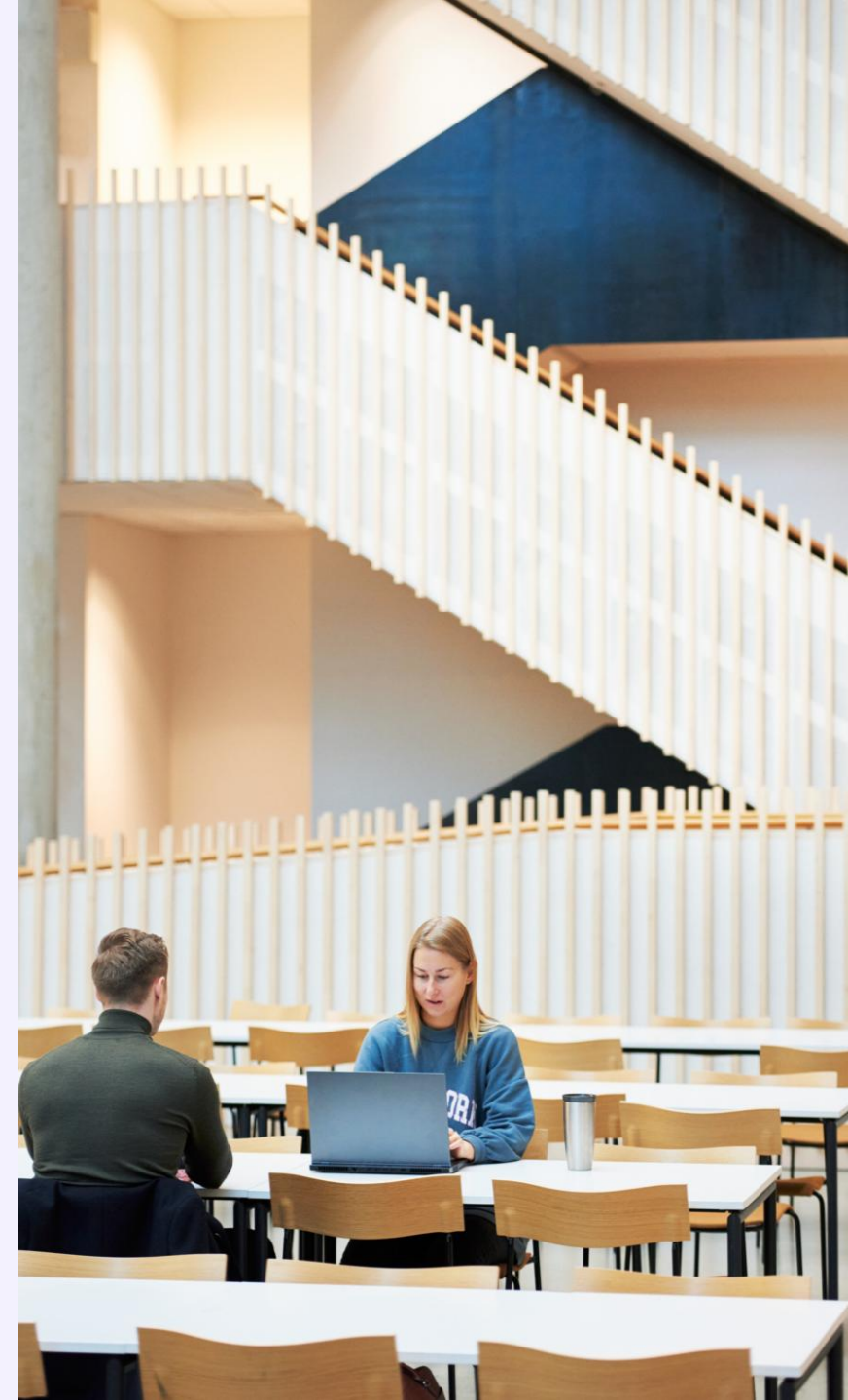
Seminar on Transformation of Higher Education, Digitalization and Organizing Collaboration for HEIs

Helsinki 20.03.2026

Maria Kumle, Director of Educational Services

Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research

- A government IT provider delivering national services for education and research.
- We develop and operate services that connect the knowledge sector.
- We facilitate the sharing and use of data to enhance knowledge and collaboration.
- Shared services, and digital infrastructure for the knowledge sector



Shared services



Education

Services for the student life cycle



Research

Data and services enabling research and knowledge sharing / production



Infrastructure

Administrative tools, infrastructure, networks, security services





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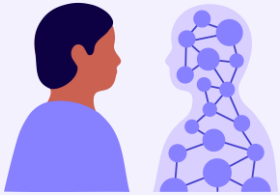


Inger-Lise
Strøm



Division for educational services

Digital Learning
Environments



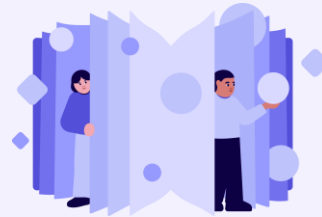
Planning and core
data



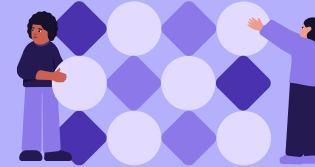
Admission



Education and
competances



User and
technology
support



Communication and
strategy



The Norwegian HEI landscape

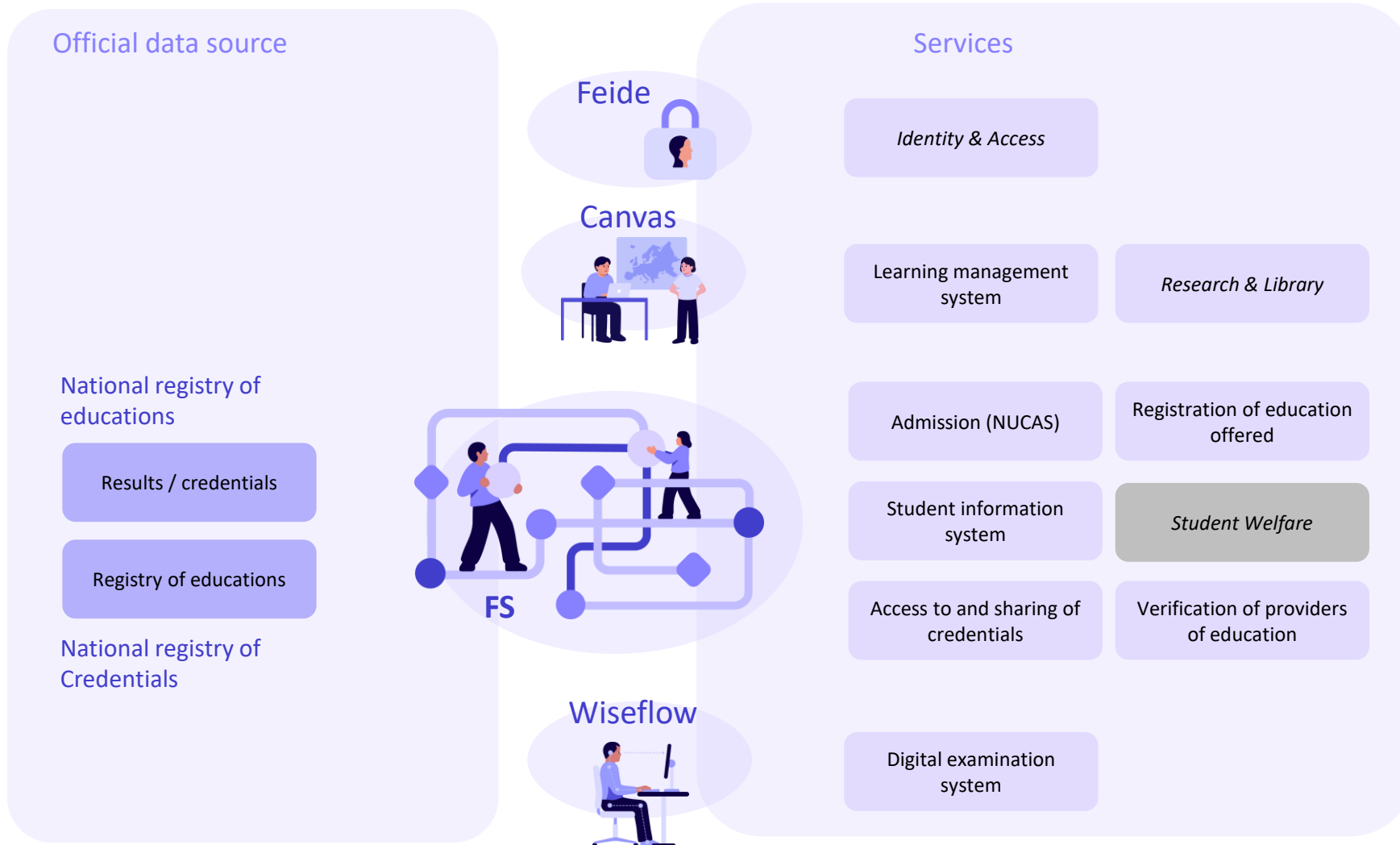


- 40+ universities and university colleges
- Governed by the Ministry of Education and Research
- Full participation in European Education Area and European Research Area

- Digital acceleration
- Reduced budgets
- AI integration
- Data sovereignty
- National Strategy for Higher Education and Research to 2040



From application to credential



30 years of collaboration

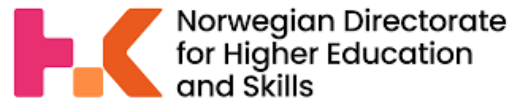


"National solutions succeed when institutions feel ownership, not just obligation."





KUNNSKAPSDEPARTEMENTET



Mandate



high-quality shared infrastructure and services

coherent, well-governed digital tools with good data flows across systems and responsible use of new technology including AI



Data sharing as a strategic driver

sector coordinator for data sharing — actively facilitating reuse of data for research, innovation and policy

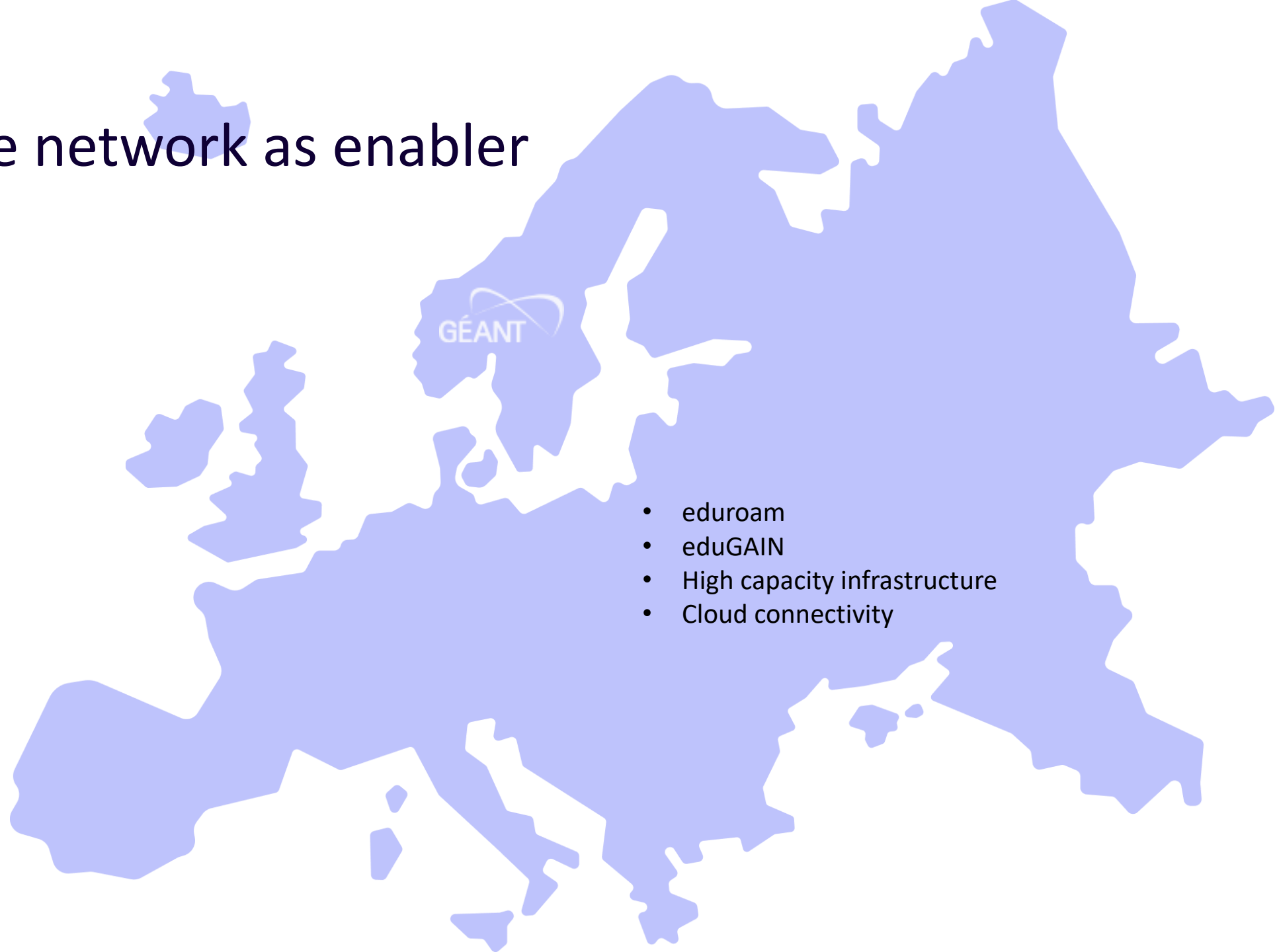


Security and trust built in by design

Sector Response Environment (SRM) for cybersecurity incidents in higher education and research, and drives security awareness and competence across the sector.



The network as enabler



- eduroam
- eduGAIN
- High capacity infrastructure
- Cloud connectivity



Interoperability – a core strategic commitment

National Interoperability

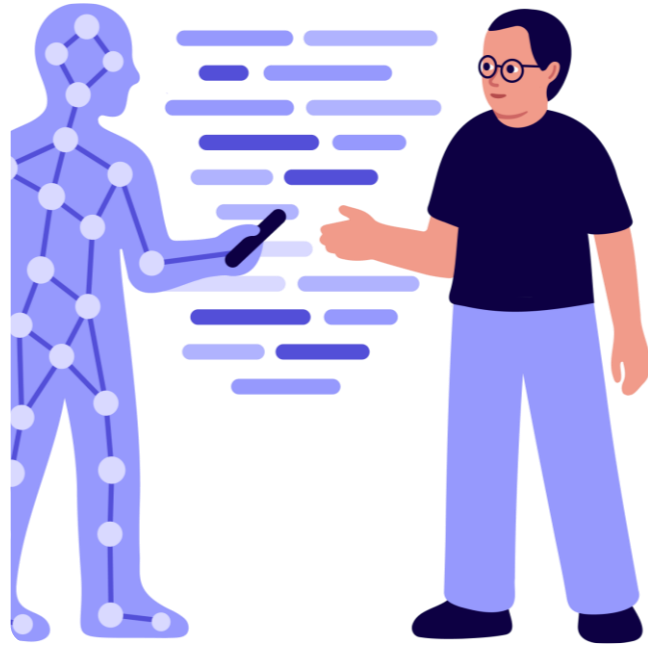
- **Feide** — national education identity federation since 2003; one of Europe's earliest and most comprehensive
- **FS** — common data model across institutions enabling national statistics, mobility, and policy analytics
- Active alignment with national frameworks (Digdir, eID strategy, Altinn)
- **Vitnemålsportalen** — verifiable, standardised academic credentials nationally

International Interoperability

- **Europass Digital Credentials Infrastructure (EDCI)**
- **European Student Card Initiative (ESCI)** and European Student ID
- **Emrex** network — electronic exchange of academic records across borders
- **ELMO** standard development
- **GÉANT Trust & Identity** and **eduGAIN** federation

"Interoperability is not a project for us — it is a permanent operating principle."





Sikt KI

- Security, easy to use, one platform – several services
- Deliberate choice: **sovereign, shared AI infrastructure** over hyperscaler dependency
- Aligns with **EU AI Act** compliance requirements and national data governance expectations
- A **living service** developed iteratively with the sector

The Challenge

*Norwegian HEIs needed AI tools but faced concerns around **data privacy, sovereignty, and GDPR compliance**
Commercial AI tools offered capability but not **institutional control***

SIKT's Response: A Shared AI Platform

National AI platform for the Norwegian education and research sector

Built on **open-source foundations** with models hosted within **Norwegian/European data infrastructure**

Provides HEIs with **API access to large language models** through a common, GDPR-compliant gateway

Enables institutions to build **local AI tools and services** without managing their own infrastructure



Organizing for the Future: What Has Worked in Norway?



Consolidation enables coherence



Interoperability must be funded as infrastructure



Trust takes time — and governance



AI is the next shared infrastructure challenge



Own what is strategic, procure what is commodity





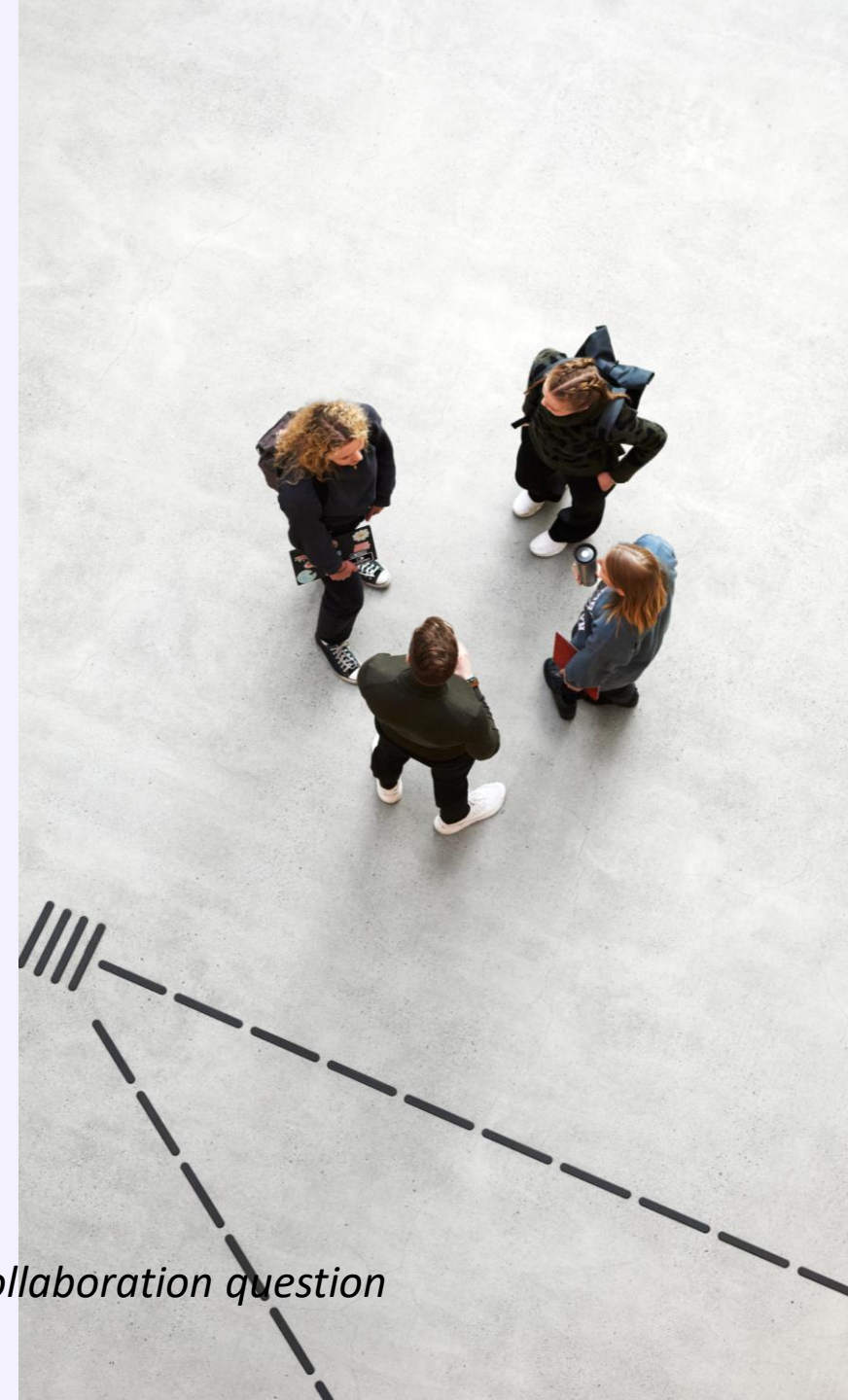
Looking to 2040: Norway's Strategic Horizon



National Strategy for Higher Education and Research to 2040

- Digital sovereignty and European alignment
- eIDAS 2.0 and the EU Digital Identity Wallet
- AI and the future of assessment
- Lifelong learning and micro-credentials
- Open science

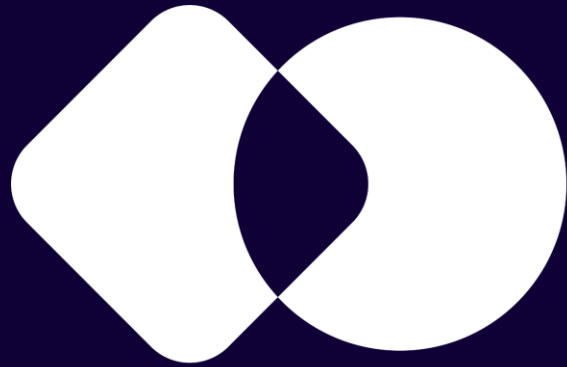
The 2040 horizon is not primarily a technology question — it is a governance and collaboration question



Summary

- Scope
- Governance
- NREN integration
- Interoperability
- Data sharing
- Security
- AI
- Future
- Full life cycle
- Sector co – ownership, national solutions
- Network + services
- National (FS, Feide) International (Emrex, europass)
- National coordinator role
- Built in, formal SRM role
- Shared, sovereign, AI as developer tool
- eIDAS 2.0, AI and assessment, lifelong learning, 2040 strategy





Sikt
Kunnskapssektorens
tjenesteleverandør

