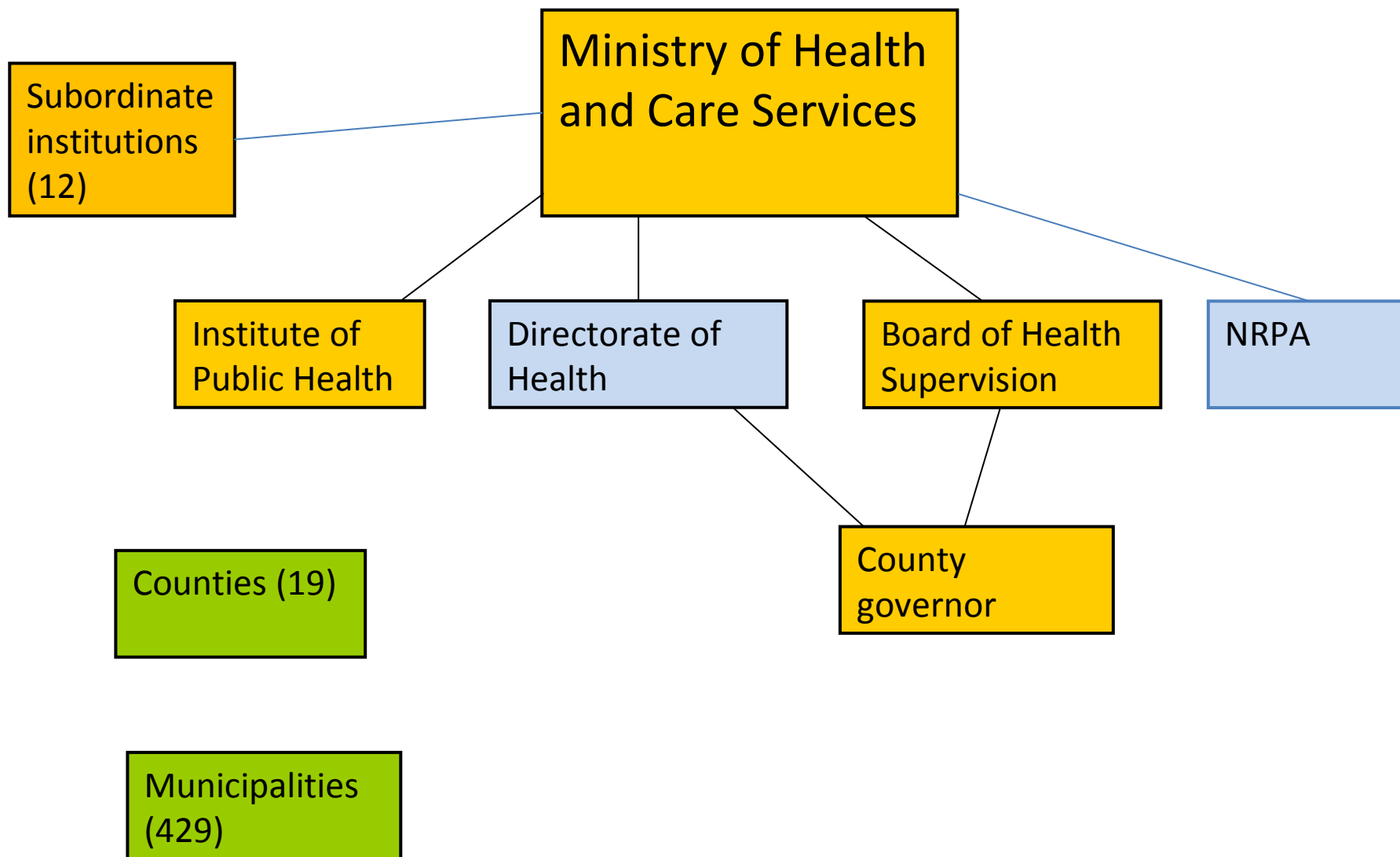


# **Radon prevention through systematic public health work in a municipality**

Senior Adviser Finn Martinsen, Dept. of Environmental Health, The Norwegian Directorate of Health



# The Norwegian Directorate of Health – mission and role

- **Health care adviser** – responsible for monitoring conditions that affect public health
- **Implementing** adopted policies
- **Administrative authority** – responsible for applying and interpreting legal statutes and regulations

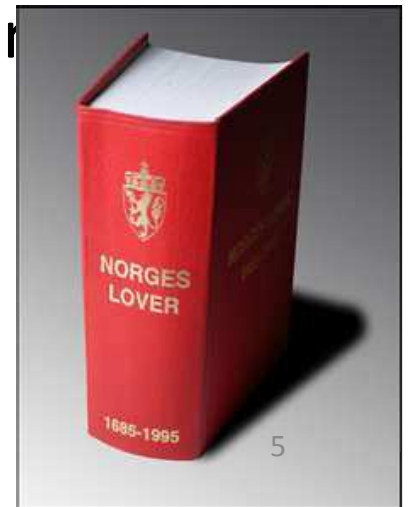
# Some environmental public health challenges.....

- Water quality
- Waste disposal
- Indoor air quality, (including radon)
- Environmental noise
- Air quality
- Accidents and injuries
- .....

# The main content of the PHA (from 01.01.2012)

- Responsibilities at the **local (municipality)**, regional (county) and national (state) levels are specified
- The local and regional levels are key stakeholders, but with a clear responsibility for the **national level to support** them
- The **responsibility** for public health work has been moved from the Health Service sector to the **municipality itself**

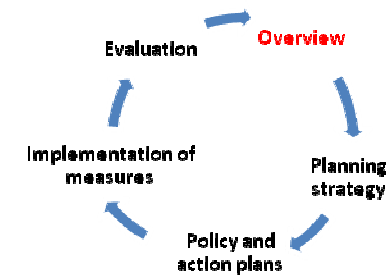
Paris, 30 September - 2 October 2014



# Systematic public health work

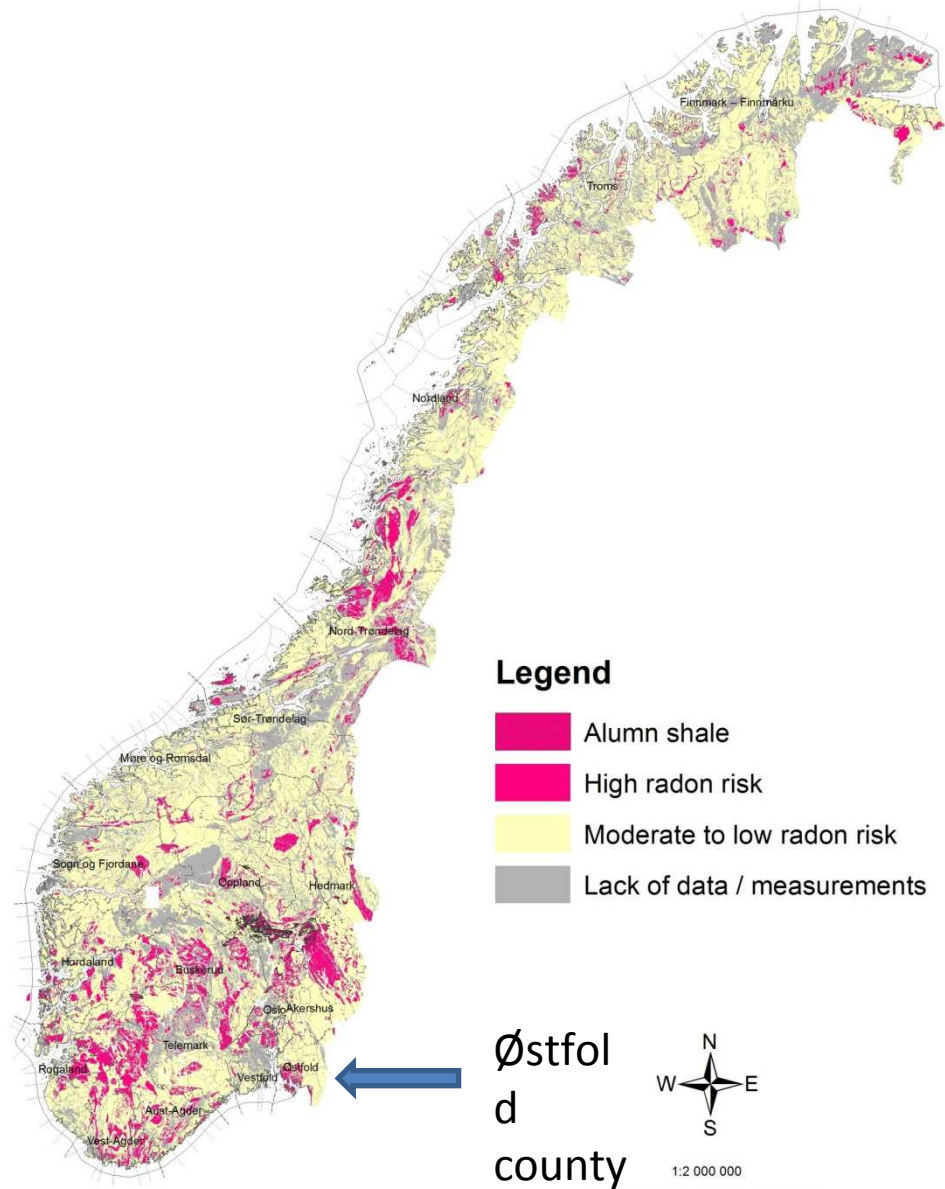


# Overview of the population's health and determinants of health



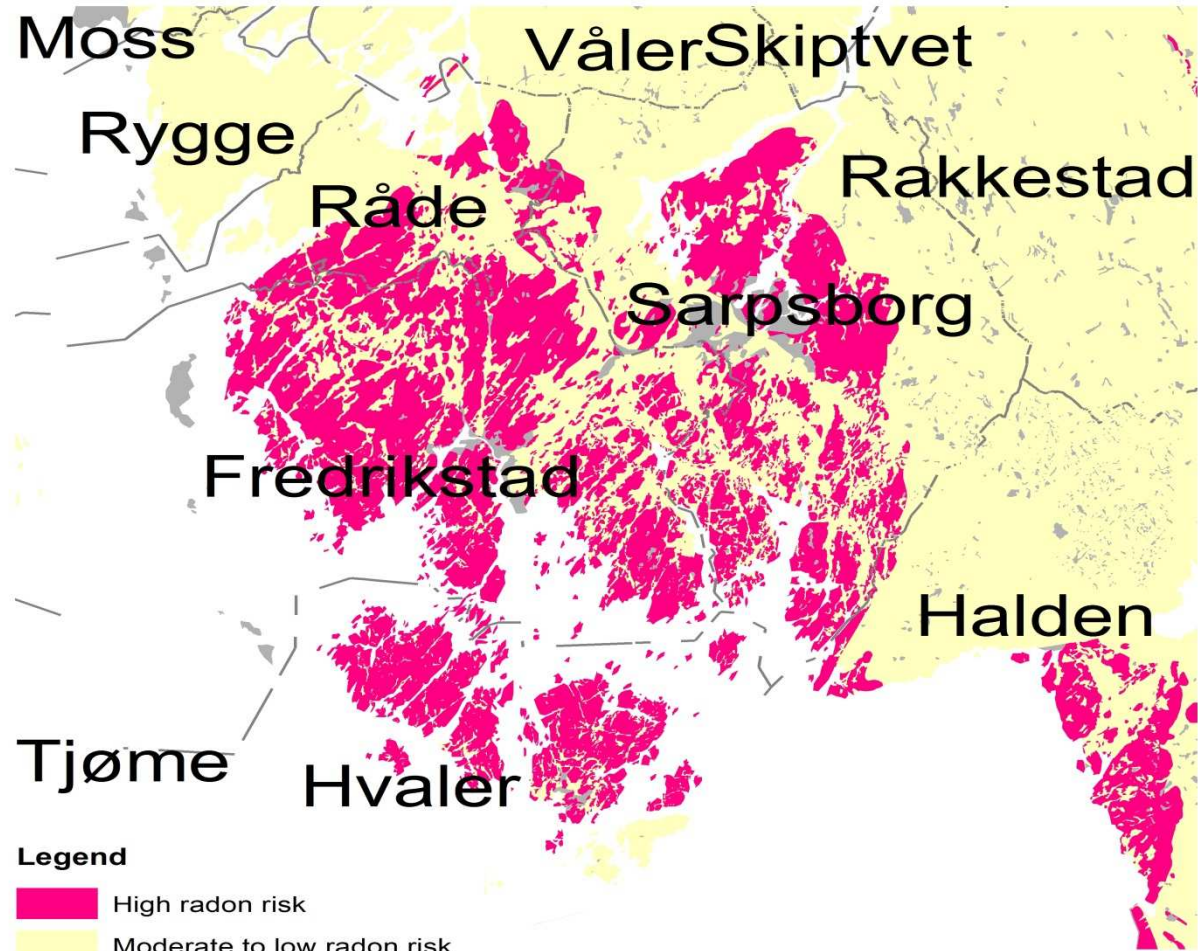
- The basis for the other responsibilities in the act
- Regulations emphasize:
  - **Continuous** overview
  - Municipalities and counties shall prepare a **document** with analysis every fourth year
  - The 4-year document shall be **available for the public**

# Radon Risk Map Norway - threshold value 200 Bq/m3








Radon Risk Map of Norway - threshold value 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>



Legend

-  High radon risk
-  Moderate to low radon risk
-  Lack of data / measurements



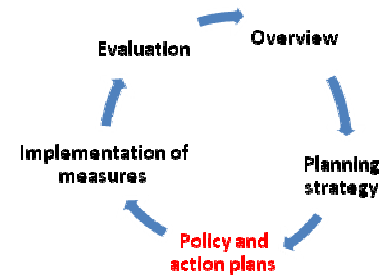
1:65 000  
Projection: UTM Zone 33N Datum: WGS 1984  
From: Radon Risk Map of Norway. Scale 1:1,000,000. Geological Survey of Norway and National Radiation Protection Authority. Smethurst, M.A., Wetton, R.J., Ganerød, G.V., Rudjord, A.L. og Finne, I., 2014.

# Strategic planning – how?



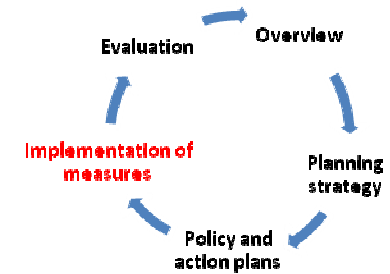
- Systematic planning within municipalities every 4th year
- **The plans are based on identified local challenges (e.g. radon exposure) and opportunity structure**
- Public health is also included in the national expectations (directives) for regional and local planning

## Policy and action plans – how?



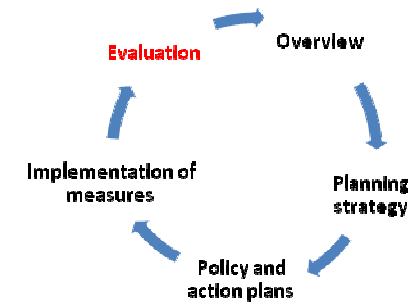
- Must be related to the «overview»: Is the presence of radon a problem? If so, **where**, and in **what way**?
- Communication strategy: How to increase the **public awareness** of the risk from radon exposure?
- **Reduction** of radon concentration in public buildings **according to regulations** (schools, kindergartens, dwellings for rent..)
- Radon as **topic** in local supervisory activities

# Implementation of measures – how?



- Aspects of reducing the radon concentration:
  - **Measurability** and the possibility of **follow-up**
  - The demand for local **competence** and **capacity**
  - Local and external **organization/cooperation**
  - Including the presence of radon in **local authority planning**.

# Evaluation and supervision – how?



- **Evaluation of plans** (integration of radon, kind of efforts, and so on)
- Evaluation of the **process** (participants, progress)
- Evaluation of the **results/effect**
- Proposing **improvements**

## Preferably – **the precautionary principle**

- But, regulations give local authorities the opportunity **to claim correction** (e.g. to carry out efforts to reduce radon concentration in schools according to regulations given by NRPA)!

## Summary: **What is to be required from the local authority?**

- Meeting the relevant **legal requirements** (laws , regulations, guidelines)
- A comprehensive **overview**
- **Risk** assessment
- Acquisition of **competence** (analyzing the risk, proposing actions)
- **Cooperation** with other local and national authorities (building sector, NRPA, i.a.)
- **Standardisation** of methods for measurement and registration, supervision, ...
- Strategy for dissemination of **information**

## **Cooperation: Guidance to local authorities/municipalities**

- NRPA and the Norwegian Directorate of Health are nowadays preparing a **project**:
  - **Adequate information** to the population about radonconditions and precautions
  - Cooperation between national (NRPA) and local authorities in **supervising radon** in schools, kindergartens and dwellings for rent.



- **To counter the health risk from radon exposure we still have some way to go in Norway, but we are under way....**

**Thank you for your attention!**