

## Great interest in further exploration activity on the Norwegian shelf

### Description

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The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy offers 53 new production licenses on the Norwegian continental shelf in the licensing round APA 2021.

— **The petroleum industry contributes with large revenues, value creation and jobs across the country. I am therefore happy to offer 53 new production licenses in the predefined areas. Further exploration activity and new discoveries are crucial to develop the Norwegian petroleum industry further, says Minister of Petroleum and Energy Marte Mjøs Persen.**

Awards in predefined areas (APA) is an annual exploration round in the most mature areas on the Norwegian shelf.

The 53 production licenses offered in this year's round are distributed over the North Sea (28), the Norwegian Sea (20) and the Barents Sea (5). A total of 28 different oil companies, from large international companies to smaller Norwegian exploration companies, are offered shares in one or more of these licenses. 15 companies are offered one or more operatorships.

— **Awards of productions licenses is a mainstay in facilitating a stable level of activity on the continental shelf. This award is an important contribution to maintain future exploration activity and to make new, profitable discoveries, says Mjøs Persen.**

### Background

Before licenses can be granted for petroleum activity in an area on the Norwegian continental shelf, the area must be open for petroleum activities. Production licenses can only be granted in areas that are open and accessible for petroleum activities.

A production license gives the exclusive right to explore, drill and extract petroleum within the license's geographical area. Production licenses are normally awarded through licensing rounds. In a licensing round, the ministry announces certain geographical areas where companies can apply for production licenses. On the basis of the applications received, a production license is granted to a group of companies on the basis of objective, non-discriminatory and pre-announced criteria. The Ministry designates one operator for each production license.

The annual licensing rounds APA (Awards in predefined areas) were introduced in 2003. The aim was to best facilitate the identification and extraction of profitable resources in mature areas before existing infrastructure shuts down. The APA licensing rounds take place annually and within a predefined area. This gives the companies predictability about the available areas to apply for in the APA. This

facilitates regular replenishment of new exploration area for the companies, which is important for achieving effective exploration. Over time, the APA area is expanded based on petroleum professional assessments of the areas' maturity, and in particular the need for step-by-step exploration and utilization of time-critical resources. Today, the APA area comprises the majority of open, accessible exploration area on the Norwegian continental shelf.

The announcement of APA 2021, including expansion of the APA area, was sent for public consultation with a consultation deadline of 16 April 2021. The licensing round was announced on 9 June with the application deadline 8 September 2021 for companies. By the application deadline, the Ministry had received applications from 31 companies.

After the application deadline, the applications have been processed, which has resulted in the awards announced today.

## Links:

- [Map](#)
- [Offers with work obligations](#)
- Read more at the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate's web page

## Offers are given to the following companies (shares/operatorships):

Aker BP (15/7)

A/S Norske Shell (2/1)

Chrysaor (4/1)

Concedo (3/0)

ConocoPhillips (3/3)

DNO (10/3)

Equinor (26/12)

Idemitsu (3/0)

KUFPEC (1/0)

Longboat (1/0)

LOTOS (4/0)

Lundin (10/5)

M Vest (2/0)  
Neptune (2/2)  
OKEA (4/3)  
OMV (3/1)  
ONE-Dyas (3/0)  
Pandion (3/0)  
Petrolia NOCO (2/0)  
PGNiG (4/3)  
Source (2/0)  
Spirit (7/2)  
Suncor (2/0)  
Sval (3/0)  
TotalEnergies (1/0)  
Vår Energi (10/5)  
Wellesley (3/1)  
Wintershall Dea (7/4)

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**Author**

g-thewlispolarconnection-org