

Short report about NKF-N (Norway)

At present there are many building projects in the museum sector in Norway. A new National Museum and new Munch Museum are being built in Oslo. In Bergen the Natural History Museum is being renovated and will reopen in the fall of 2019. That requires the preparation of the artifacts for either packing and moving or for display. This has led to an increase of conservation staff in those institutions. Most of the recent conservation graduates from University in Oslo have been able to find jobs.

Since only paintings and object conservation is offered in University in Oslo, specialists in other areas have to be hired from abroad. According to the survey of conservators performed in 2016, more than half of the conservators in Norway are either foreigners or Norwegians who were educated abroad. Thus the work of ENCoRE enabling the free movement of conservators within Europe is extremely important for Norway.

That survey also showed that most conservators (75%) have regular jobs, or, if working in private practice, do so mostly by choice. On the one hand, the work situation looks positive. On the other hand, the comments made at the end of the survey showed that there are difficulties. Conservators complained that their leadership does not understand ethics and do not know what conservation is about, and that they have to perform all jobs related to physical collection, including registration, repacking, cleaning and other technical duties that are not directly related to conservation.

Within NKF-N several professional groups were organized, like “waterlogged artefacts”, “mural painting”, “private practice” and “book, paper and photographic conservation”. In order to help the leadership understand better what conservation is, it was decided within this book, paper and photographic conservation group to prepare a summary of the E.C.C.O. Professional Guidelines and Competences and translate them into Norwegian. There are very few fully trained paper conservators hired within library and archive sector in Norway (at the moment only eight for all libraries and archives) and it is hoped to use this platform to promote paper conservation in Norway.