

Psychiatry in Norway.

Norway is *the* European country with the highest amount of people being coercively hospitalised, relative to the population numbers. An analysis made by SINTEF (research organisation) in the year 1996, it showed up that at about 45 per cent of all hospitalisations in Norwegian psychiatric clinics, are coercive. In other European countries the same numbers are between 5 to 15 percent.

The Norwegian numbers were, however, only an estimate. This is due to the fact that many hospitals do not even report coercive hospitalisations at all. Therefore, no good statistics are available.

In several other countries there are courts deciding whether or not a person shall be coercively hospitalised. This is not the situation in Norway. In Norway one may only complain to a so called “Control Commission” - after being hospitalised! In that situation it is often difficult for the patients to further their cases, because they are being drugged.

We have many examples of an utmost grave form of abuse of psychiatry – hospitalising people who have disclosed corruption and abuse of power. The most well known example is the infamous so called Juklerød-affair.

Arnold Juklerød was hospitalised at Gaustad Psychiatric Hospital in 1971, with the diagnosis “*cverulantia paranoia*,” According to the psychiatrists of Gaustad, Juklerød was diagnosed having “unchangeable paranoid false ideas”. This because he was able to prove, that the local authorities had broken the law, when shutting down a school.

As Trond Skaftnesmo later on documented, and also admitted by the Department itself in 1995, Juklerød’s “false ideas” were proven to be true! In spite of this, his so called “diagnosis” was never deleted.

Another one who was labelled mentally ill and coercively hospitalised was Synnøve Fjellbakk Taftø, a diplomat and a jurist. Taftø has written a book called *Skjoldmøysagaen*, where she writes about her experience from the Norwegian Diplomacy Service.

In the year 2000, the police in Sunnmøre wanted Kåre Torvholm and Oddmar Remøy mentally examined. In the case of Remøy, the argument for hospitalising him, tells a lot. This is what Bjørn Martin Aasen, municipal doctor in Herøy, and former secretary in one of the departments of Gro Harlem Brundtland’s government, was writing to justify coercive hospitalisation:

“He belongs to a civil network with both local, national, and international connections, which purpose is to disclose criminal things, happening in the public sector, and to get things on to a more productive track. In my opinion the requirements in lph 3 are fulfilled” (Lph 3’ is a shortage for the Law on Mental Care).

In a report written in 1999, when a new law concerning psychiatry was carried, Dag Hiåsen wrote about the control commissions. In the year of 1997, as many as 9,651 Norwegians citizens were coercively hospitalised. The number of complaints on coercive psychiatric treatments, endorsed by the control commissions during the same year, was 49. That number was exceeded by the number of the control commissions at that time - which was 57!

During the last years the use of medication against ADHD has soared and has increased by 900% in the period 96-06. The UN's drug organ has voiced concern about the strong increase in Norway, which is exceptional in Europe. There exist noteworthy warnings about side effects of this medication, as well as interesting alternatives to medication. (see <http://home.no.net/fampo/adhd.html>).