

Jonas and Ingrid's mother and father both have jobs. Their mother is a bookkeeper for an accounting firm, and their father is an oil company executive. He has worked in the oil industry for a long time. He wears a suit and tie on most days and carries a briefcase. Sometimes he has to travel for his company. Every now and then he'll take his family with him. Jonas and Ingrid



have loved these trips. They've been to Russia, Spain, Italy, England, and the United States. Sigrid has a particular love for traveling and thinks she might want to work in the airline industry one day. Maybe she'll be a pilot. Who knows?

**A mother and child look down at Lysefjord, one of the more than one thousand fjords that mark the Norwegian coastline.**

### Life in the North

Jonas and Sigrid live in Norway, one of the most northerly countries in Europe. Much of Norway's landscape is rough, rugged, and rocky. The nation is renowned for its dramatic sea inlets bounded by towering mountains. These are called fjords (fee-ORDZ). Norway also has thousands of glaciers, moving masses of ice formed over the years as snow builds up and compresses into ice.





**Workers on a drilling platform in the North Sea. More than two hundred thousand people work in Norway's oil and gas industry.**

Norway's economy is one of the healthiest in the world. Oil was discovered beneath the ocean floor in Norwegian territory in the 1960s. Wealth from this oil has enabled the Norwegian government to provide well for its people. It pays for most health care and education. People are given many months off from work when their children are young, and generous pensions when they themselves are old. The standard of living is high and so is the cost of living. Norway is now one of the most expensive countries in the world.

### **An Equal Society**

Norway has a strong commitment to equality. Norwegians believe that everyone should be treated equally, regardless of their race, gender, age, religion, education, or wealth. Government benefits help smooth out inequality in wealth.

And so do the attitudes of the people. Most Norwegians dislike it when people display too much pride or arrogance. So a doctor and a clerk, for example, chat easily as equals, calling each other by their first names.

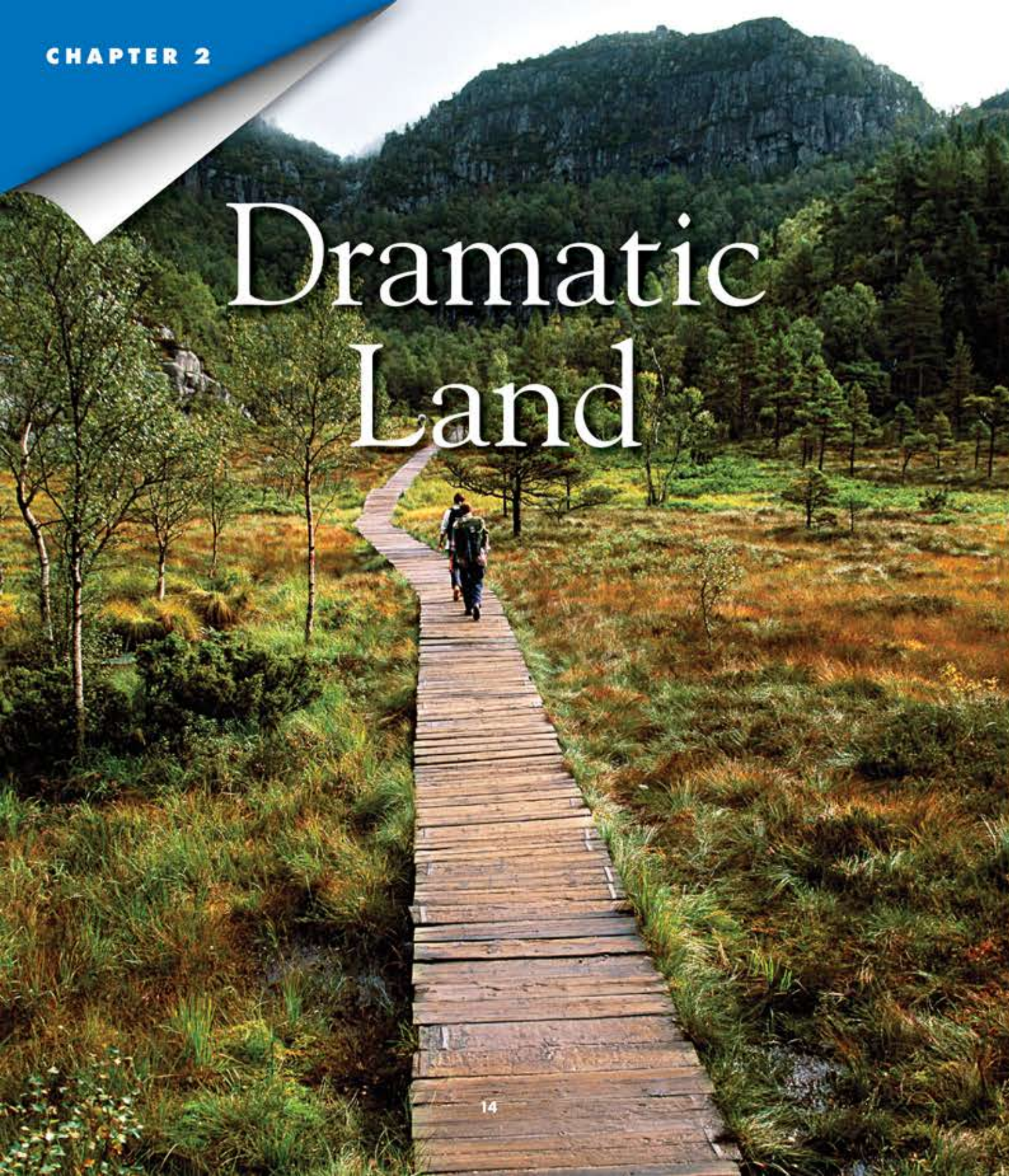
Norwegians work hard, but they are committed to prioritizing time with their families. They seldom stay late at work, and they look forward to time off. Many Norwegians have a country house, a small cabin where they can escape the city. They go to hike, sail, and enjoy the beautiful land. But mostly, they just want to relax, enjoying the warm coziness of time with their family.

**During winter in Norway there is a lot of snow to play in.**





# Dramatic Land



**N**ORWAY IS ONE OF THE MOST NORTHERLY COUNTRIES in Europe. It is part of a region called the Scandinavian Peninsula, which includes Sweden and sections of Finland and Russia.

Although Norway is similar in area to the U.S. state of Montana, it is relatively long and narrow. It borders Sweden, Finland, Russia, and three large bodies of water—the Barents Sea to the north, the Norwegian Sea to the west, and the North Sea to the south. A smaller body of water, the Skagerrak Strait, is between southern Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

*Opposite: Hikers in Norway take a footpath to Jostedal Glacier, the largest glacier in mainland Europe.*