



## Central Banking in Action



*Sindre Midttun is a MEcon student from Norway with a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Oslo University. With three colleagues, he just won the prestigious Norwegian Central Bank Case Competition. How did they beat the competition? How does studying MEcon differ from studying Economics in Oslo? What are the highlights of the MEcon experience? Will the future career be in public policy, management or in science?*

**Among other entrepreneurial ventures, you are a free-lancer for Norwegian TV companies. What are your activities? What do you think about communication and rhetoric in economics? Must economists do better?**

One of my main sources of income was from news broadcasts. This has given me an insight into what the modern, fast-paced media industry expects from experts, such as economists, when they are invited into the newsroom or to debates. I do believe that one of the main challenges facing economists is to convey their message in a way understandable to the layman, without losing the needed nuances. This is a very hard task indeed, but I know that in TV and other live media, you rarely get more than a few minutes to get your message through.

**You have a bachelor's degree in economics from Oslo University. Why did you move to St.Gallen and enroll in MEcon? How do HSG studies compare to your experience in Norway? Is there enthusiasm or regret?**

HSG has a strong brand in Norway. I wanted to do my Master's abroad, and in Central Europe, so HSG was a good match in that regard. At the University of Oslo, the focus was more practically oriented. This is probably because Norway has some economic features not found in other European countries. At the HSG, the courses are more rigorous and theoretically demanding and the students are in general more ambitious than in Norway. All in all, I think the combination of the learning outcomes from each university is a good mix.

**With three colleagues, you won the prestigious annual Case Competition of the Central Bank of Norway. What were the challenges? How did you beat the rival teams?**

The case competition was split into two sub-parts, which had to be completed under time constraints. The first part was about setting the interest rate according to several economic indicators. As it often is in typical real-life situations, there are no strict rights or wrongs,



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but the key is to argue consistent for your policy advice. For the second part, we had to give a presentation on the transition from the IBOR system of interbank lending rates. Analytical skills, an interest in the current state of affairs in the Norwegian and International economy, and the ability to divide the workload efficiently within the team were the key factors for our success.

**Which specializations in economics are most appealing to you? Are you now planning a Master's thesis in the art of central banking?**

My main interests lies within monetary policy and central bank activity. There are numerous challenges facing central banks currently. In Scandinavia, there is a debate in economic circles about issuing some form of Central Bank Digital Currency. Therefore, it would be interesting in researching possible impacts a central bank issued digital currency could have on financial stability.

**Where do you see your future professional career? In public policy, in the financial sector, or in research?**

I think working with policy advice in the public sector sounds interesting, for example with monetary policy in the Norwegian Central Bank. But I am also open to other opportunities that could arise, as I think the analytical mindset of an economist, along with an interest in how economics and politics affects real life will offer many interesting career opportunities in the long run.

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