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## **National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21\***

**Norway**

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



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## **I. Introduction**

1. Norway is a staunch supporter of the protection and the promotion of human rights, both domestically and globally. Respect for human rights is vital to achieve inclusive and democratic societies based on the rule of law. This report provides information on developments in the period from May 2019 to May 2024. We welcome the opportunity to present Norway's progress and discuss achievements, opportunities, and challenges.

## **II. The reporting process**

2. In its third review, Norway received 241 recommendations, 176 of which it fully accepted, and 11 of which it partially accepted. These recommendations were followed up by the relevant ministries as set out in the report's annex.

3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security have coordinated the preparation of this report with all relevant ministries. Civil society participated in an open meeting in February and has had the opportunity to see a draft of the report.

## **III. Norway's human rights framework**

### **Legal framework**

4. Norway is party to a large number of human rights instruments within the framework of the UN and the Council of Europe. The Constitution sets out the responsibility of Norwegian authorities to respect and secure human rights in Norway. The Human Rights Act stipulates that the conventions incorporated into the Act apply as Norwegian law, and in case of conflict, shall take precedence over other Norwegian laws. Other specific legislation may also explicitly state that the provisions in the Act apply with the limitations that follow from international law.

5. The Instructions for Official Studies of Central Government Measures states that fundamental considerations, including of human rights obligations, must be addressed in the study on the suggested measures' impact.

### **Norwegian National Human Rights Institution**

6. The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NHRI), established in 2015, received 'A status' accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in 2017. Its annual budget has increased considerably since 2015.<sup>1</sup>

### **Cooperation with treaty bodies etc**

7. Responsibility for following up on recommendations received under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and from treaty bodies is delegated to the relevant ministry, since following up on human rights recommendations is best secured when the responsibility lies with the ministry which oversees the subject of the recommendation. The ministries have good dialogue with the NHRI on improvements concerning the follow-up of treaty bodies' recommendations. Thematic dialogue meetings have been established between relevant ministries, the NHRI, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, and civil society.<sup>2</sup>

8. Norway has a constructive dialogue with and is expecting country visits from several Special Rapporteurs.<sup>3</sup>

## IV. Acceptance of international human rights instruments

9. Norway ratified the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2019.<sup>4</sup>

10. In 2022, a process was instigated to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into Norwegian law.<sup>5</sup> The government appointed a committee of legal experts to examine the consequences of this process. Incorporation into the Human Rights Act was considered specifically. The committee submitted its report in January 2024. The report has been made available for wide public consultation and the process is being followed up by the Ministry of Culture and Equality. In 2017, a broad majority in Parliament decided not to ratify the individual communications mechanisms under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),<sup>6</sup> the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).<sup>7</sup>

11. In 2022, the Parliament considered ratifying the third Optional Protocol to the CRC of 1989, but the proposal did not gain support. Since the matter has recently been debated in Parliament, the Government is currently not considering this.<sup>8</sup>

12. Ratification of the Kampala Amendment is currently under consideration.<sup>9</sup>

## V. Follow-up of recommendations and developments in the human rights field

### The CRC and the Children Act

13. Norway's commitment to supporting parents in caring for their children is exemplified through its robust parental leave programme. This initiative provides ample time and resources for parents to devote to their child's upbringing. Parents are entitled to 49 weeks of paid leave, ensuring that they can prioritize their family responsibilities without sacrificing their financial stability.<sup>10</sup> The allocation of 15 weeks of leave specifically for fathers, aimed at fostering parity in domestic duties and childcare responsibilities, is particularly noteworthy.<sup>11</sup>

14. The Government is in the process of implementing a new Children Act that regulates the relationship between children and parents. The Children Act Committee was instructed that the new Act must comply with the requirements arising from international law, in particular the CRC and the European Convention on Human Rights. In 2020, the Committee proposed several amendments to the existing Act, including an introductory chapter highlighting the most fundamental children's rights. In 2022, the Act was amended to stipulate that the Children's Expert Commission shall assess the quality of expert reports in parental disputes before the courts can use them as evidence. The intention was to strengthen the legal protection of both children and parents.<sup>12</sup>

### Equality and non-discrimination

15. Although the principle of non-discrimination is enshrined in the Constitution, it does not contain a list of prohibited grounds of discrimination. However, it is undisputed that discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, e.g., national origin, descent, skin colour, and language, is covered by the provision.<sup>13</sup>

16. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits direct and indirect discrimination<sup>14</sup> based on gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or combinations of these factors.<sup>15</sup> The Act includes provisions on universal design and accommodating the individual needs of people with disabilities. Public authorities, employers, and employer and employee organisations must make active, targeted, and systematic efforts to promote equality and prevent discrimination.<sup>16</sup>

17. The Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud is an independent body that promotes equality and prevents discrimination in all areas of society. It provides guidance and ensures that Norwegian legislation and administrative practice are consistent with CEDAW, CERD, and CRPD. The authorities continuously ensure that the Ombud has sufficient resources.<sup>17</sup> Complaints concerning breaches of the legislation are dealt with by the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal.

## **Gender equality**

18. Norway has a high degree of gender equality.<sup>18</sup> The employment rate is nearly as high for women as for men. There are good parental benefits, extensive flexible working arrangements, a statutory right to leave to look after sick children, an entitlement to work part-time in connection with care of children under 12, and a statutory right to daycare for children below school age and to an after-school programme for young schoolchildren.<sup>19</sup>

19. Women account for the majority of those who graduate from universities with degrees, including doctorates. However, education choices are still gender-traditional, resulting in a gender-segregated labour market.<sup>20</sup> The Government supports several programmes that aim to achieve gender balance in education.

20. More women with minority backgrounds need to enter the labour market,<sup>21</sup> and more of these women need the opportunity to work full-time.<sup>22</sup> In 2023, 34.6% of women worked part-time (as opposed to 17.2% of men). In 2022, 38% of all managers were women.

21. To strengthen and systematize gender equality policy, the Government is working on a strategy for equality between women and men. The Government is also working on a white paper on sexual harassment.<sup>23</sup>

22. More female leaders are needed in the private sector. Efforts to achieve greater gender balance at the top level include rules mandating that medium-sized and large companies must have at least a 40% gender balance on their boards. These rules will eventually apply to about 20,000 companies. The Ministry of Culture and Equality funds the CORE Norwegian Gender Balance Scorecard, which maps the gender balance of executive committees and boards of the largest companies in Norway.

## **Equal pay**

23. The gap between women's and men's pay has been reduced over the last decade and is smaller than in most countries. See the annex for details. Gender differences in employment status (full-time/part-time), industry/sector, education, work experience, skills, and expertise are important factors behind the pay gap. The Government aims to reduce gender segregation, and – indirectly – differences in pay.<sup>24</sup>

24. Pay discrimination based on gender is prohibited by law. Wage setting is done through negotiations between employee and employer organisations, and through local and individual negotiations. Anyone who suspects discrimination<sup>25</sup> based on gender can demand information about the pay of their colleagues. Employers in all public enterprises and employers in larger private enterprises have a duty to promote gender equality, including equal pay, and to report on their gender equality work.

## **Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression**

25. Since 2009, same-sex couples have had the same right to marry as opposite-sex couples and have also had the right to adopt children.

26. The provisions in the Penal Code prohibiting discrimination and hate speech, as well as other provisions regarding hate crime, were amended by an act entering into force in 2021. The act expanded the protected characteristics to also include a person's gender identity and gender expression.<sup>26</sup>

27. Social attitudes towards and living conditions for LGBT+ people are improving, but research shows that targeted, systematic efforts in this field are still needed. In 2023 a new action plan was launched,<sup>27</sup> which aimed to secure the rights of and improve the quality of life for LGBT+ people and to foster greater acceptance of gender and sexual diversity.

28. An amendment to the Penal Code prohibiting conversion therapy entered into force on 1 January 2024.

### **Persons with disabilities**

29. In 2019, Norway launched an action plan for equality for people with disabilities.<sup>28</sup> The government presented a white paper on the human rights of people with cognitive disabilities in 2022.

30. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has written a guide to the CRPD aimed at the municipalities and counties and has also developed training materials used in skills training workshops. The project became nationwide in 2023. All county governors have been tasked with implementing the CRPD.

31. The Government is working systematically to implement universal design throughout Norwegian society. An action plan<sup>29</sup> includes measures in spatial planning, infrastructure, construction, transport, and digitalisation, among other things.

### **Self-determination and participation**

32. Under the Norwegian Guardianship Act, ordinary guardianship is a voluntary support measure designed to be in line with the principles of the CRPD.

33. In close consultation with relevant organisations, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security is currently reviewing the Guardianship Act with respect to the principles set out in the CRPD.<sup>30</sup> In 2023, several important amendments to the Act entered into force, which underlined the principle of voluntariness in ordinary guardianships. For persons not able to give legally binding consent, or who have difficulties expressing their will and preferences, decisions shall be based on the best interpretation of their will and preferences.<sup>31</sup> The revision of the Guardianship Act, as well as the Guardianship Authority's work to ensure that individual needs, wishes and preferences form the basis for all guardianships, are ongoing processes.

### **Ethnicity, religion and belief**

34. The Penal Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination based on, *inter alia*, skin colour, and national or ethnic origin.<sup>32</sup> A formal ban on racist organisations has been considered and rejected several times. Norway has traditionally only criminalised specific acts or omissions that cause harm or damage. However, the Criminal Procedure Act was amended in 2021 enabling the courts to issue orders prohibiting specific criminal organisations, provided that certain criteria are met. To participate in, recruit members to, or in any other way sustain the activities of a criminal organisation that is prohibited pursuant to the Criminal Procedure Act constitutes a criminal offence.<sup>33</sup>

35. Religious freedom is enshrined in the Constitution. It states that the Church of Norway is the Established Church of Norway and will therefore be supported by the State, and that all religious and belief communities shall be supported on equal terms.<sup>34</sup> The Religious and Life Stance Communities Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2021, regulates such grants. The Church receives a block grant from the state, while local congregations are entitled to grants from the municipalities. Other religious and belief communities are entitled to a grant per member that equals the grant that the Church receives per member.

36. Since 2019 the Government has strengthened<sup>35</sup> its efforts to combat racism and discrimination through several action plans.<sup>36</sup>

37. In 2023, the Government presented an action plan<sup>37</sup> against racism and discrimination with a focus on access to and advancement within the labour market<sup>38</sup> and on young people. The Government has started work on a new action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims, a new action plan against antisemitism, and an action plan against harassment and discrimination of Sami people.

38. In 2021, The Government established a national grant scheme with the aim of facilitating local, regional, and national initiatives and activities. The scheme will help to promote anti-racism, diversity, and dialogue, as well as contribute to knowledge and awareness among the majority population about racism, discrimination, and hate speech.<sup>39</sup>

39. The Government has funded three surveys, in 2012, 2017, and 2022, on the population's attitudes towards ethnic and religious minorities. The Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies carried out the surveys. A fourth study will also be carried out. The studies have a special focus on attitudes towards Jews and Muslims.

40. In 2020, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs launched a knowledge portal on equality and living conditions among Sami, national minorities and people from migrant backgrounds. On the portal, the directorate disseminates statistics and research-based knowledge from various sources about the groups' living conditions and on non-discrimination.<sup>40</sup>

### **Integration of immigrants<sup>41</sup>**

41. The main goals of Norway's integration policy are to increase labour force participation, build stronger communities, promote gender equality, and combat negative social control. For several decades, Norway has been investing heavily in official data, statistics and analyses to monitor and continuously improve policies. The Government presented a white paper on integration, which addresses lessons learned from the recent major influx of displaced persons from Ukraine, follows up on the Commission Report on Integration for Labour Migrants, and presents a coordinated integration policy. In 2021, a new Integration Act was introduced. One of its main objectives is to ensure that more refugees gain formal education, language training and social studies.

42. Norway is working to increase employment rates among immigrant women who need to acquire basic skills and who are not covered by other schemes or who need individualised training. As many as 74% of the participants who completed the scheme in 2022 gained employment or participated in education after completing the Job Opportunity Program.

43. In 2021, the Government launched a strategy to strengthen the role of civil society in developing and implementing its integration policy. Three years into the strategy period, the framework for voluntary efforts in the field of integration has increased substantially, and voluntary activity, knowledge development, and experience sharing have increased. The Government provides grants to immigrant organisations and other NGOs, both locally and nation-wide, and invites civil society to an annual integration conference.

44. Human rights defenders who receive asylum in Norway are able to continue their engagement after settlement. In 2022, the criteria for allowing leaves of absence from the compulsory introduction programme for refugees was broadened to allow human rights defenders to take part in peace and reconciliation efforts at both the national and international level, including working to promote human rights.<sup>42</sup>

### **Unacceptable working conditions and work-related crime**

45. Norway is pursuing an active policy to increase the use of permanent full-time positions in working life, strengthen organised industrial relations, and sanction unlawful activities to counteract social dumping and work-related crime. The government is implementing a model that lays down national requirements for proper practices in all public procurements, starting with the construction and cleaning industries.



46. An action plan for combating social dumping and work-related crime was launched in 2022, with a separate action plan to combat social dumping in the transport sector. Strengthening cooperation between public authorities, including the effective use of sanctions, is important. In 2022 an amendment to the Penal Code was introduced concerning wage theft. The Labour Inspection Authority was also given competence to order an employer to pay wages in accordance with the general application of collective agreements in certain sectors. In cooperation with social partners and voluntary organisations that provide help for vulnerable workers, the Government aims to improve the information provided to migrant workers about employment rights and to follow up measures to assist workers who are exploited.

### **Combatting criminal offences**

47. For information on the Norwegian Police Service's education, see the Common Core Document.

### **Hate speech and other hate crimes<sup>43</sup>**

48. The Penal Code prohibits hate speech. The provision includes discriminatory or hateful statements based on someone's skin colour, national or ethnic origin, religion or life stance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the Penal Code prohibits the act of publicly inciting someone to commit a criminal act, which includes incitements to violence.<sup>45</sup>

49. In accordance with instructions from the Director of Public Prosecution, investigations of hate crimes, including hate speech, have long been given priority by the police and prosecuting authorities.<sup>46</sup>

50. The National Competence Centre on Hate Crime was established in 2021. Oslo Police District was assigned tasks and has been allocated permanent funding, which involves training measures in the police districts. Dedicated teams will receive training in each district. The centre has been given increased funding in 2024. It is within the Centre's remit to help increase competence in all areas related to hate crime, including investigation and prosecution. Work on the identification, registration, and prosecution of hate crime in the police districts is an important part of the competence-boosting measures that are being implemented under the auspices of the Centre. The prosecuting authorities are responsible for ensuring that cases of this type are prioritised and prosecuted.<sup>47</sup> The Police University College's study programme on hate crime is now offered on a permanent basis.<sup>48</sup>

51. The Government has increased its support for the No Hate Speech Movement through the Norwegian organisation Stopp hatprat, which has built up a national network of young people, voluntary organisations, municipalities, youth workers and other professionals who are in contact with young people daily. The organisation hosts workshops, seminars and courses, and has developed a system of stop hate speech ambassadors who help spread knowledge online. In further efforts against hate speech, the Government will place a particular emphasis on measures that can help combat online harassment and hate speech.<sup>49</sup>

52. A report has been drawn up that uses big data analyses to map the content and extent of hateful and discriminatory statements against Muslims on social media. The report shows an increase in hate speech in the last ten years, but that there is only a small group behind most of the instances.

53. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has prepared a digital guide to prevent and deal with hate speech, harassment and threats against politicians and candidates, which is available online.<sup>50</sup> It was published prior to the 2021 parliamentary elections and was updated prior to the 2023 municipal and county council elections.

## **Domestic violence and rape<sup>51</sup>**

54. Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence is a high priority for the Government. A new national escalation plan against violence and abuse against children and domestic violence for the period 2024-2028 was presented in December 2023.<sup>52</sup>

55. Developed by nine ministries, the plan will contribute to more targeted prevention, better help and protection of victims, and more effective prosecution and treatment of perpetrators. The plan contains a separate section on violence and abuse in Sami communities, developed in close collaboration with the Sámediggi (Sami Parliament).<sup>53</sup> It will also help meet the obligations in the Istanbul Convention, ratified by Norway in 2017.<sup>54</sup>

56. The Government is establishing a permanent National Intimate Partner Homicide Commission, which shall continuously review all cases. The purpose is to learn from shortcomings and to prevent severe intimate partner violence and partner homicides.

57. In 2023, the Government appointed a committee to examine issues related to the prevention and prosecution of rape. The committee examined how victims of rape are supported after the crime and during the investigation process. The committee submitted its report in March 2024 and its recommendations are now under consideration.

58. In 2021 the Ministry of Justice and Public Security commissioned the Criminal Law Commission to conduct a general review of the provisions relating to sexual offences in the Penal Code and propose legislative amendments. In December 2022 the Commission proposed several amendments to better safeguard sexual autonomy whilst also ensuring that the criminal legislation adheres to the rule of law. The Commission recommended expanding the current provision on rape so that it also covers engaging in sexual intercourse or similar sexual activities “with a person who does not want to, and who expresses this in words or actions”. The Ministry is currently considering the recommendations.<sup>55</sup>

## **Human trafficking<sup>56</sup>**

59. In order to secure a more unified approach from the relevant authorities, the Coordination Unit against Trafficking published national guidelines in 2023 for identifying victims of trafficking. New guidelines were also issued on the cooperation between police, child welfare services, and the immigration service concerning the disappearance of unaccompanied minors from asylum centres. Guidelines for the police on the search for missing persons are under revision, with a special focus on improving investigations into missing unaccompanied minors who are seeking asylum.<sup>57</sup>

60. The Child Welfare Act contains a provision to protect potential victims of trafficking: an emergency order for the placement of a child in an institution when there is a risk of human trafficking. An emergency order may only be issued when it is necessary to protect the child. If there is a need for further measures, the Child Welfare Service must promptly follow up the emergency order with an application to the Child Welfare Tribunal for placement in an institution pursuant to section 6-6. If such an application has not been made within two weeks of the date of the order, the emergency order lapses. The provision entered into force on 1 January 2023.

61. The national guidance function for cases of minor victims of human trafficking at the Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs aims to contribute to increasing the competence of the services so that more victims are identified and receive assistance and protection.

## **Compensation for violent crimes**

62. The new Compensation for Violent Crimes Act entered into force in 2023. Pursuant to the Act, a person who is the victim of a serious criminal offence, or their next-of-kin, may be entitled to compensation from the state. As a main rule, the compensation claim must be administered by the courts during the criminal proceedings. If the compensation claim has

not been administered by the courts, i.e., because the criminal case was dropped, the aggrieved party can apply for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. The penal provision on hate speech is not within the scope of the scheme. However, persons exposed to serious criminal offences motivated by a person's skin colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or disability, may be entitled to compensation. A separate provision sets out that if an offence is motivated by the above mentioned, it is an aggravating factor to be considered in connection with sentencing.

63. As a rule, the aggrieved party will be entitled to legal assistance during the criminal proceedings. If the case is not dealt with by the courts and the aggrieved party applies for compensation, expenses for legal assistance can be covered if the scope or complexity of the case so requires. Victims of violence can also take civil action against the perpetrator for compensation. In such lawsuits, the victim of violence will be entitled to free legal advice to assess a lawsuit, as well as free costs in the compensation case against the alleged perpetrator.<sup>58</sup>

## **Deprivation of liberty**

### **Police custody**

64. Under Norwegian law, people placed in police custody must be transferred to an ordinary prison within 48 hours.

#### *Psychiatric institutions*

65. The Directorate of Health has drawn up professional guidance on the prevention of the use of coercion in mental health care for adults, applicable nationwide from 1 March 2022. The guidance is intended as a tool for gaining a more uniform understanding of how the use of coercion can be prevented.<sup>59</sup>

### **Prisons**

66. The Government has constituted an independent committee to undertake an evaluation of the criminal sanction preventive detention and the special sanctions committal to psychiatric care and committal to care, and investigate how the health of detainees and inmates, with a particular focus on mental health disorders or developmental disabilities, can best be safeguarded during custody, execution of sanctions and reentering to the society. Based on these evaluations and assessments, the committee shall provide a number of recommendations.<sup>60</sup>

67. The Directorate of Health is in the final stages of completing a revision of the national guidelines for providing health services for detainees and inmates, including persons with psychological disabilities and serious mental health issues. A subsidy scheme that is partly financing the health care services for people in detention is also being revised. The aim is better treatment of detainees with the greatest needs, such as women and children.

68. A national unit for prisoner with complex mental health problems was opened at Ila Prison in May 2023. It has a higher staffing level, where health services and prison staff cooperate closely to improve conditions for the prisoners, and thus reduce solitary confinement. In addition, eleven activity and resource teams have been established, also contributing to reduce the use of solitary confinement.

69. A new Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service is planned to be operational in 2025. It will conduct systematic and regular supervision in line with international human rights standards. In 2023, the Ministry submitted a consultation paper for public hearing, revising the current regulation regarding solitary confinement and coercive measures in the Correctional Service. The aim is to reduce the use of such measures in line with recommendations from the Parliamentary Ombud.<sup>61, 62</sup> See the annex for more information.

70. The Directorate of Correctional Service publishes statistics on solitary confinement monthly and on suicide and suicide attempts on a yearly basis.

## **Asylum and immigration**

71. The Government is striving for a predictable and responsible immigration policy that ensures due process within the framework of Norway's international obligations.<sup>63</sup> All asylum applications are carefully and individually assessed. Asylum seekers who are found to need international protection will be granted asylum, in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement.<sup>64</sup>

## **Asylum, visas and residency**

72. The internal flight alternative is assessed when processing an asylum application. In 2016, the condition "unreasonable" was repealed. Circumstances that were formerly part of the assessment of what is "unreasonable" are now considered when assessing residency on strong humanitarian grounds. Norway respects the prohibition on subjecting anyone to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

73. Guidelines from September 2022 clarify that if a person applying for asylum already holds a permanent residence permit or a residence permit which forms the basis of a permanent residence permit, this is relevant when assessing whether the applicant has a genuine protection need. Since this person will not return to his/her country of origin, it is less likely that the same person has a well-founded fear of persecution or may be subject to other inhumane treatment.

74. An application for a residence permit under the Immigration Act may be refused examination on its merits if the applicant has travelled to the realm after having stayed in a state or an area where the foreign national was not persecuted. Since 2015 it has not been a requirement that the asylum seeker must have access to an asylum procedure in the country to which the person is referred.

75. The Government reduced the fee for family reunification<sup>65</sup> in 2020. However, in 2024 the fee for family reunification, save family reunification for refugees, was increased to ensure a better balance between the actual expenses to process the cases and the fee.

76. The deadline for submitting a family reunification application with an exemption from the subsistence requirement is considered to be in accordance with our international obligations. Expedient processing of all immigration cases, including family reunification cases, is something we constantly strive to improve.<sup>66</sup>

## **Minor asylum seekers**

77. All unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors need a level of care and accommodation designed to meet their particular needs. Norway has an age-adjusted reception system. The reception facilities offered to unaccompanied minors over 15 are specially designed to meet the needs of this age group. Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers under this age are offered accommodation in designated care centres by the Child Welfare Service.

78. For procedures for dealing with the disappearance of unaccompanied minors from care centres and reception centres,<sup>67</sup> please see the section on human trafficking above.

79. As regards children in forced return processes, a minor regulatory amendment was made to the Act in 2023 regarding the detention of minors. The deadline has now been adjusted to "the day after" the apprehension and shall provide a basis for better deportation where children are involved.<sup>68</sup>

## **Freedom of expression, assembly and association**

80. The Constitution protects freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of expression, regardless of form or medium. The right to express political views, including views on human rights, has particularly strong protection.<sup>69</sup> The Constitution sets out the right of access to public documents and the state's obligation to facilitate "an open and enlightened

public discourse". The authorities support the media through grants and VAT exemptions for news and current affairs media, and funding for local audio and visual media, Sami news media, and innovation. In 2020, The Media Liability Act entered into force. Its objective is to support the role of editor-controlled media in defending an open and enlightened public discourse. The Act sets out clear rules governing liability for hate speech and other unlawful content that users post on edited online platforms.

81. A new regulation on whistleblowing in the workplace was introduced in 2020. The purpose is to protect employees who report issues of concern in their undertaking.

82. A Commission for Freedom of Expression presented its report in 2022. The Commission states that the current situation for freedom of expression in Norway is by and large favourable. It highlights certain areas of improvement, i.e. the challenges that persons belonging to minority groups may face when they express themselves in public. The Commission states that open and informed public discourse will be undermined if certain voices and perspectives are systematically excluded. The report is currently being followed up by the Ministry of Culture and Equality in collaboration with other ministries.

83. There are more than 100,000 voluntary organisations in Norway. Public funding (state level) for voluntary organisations totalled more than NOK 14 billion in 2022.

## **Elections**

84. Voter turnout in the 2021 parliamentary election was 77.2%. A new Election Act was adopted in 2023, which will be applied in the 2025 parliamentary election. An overriding consideration has been to modernise the regulations, both in terms of language and content, making them easier to understand. A new appeals system for elections that meets the requirements for an independent judicial review was adopted. Rules that allow for the extension or postponement of the election proceedings, or the holding of a new election if an extraordinary event occurs that is likely to prevent voters from voting, have also been adopted. These rules apply to all elections.

## **Children and families**

### **Violence against children**

85. Combating violence against children is a priority area for the Government. The primary goal is to prevent children from being subjected to violence and sexual abuse both inside and outside their home, cf. the escalation plan launched to combat violence and abuse.

86. The Ministry of Children and Families will establish a permanent commission to review cases of violence, abuse and serious neglect of children. The commission will investigate the work of all services involved in the cases examined to uncover systemic failures, with the aim of improving the relevant services.<sup>70</sup>

87. Regarding domestic violence, the Government is currently reviewing the Crisis Centre Act which gives municipalities an obligation to provide shelter services to women, men and children experiencing violence in a close relationship. Among other things, the review is examining how to provide adequate services to women with substance abuse and other vulnerable groups, how to improve crisis centre services for the Sami population.<sup>71</sup>

88. Time spent online by children and young people has increased significantly. Online sexual exploration is common among young people and there can be blurred borders between exploration and abuse. The Government is preparing a white paper on safe digital childhoods. A key objective is to develop more comprehensive policies to promote safer internet use for children and young people.

### **Child welfare<sup>72</sup>**

89. The right of the child to protection, and the principle of the best interests of the child, are fundamental considerations in the work of the child welfare services.<sup>73</sup> The new Child

Welfare Act came into force in 2023. The Act emphasises preventive efforts, early intervention and strengthening legal protections for children and parents as contributing to better child welfare work. Overarching provisions regulate the best interests of the child and the child's right to participate, the right to family life, and the child's right to care and protection. Child welfare measures shall not be more invasive than necessary.<sup>74</sup> Children's cultural, linguistic and religious background must be a consideration in all the work of the Child Welfare Service, and the special rights of Sami children and indigenous people must be safeguarded.<sup>75</sup> The aim of reunifying the child and the parents after a care order has been issued has been clarified in the Act, and the rules on contact between the child and the family mirror this principle.<sup>76</sup>

90. The Ministry of Children and Families is also working on a quality reform<sup>77</sup> of child welfare. The reform aims to address several challenges in the sector, and the Ministry will present a bill with a white paper in spring 2025.

### **National complaints procedures for children**

91. It is important that children have easy access to effective national complaints procedures. In March 2023, the Parliament instructed the Government to ensure national complaints options for children and to improve information for children and youth regarding their right to file appeals in individual cases. The ministries have recently mapped out children's complaints options across all sectors. To improve the information available to children and young people about their right to complain in individual cases and the complaint rights that exist, information on this has recently been published in the public information channel for youth.<sup>78</sup>

### **Adoption**

92. The Adoption Act is based on the principles of several instruments of international law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Norway is also a party to the 1993 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. In adoption cases, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

93. In recent years, information about serious issues in intercountry adoptions to other countries has emerged, leading several countries to conduct internal investigations. The Government has launched an independent investigation of international adoptions. The investigative committee will deliver its report by the end of 2025 and will examine whether Norwegian authorities and others have had sufficient control over historical intercountry adoptions and assess forward-looking measures, among other things. The overall purpose is to obtain answers as to whether there have been illegal or unethical circumstances in connection with foreign adoptions to Norway.

### **Family counselling services**

94. Family counselling is a specialised, free service that focuses on family-related issues, and does not require a referral.<sup>79</sup> It is the goal that municipalities should offer evidence-based parental support, and that collaboration between different services should be strengthened. The Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs administers a grant programme for parental support initiatives. The aim of the programme is to empower parents in their parental role, so they can provide good care for their children, and to prevent violence, abuse, or neglect.<sup>80</sup>

### **Citizenship for stateless children**

95. The Government seeks to prevent statelessness in accordance with Norway's international obligations. In 2016, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security issued instructions to ensure that applications for citizenship from stateless persons are processed in

accordance with relevant conventions, so that no child born in Norway remains stateless. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion will now review the Citizenship Act. In this context, the Ministry will consider whether to include a definition of statelessness as recommended by the UNHCR.<sup>81</sup>

### **Work, social security and adequate standard of living**

96. An adequate standard of living is ensured through a high degree of employment and relatively low inequality, a welfare state with a high degree of free or low-cost universal public services and benefits, and a good standard of housing. Norway's national insurance scheme ensures that people who are unable to work because of age, illness, injury or family situation still have an income. The municipalities provide social assistance, including financial support after an individual assessment based on nationally set guiding levels, to ensure an adequate standard of living. This needs-based support constitutes a safety net and is available for all legal residents in Norway who after exhausting other income opportunities do not have enough funds to cover their basic needs.

97. Social services and benefits from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (Nav) should be available for everyone in need, regardless of digital access and knowledge. It is the individual municipality and the local Nav office that determine their availability, and how opening hours and appointments should be arranged. Nav has implemented measures to improve the availability of services and benefits and its dialogue with users.

#### **Housing<sup>82</sup>**

98. The municipalities are required to find adequate temporary housing for people who are unable to find accommodation themselves. What is considered adequate will depend on prevailing social conditions and current standards for good practice in the social services. The municipalities are required to give individually adapted assistance to the disadvantaged in the housing market. The municipalities are also required to keep an overview of the need for ordinary and adapted housing for the disadvantaged in the housing market. Loan and grant schemes are available to give the disadvantaged in the housing market better access to housing, irrespective of ethnic background.

### **Child poverty**

99. A lack of regular employment for parents is the most important cause of poverty amongst families in Norway. In 2020–2022, the share of children growing up in households with a persistently low level of income, i.e. less than 60% of median income, was 10.6%, compared to 6.7% in 2003–2005. Children of immigrant parents, parents with low labour market participation, and children in single-parent families are particularly at risk. The increase in the number of children growing up in persistently low-income households has been particularly high among families with an immigrant background, where many have come to Norway as refugees, see integration of immigrants above. Measures to increase parents' participation in the labour market are considered the most effective way of combating child poverty.

100. For children under 18, parents receive a universal, tax-exempt, non-means-tested monthly child benefit, which is especially important for supporting children and families living in poverty. Single parents are entitled to more child benefit. In 2023–2024 child benefits have increased. The maximum fee for kindergarten has been reduced, and free core hours are offered to low-income families. The national grant scheme for including children and youth in leisure and holiday activities, part-time and summer jobs, and to improve secondary-school attendance, has been increased by NOK 231 million. Municipal start-up loans are offered to low-income families who do not qualify for a mortgage from an ordinary bank, and low-income families with high housing expenses may be entitled to a government-financed housing allowance.<sup>83</sup>

101. In October 2023, an expert panel on children in poor families submitted its recommendations to the Government. The current strategy<sup>84</sup> on children in low-income

families is being renewed in 2024. In 2025, the Government is to present a white paper on social equality and social mobility among children and young people.

### **Mental health**

102. In June 2023 the Government introduced a new Escalation Plan for Mental Health (2023-2033) with three focus areas: promotion of good mental health and preventative mental health work, high quality services that are easily accessible for all, and services for people with severe and complex needs.

103. One aim of the plan is to reduce children and youth's self-reported mental health issues by 25%. To achieve this, more knowledge about the underlying causes is needed, as well as increased and better access to low threshold services in the municipalities.

104. An expert committee appointed by the Government has investigated the circumstances surrounding a lack of consent for the use of coercion in mental health care. The Government will assess the need for changes in the legislation on coercion in light of the committee's report, with a view to promoting a bill. The Directorate of Health has been asked to consider how an arrangement for decision support for patients in mental healthcare can be introduced in the services.<sup>85</sup>

105. A white paper on psychoactive substances<sup>86</sup> will be presented in 2024.

### **The right to education**

106. The Education Act gives all children the right and obligation to free primary school education, and the right to free upper secondary education for all young people who have completed primary school education, or the equivalent when it is likely that they will stay in Norway for longer than 3 months. The new Education Act came into effect on 1 August 2024.

107. Both municipalities and county municipalities have a duty to ensure that pupils receive adapted education, so they get a satisfactory result from their training and education regardless of their functional level and are able to utilise and develop their abilities. The right to individual adaptation has three dimensions: individually tailored education, personal assistance, and physical adaptation and technical aids.<sup>87</sup>

108. The right to upper secondary education for adolescents and adults is extended in the new Act, applying to the achievement of study or vocational competence, regardless of how long the individual needs to complete the education. There is no requirement for Norwegian language competence upon admission to upper secondary education, but the applicant must have legal residence in Norway. Adolescents who are staying legally in the country while they are waiting for their application for a residence permit to be administered, have the right to upper secondary education when they are under 18 and it is likely that they will remain in Norway for more than three months. Adolescents are entitled to complete the school year that begins in the year in which they turn 18. Adults who are staying legally in the country while they are waiting for their application for a residence permit to be administered do not have the right to upper secondary education. The right to specially adapted education in the Norwegian language for youth is also included in the new Act and has been extended to include adults for the first time.

109. For those whose application for a residence permit is rejected, the right to upper secondary education applies until the date of the final decision.<sup>88</sup>

110. The principle of the child's best interests is enshrined in a separate section to underline that this applies to all actions and decisions under the Act. There is also a separate statutory provision on a pupils' right to participate in everything that concerns them, to express themselves freely and to be heard, and that the pupil's opinions must be weighted in accordance with their age and maturity. Corresponding rules are simultaneously enshrined in the Private Schools Act.<sup>89</sup>

111. The social studies curriculum includes human rights at different stages of primary and secondary education.<sup>90</sup> On completing year 2, children are expected to be able to explore and



give examples of how children can influence decisions and collaborate on democratic processes. After year 7, they are expected to be able to discuss what equality and equal opportunities mean for a democracy, and develop proposals for how to counteract prejudice, racism and discrimination.

112. Drop-out rates in upper secondary education fell steadily over the last two decades, including throughout the pandemic. As primary and lower secondary education is compulsory, almost all students complete these stages of their education. 80% of Norwegians born to immigrant parents and 65% of immigrants completed upper secondary school within five/six years compared to 83% of the majority students.<sup>91</sup>

### **Gender distribution**

113. The application figures for upper secondary education for the school year 2023–2024 show that more girls are applying to study preparatory education programmes while more boys are applying to vocational education programmes. Gender distribution is skewed in seven of ten vocational programmes, while there is more gender balance in study preparation programmes. The number of applicants for vocational subjects has generally increased in recent years; approximately half of the applicants now have a vocational education programme as their first choice.

114. The major challenge in tertiary education is that many women and men apply to different areas of study, which results in more studies that reveal a skewed gender balance. Men dominate in sports, ICT and technological studies, while women are in the majority in health and social studies, teacher studies, law, and language studies. We find a more even gender balance among applicants who start studies in the fields of science, history, and economic-administrative subjects.<sup>92</sup>

### **Indigenous peoples and national minorities**

115. In 2017, the Parliament established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the Norwegianization (assimilation) policy and injustices committed against the Sami and Kvens/Norwegian Finns. The Commission decided later to include Forest Finns in its remit. The Sámediggi and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish and Forest-Finnish organisations were involved in the Commission's work. The Commission submitted its report to the Parliament in June 2023. The Parliament will finish administering the report in the autumn of 2024.

116. The Parliament passed an Act relating to language in 2022 to strengthen and secure Norwegian as a complete language. The Act also protects the status of the Sami languages, Kven, Romani, Romanes, and Norwegian sign language.

117. Norway's cultural policy aims to support and facilitate the safeguarding and revitalization of minority cultures and to widen the scope and range of their culture in society and historical narratives. The Government emphasizes ensuring and strengthening the operation of the Sami and the national minorities' own cultural institutions and cultural actors.<sup>93</sup>

### **Indigenous peoples**

118. Rules on consultations with Sami interests are codified in the Sami Act and came into force July 2021. They are largely a continuation of the Procedures for consultations and apply to central government authorities, counties, and municipalities, and to private legal entities when exercising authority on behalf of the State.<sup>94</sup>

119. The right to early consultations applies to the Sámediggi and other representatives of Sami interests in matters concerning legislation, regulations, and other decisions or measures that could directly affect Sami interests.<sup>95</sup>

120. The Sami people have access rights to natural resources in Sami areas. Compliance with international law is crucial when granting licenses for production and transmission of

electricity in traditional Sami areas. In December 2023, the government presented several new measures to mitigate land conflicts with reindeer herding communities when developing renewable energy.

121. In October 2021, the Supreme Court found that the licensing decisions and expropriation permits for wind power development in Fosen violate Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), infringing on the Sami reindeer herders' ability to practice their culture. The Government later initiated a mediation process that led to an agreement between the parties, in December 2023 and in March 2024, respectively.

122. The Government will perform a comprehensive review of the Reindeer Husbandry Act of 2007 and is consulting the Sámediggi and the Sami Reindeer Herder's Association of Norway. The goal is to present a legislative proposal to Parliament during the spring of 2025.

123. There is a close dialogue with the Sámediggi and indigenous local rights holders concerning the conditions for traditional Sami salmon fishing. In areas of non-sustainable fishing in Sami areas, the Government has maintained a limited Sami salmon fishery by placing more severe restrictions on other fishing groups. In the area where all salmon fishing is prohibited, the Government funds projects that aim to pass knowledge about the traditional Sami salmon fishing on to the next generation.<sup>96</sup>

124. In accordance with the Finnmark Act, the Finnmark Commission is currently mapping use and ownership rights to the land in Finnmark county based on applicable national law. The Commission assesses claims to collective or individual rights to fishing grounds in sea and fjord areas in Finnmark when someone with a legal interest in clarification requests this. The Commission's assessments also concern Sami fishing and reindeer herding rights. The conclusions can form the basis for the formalisation of use and ownership rights and the mapping thereby contributes to ensuring the legal recognition of Sami rights.

125. The Government has not yet decided how the Sami Rights Committee's proposal on mapping rights south of Finnmark should be followed up.<sup>97</sup>

126. In 2018, the Government carried out an evaluation of the Minerals Act and considered questions regarding the Sami as a follow up to the initial evaluation. In 2022, an independent committee proposed a considerable modernization of the Act. Among other things, the committee proposed that the current regulations concerning mineral activities in the county where most Sami live, i.e., the regulations concerning consulting the Sami stakeholders and the benefit sharing mechanisms, should apply to all traditional Sami areas.<sup>98</sup> The Government is assessing the recommendations by reviewing the Minerals Act and proposing changes in the legislation and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries will consult the Sámediggi and Sami stakeholders.

127. In connection with the regional reform and the transfer of authority and tasks in the cultural environment field to the county councils, authority and tasks were also transferred to the Sámediggi for Sami cultural heritage sites, entering into force January 2020.

128. In 2022, the Government appointed a legislative committee to consider and propose a new cultural environment act to safeguard the Sami cultural environment and the cultural environment of national minorities in accordance with Norway's international obligations. The report will be delivered by 1 February 2025.

129. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development presented a bill to the Parliament in 2023, which applied new statutory provisions for the use of Sami languages. It entered into force in January 2024. The Ministry has consulted the Sámediggi about the bill and made changes based on their input. One main goal of the bill is to adapt the rules to the Sami language situation in different municipalities and to help ensure that more municipalities apply for incorporation into the administrative area for Sami languages.<sup>99</sup>

130. In 2023, the Government presented a white paper on Sami language, culture, and social life.<sup>100</sup> The Government will follow up on the report in collaboration with the Sámediggi.<sup>101</sup> The right to training in Sami at upper secondary level has been extended to also apply to non-Sami pupils who have had training in a Sami language or who had Sami in primary school.

## National minorities

131. The white paper<sup>102</sup> on national minorities in Norway describes recent policy relating to national minorities and how the Government plans to further develop the policy to strengthen minorities' languages, culture, and situation. The national minorities' organisations submitted input to the part of the report that describes the minorities' current situation.

132. Romano Kher – Roma cultural and resource centre, established in 2018 in dialogue with the Roma minority, is run by the Church City Mission. The Roma are involved in decisions regarding the centre.<sup>103</sup>

133. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development finances the City of Oslo's school guidance programme<sup>104</sup> which purpose is to improve learning outcomes, reduce absence, and increase the chances of pupils from a Roma background completing primary and lower secondary education.

134. In 2018, the Government presented a targeted plan for continued efforts for the Kven language, which was evaluated in 2022 in dialogue with a reference group consisting of representatives from Kven organisations and institutions and the Arctic University of Norway.<sup>105</sup>

135. As part of the representative protection list for cultural environmental management, it has been noted that cultural heritage associated with national minorities was underrepresented. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage created the Minority Project to counterbalance this lack of representation. The various minorities themselves have contributed to defining which cultural monuments are important to them and represent their history and culture.

136. Norway has had action plans to combat antisemitism since 2016. The current plan,<sup>106</sup> which remains largely unchanged in 2024, forms the basis for coherent and systematic efforts to combat harassment of Jews and antisemitism. The Government has decided to draw up a new action plan and is in dialogue with the Jewish minority. The plan will be launched in 2024.

## Human rights in Norwegian foreign policy and development policy

137. Under certain conditions, the Norwegian Penal Code permits the exercise of universal jurisdiction in cases concerning international crimes. A special section of the national police (KRIPOS) and the National Authority for the Prosecution of Organized and Other Serious Crimes have been established to investigate and prosecute such cases. These measures, along with Norway's ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2000 and subsequent incorporation of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide into the Penal Code, signal Norway's willingness to uphold international law and fight impunity for atrocity crimes.

138. Norwegian development cooperation is committed to strengthening human rights globally. Norway supports the strengthening of human rights in our development cooperation through a twin track approach, by supporting several targeted human rights efforts as well as employing a human rights-based approach throughout our development cooperation.<sup>107</sup>

139. While maintaining a broad approach to human rights in our development cooperation, we have a particular focus on human rights defenders, freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief, worker's rights and cultural rights. Strengthening women's rights and gender equality remains a priority, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. Moreover, we focus on the inclusion and empowerment of groups in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, children and young people, as well as the LGBTIQ+ community.<sup>108</sup>

140. Norway cooperates with multilateral partners as well as partners from civil society, including national and international organisations. Local ownership, localization and sustainability are all important dimensions of our development cooperation.<sup>109</sup>

## **Human rights and the business sector**

141. The Norwegian government puts strong emphasis on responsible business conduct and expects all Norwegian enterprises to conduct their business in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles and the OECD Guidelines. For large enterprises, this expectation has become a legal obligation through the Norwegian Transparency Act which entered into force in 2022 and which aims to promote enterprises' respect for human rights and decent working conditions in connection with the production of goods and the provision of services. It also aims to ensure public access to information regarding how enterprises address adverse impacts on human rights and decent working conditions.

142. The Act applies to large enterprises that are resident in Norway, and foreign enterprises that offer goods and services in or outside Norway and pay taxes to Norway. Similarly, many smaller enterprises are indirectly affected, for instance through participation in supply chains. Applicable enterprises have the duty to carry out due diligence in accordance with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and publish publicly available yearly due diligence reports. Norway's Consumer Authority advises and guides enterprises, and monitors compliance. The Consumer Authority may address non-compliance with a prohibition or an order, or an enforcement or infringement penalty.

143. Norway actively participates in global initiatives that promote ethical business practices and social responsibility, such as the Global Compact. In 2023, Norway contributed actively to updating the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, supporting the increased protection of at-risk groups in relation to the conduct of businesses, among other things. Since Norway's National Contact Point (NCP) for the OECD Guidelines was launched in 2011, it has handled numerous concrete instances, ensuring accountability and transparency in businesses operations to reduce the adverse impact of business activities on people, planet, and society. This demonstrates Norway's commitment to fostering responsible business conduct to protect human rights.<sup>110</sup>

144. Norway's sovereign wealth fund, the Government Pension Fund Global, shall be a responsible investor in its role as a financial investor with the objective of achieving the highest possible return at an acceptable level of risk. Environmental, social and governance considerations form an integral part of the Fund management.

145. The Fund's manager, Norges Bank (the Central Bank of Norway), contributes to furthering good corporate governance and responsible business conduct principles and international standards, and has also prepared expectation documents on a variety of issues, including climate change, human rights, and children's rights. The documents express expectations directed at the companies' boards and are among other things used in dialogue with the companies in which the Fund is invested.

146. Norges Bank conducts ongoing due diligence on environmental and social topics such as human rights. In selected cases, companies identified as systematically mismanaging ESG risks, and for whom engaging with the company has failed or is unlikely to succeed, may be considered for risk-based divestment. In total, the Fund has divested from 123 companies based on human and children's rights risk in the period 2012–2023.

147. The Fund also excludes companies whose products or conduct violate fundamental ethical norms based on Guidelines for Observation and Exclusion of Companies from the GPF, prepared by the Ministry of Finance. For more details, see the annex.

## **VI. Developing issues**

### **Human rights and climate change**

148. Climate change and the consequences of anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gasses, as well as loss of biodiversity and pollution, may affect the conditions for the materialisation and enjoyment of different established human rights. The synergy between environmental protection and human rights has been emphasised by States on numerous occasions. Norway co-sponsored HRC resolution 48/13 and voted for UNGA resolution

76/300 recognising the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, while underlining that the recognition through these resolutions is political and thus without legal effect.

149. Norway is a party to the Paris Agreement and is fully committed to reducing national emissions and contributing to the global long-term target in the Agreement's Article 2 of keeping the global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Norway pursues an active and comprehensive climate policy to achieve this goal, among other things through statutory economy-wide climate targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

150. Norway is a party to the Biodiversity Convention and adopted a Nature Diversity Act in 2009. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework states that its implementation should follow a human rights-based approach. Norway is considering its follow-up, including how to strengthen protection and conservation.

151. In addition, Norway is a party to conventions concerning chemicals and waste, was among the initiators of the ongoing negotiations for a global plastics treaty, and launched and co-chairs the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution together with Rwanda and several other countries.

152. Norway was one of 32 Parties to the Duarte Agostinho and others climate case before the European Court of Human Rights. The case was declared inadmissible by the Court 9 April 2024, as the applicants were only covered by Portugal's territorial jurisdiction, they had not exhausted domestic remedies in Portugal, and they did not have victim status as required by the European Convention on Human Rights. As a Party to the Convention, we are currently considering the implications of the Court's judgment against Switzerland on the same date.

153. Norway aims to have a high degree of transparency and broad involvement in environmental policymaking and implementation of regulations. Norwegian environmental authorities have a long tradition of including civil society in environmental policymaking. Norway included a Civil Society Assessment of National Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, in its Voluntary National Review to the UN in 2021.

154. Norway also has an Environmental Information Act, the purpose of which is to ensure public access to environmental information and thus make it easier for individuals to contribute to the protection of the environment, to protect themselves against injury to health and environmental damage, and to influence public and private decision-makers in environmental matters. The Government is working on a climate strategy for the period up to 2035. As part of the process, regional dialogue meetings have been held across the country. A meeting in the Sámediggi will also be held on how to best reflect and ensure indigenous peoples' rights in climate policies and measures. Targeted dialogue meetings have also been planned to ensure engagement on specific measures. The 2035 climate strategy will also aim at a format accessible to the public to enhance involvement and understanding of climate policies and the transition towards a low-emission society.

155. In 2023, the Government presented a white paper on climate adaptation. The Government recognizes that Norway's Saámi population is especially vulnerable to climate change. Saámi knowledge and experience should further be consulted on issues regarding climate adaptation. In addition to statutory consultations, the Government will also involve the Sámediggi and the Norwegian Reindeer Herder's Association in climate change adaptation work, where relevant. It may also be relevant to involve other Sami organisations and institutions in climate change adaptation efforts.<sup>111</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> 140.23 (Ireland).

<sup>2</sup> 140.24 (Haiti), 140.25 (Paraguay), 140.26 (Bahamas).

<sup>3</sup> 140.20 (Belarus).

- 4 140.9, 140.10, 140.11, 140.12 (Iraq, Mozambique, Seychelles, Ukraine).
- 5 140.6 (Italy).
- 6 140.4, 140.21 (Bolivia, Mozambique).
- 7 140.21 (Mozambique).
- 8 140.21, 140.3 (Mozambique, Italy).
- 9 140.17 (Iceland).
- 10 140.148 (Egypt).
- 11 140.178 (Algeria).
- 12 140.150 (Brazil).
- 13 140.45 (Senegal).
- 14 140.33 (Angola).
- 15 140.31 (India).
- 16 140.61 (Argentina).
- 17 140.27 (Republic of Moldova), 140.46 (Botswana).
- 18 Norway ranks second of the 146 countries evaluated in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2023.
- 19 140.178 (Algeria).
- 20 140.177 (Iraq).
- 21 140.173 (Cuba).
- 22 140.175 (Finland).
- 23 140.174 (Egypt).
- 24 140.176 (India), 140.173 (Cuba).
- 25 140.173 (Cuba).
- 26 140.28 (Canada), 140.39 (Madagascar), 140.81 (State of Palestine).
- 27 *The Norwegian Government's Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023-2026)*
- 28 *A society for all: equality, democracy and human rights – The Government's action plan for equality for people with disabilities.*
- 29 *The Action Plan for Universal Design (2021–2025) Sustainability and equal opportunities – a universally designed Norway.*
- 30 140.213 (Peru).
- 31 140.214 (Mexico).
- 32 140.39 (Madagascar).
- 33 140.44 (Qatar), 140.69 (Jordan).
- 34 140.135 (Bangladesh), 140.136 (Barbados).
- 35 140.129 (Cote d'Ivoire), 140.36 (Barbados), 140.41 (Malaysia), 140.47 (China), 140.56 (Burkina Faso).
- 36 *Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination on the Grounds of Ethnicity and Religion (2020–2023), Action Plan to Combat Discrimination and Hatred towards Muslims (2020–2023), Action Plan against Antisemitism (2016–2020) and Action Plan against Antisemitism – a continuation (2021–2023).*
- 37 *Action plan on racism and discrimination – New initiatives 2024–2027.*
- 38 140.43 (Qatar), 140.48 (Zambia), 140.60 (Pakistan), 140.137 (Myanmar), 140.195 (Islamic Republic of Iran).
- 39 140.30 (Bangladesh), 140.32 (Philippines), 140.35 (Afghanistan), 140.52 (Maldives), 140.88 (Azerbaijan), 140.197 (Kazakhstan).
- 40 140.53 (Nepal), 140.193 (Barbados).
- 41 140.219 (New Zealand), 140.220 (Pakistan), 140.222 (Philippines).
- 42 140.138 Indonesia, 140.197 (Kazakhstan).
- 43 140.40 (Madagascar), 140.38 (Jordan), 140.47 (China), 140.62 (Colombia), 140.63 (Ecuador), 140.65 (France), 140.67 (Iceland), 140.68 (Indonesia), 140.71 (Nicaragua), 140.72 (Nigeria), 140.78 (Plurinational State of Bolivia), 140.79 (Sri Lanka).
- 44 140.81 (State of Palestine).
- 45 140.64 (Egypt).
- 46 140.81 (State of Palestine), 140.83 (Sweden), 140.84 (Zambia), 140.85 (Argentina), 140.86 (Azerbaijan).
- 47 140.73 (Pakistan), 140.75 (Qatar), 140.83 (Sweden), 140.84 (Zambia), 140.85 (Argentina), 140.86 (Azerbaijan).
- 48 140.74 (Chile).
- 49 140.28 (Canada), 140.40 (Madagascar), 140.83 (Sweden), 140.77 (Serbia).
- 50 www.hatogtrusler.no.
- 51 140.110 (Philippines), 140.103 (Chile), 140.107 (Greece), 140.104 (Colombia), 140.115 (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), 140.106 (Georgia), 140.109 (New Zealand).

- 52 140.114 (Viet Nam).
- 53 140.112 (Russian Federation).
- 54 140.105 (Denmark).
- 55 140.116 (Canada), 140.117 (Ireland), 140.118 (Netherlands), 140.119 (Paraguay), 140.120 (Spain), 140.121 (UK), 140.122 (Australia).
- 56 140.140 (Nigeria), 140.141 (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).
- 57 140.236 (Germany), 140.240 (Uganda).
- 58 140.87 (Uruguay).
- 59 140.100 (France).
- 60 140.131 (Germany).
- 61 140.34 (Sweden).
- 62 140.101 (China).
- 63 140.201 (Benin).
- 64 140.226 (Colombia), 140.227 (Cyprus), 140.228 (Uruguay), 140.229 (Switzerland).
- 65 140.230 (Costa Rica), 140.231 (Côte d'Ivoire).
- 66 140.232 (Afghanistan).
- 67 140.236 (Germany), 140.238 (Montenegro), 140.240 (Uganda).
- 68 140.234 (Myanmar).
- 69 140.136 (Barbados), 140.135 (Bangladesh).
- 70 140.181 (Malaysia).
- 71 140.114 (Viet Nam).
- 72 140.149 (Turkey), 140.150 (Brazil).
- 73 140.190 (Romania).
- 74 140.185 (Cyprus), 140.186 (Greece),
- 75 140.191 (Turkey), 140.189 (Poland), 140.187 (Islamic Republic of Iran).
- 76 140.188 (Belarus).
- 77 140.147 (Bangladesh).
- 78 Ung.no — offentlig og kvalitetssikret informasjon for ungdom.
- 79 140.148 (Egypt).
- 80 140.182 (Russian Federation).
- 81 140.241 (Brazil).
- 82 140.43 (Qatar).
- 83 140.179 (Sri Lanka).
- 84 *The national strategy for children growing up in low-income families (2020-2023).*
- 85 140.215 (Maldives).
- 86 The Prevention and Treatment Reform.
- 87 140.216 (Singapore).
- 88 140.194 (India), 140.192 (Costa Rica), 140.217 (Mexico), 140.156 (Portugal), 140.154 (Bahamas) 140.225 (Angola).
- 89 140.155 (India), 140.199 (Republic of Korea).
- 90 140.158 (Portugal).
- 91 140.157 (Algeria).
- 92 140.159 (Honduras), 140.177 (Iraq).
- 93 140.198 (Myanmar), 140.212 (Sri Lanka).
- 94 140.204 (Denmark).
- 95 140.207 (Philippines).
- 96 140.212 (Sri Lanka).
- 97 140.209 (New Zealand).
- 98 14.211 (Slovenia), 140.207 (Philippines).
- 99 140.212 (Sri Lanka).
- 100 Sami language, culture, and social life — Competence and recruitment in kindergarten, basic education and higher education.
- 101 140.51 (Cuba).
- 102 *National minorities in Norway – a coherent policy (2020).*
- 103 140.198 (Myanmar).
- 104 *Skolelostjenesten.*
- 105 140.198 (Myanmar).
- 106 Action Plan against Antisemitism 2021–2023.
- 107 140.93 (Ukraine).
- 108 140.92 (Bhutan).
- 109 140.91 (Singapore).
- 110 140.97 (Chile).

<sup>111</sup> 140.102 (Australia).

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