



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General

Original: English

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

**Seventh periodic report submitted by States parties under
articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant**

Norway^{*,}**

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not edited.

** Annexes may be consulted in the files of the Secretariat.

Contents (ikke oppdatert)

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Part I		
A. Introduction	1–4	4
B. General recommendations by the Committee	5–10	4
Part II		
A. General provisions of the Covenant	11–141	5
Article 1: Right of peoples to self-determination.....	88–106	16
Article 2: Equality and non-discrimination.....	107–129	19
Article 3: Equal rights for men and women.....	130–139	22
B. Individual rights guaranteed by the Covenant.....	142–520	24
Article 6: Right to work	142–172	24
Article 7: Right to just and favourable conditions of work.....	173–202	28
Article 8: Right to form and join trade unions	203	33
Article 9: Right to social security	204–227	33
Article 10: Right to protection of the family.....	228–289	36
Article 11: Right to an adequate standard of living	290–384	43
Article 12: Right to health	385–420	57
Article 13: Right to education		
Article 14: Compulsory primary education	421–466	62
Article 15: Cultural life and scientific Progress.....	467–520	69
Annexes		
I. Common core document Norway		

Part I

A. Introduction

1. The seventh periodic report of Norway is submitted in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The report covers the period 2020-2025, and was completed in xx.xx.2025. In the preparation of this report, due regard was paid to the guidelines regarding the form and content of periodic reports from States parties (E/C.12/2008/2) and the concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Norway's sixth periodic report (E/C.12/NOR/CO/6).
2. In order to avoid duplication of information, reference is made in this report to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024), Norway's sixth periodic report (E/C.12/NOR/6) and to other reports submitted by Norway in compliance with United Nations (UN) human rights conventions and conventions of the International Labour Organization.
3. The report has been prepared by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security on the basis of contributions from relevant ministries and other authorities. In addition to the ministries and other authorities, civil society were included in the process. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security held a public meeting where civil society were invited to share their views and concerns with the ministries. A draft report was submitted for consultation and civil society were additionally invited to submit contributions and suggestions before the report was finalised. Consultation input were communicated to the relevant ministries and taken into account during the reporting process.
4. The concluding observations of the Committee on the sixth report are addressed in the present report. Reference is made to the relevant paragraph in the concluding observations when a specific recommendation is addressed.

Concluding observations, para 49

5. The concluding observations by the Committee received in 2020 were published on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which at the time was the responsible Ministry in charge of the follow up of the Covenant).
6. Responsibility for following up on recommendations received from the Committee and other human rights treaty bodies is delegated to the relevant ministry, because managing the follow up on human rights recommendations is most adeptly carried out by the ministry which oversees the subject of the recommendation itself. The constructive dialogue between relevant ministries and the NHRI on improvements concerning the follow-up of treaty bodies' recommendations is valuable in this regard. Thematic dialogue meetings have been organised between civil society, relevant ministries, the NHRI, and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO).

B. General recommendations by the Committee

Domestic application of the Covenant

Concluding observations, paras 4-5

7. The Norwegian Constitution contains several provisions on economic, social and cultural rights, such as the freedom to join unions, the state's duty to ensure that children are provided with economic, social and health security, the state's duties towards the Sami

people, the right to education, the state's duty to create conditions under which every person capable of work is able to earn a living through their work or enterprise, the right to social security, and the right to a healthy environment. This means that many of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Covenant have been incorporated in the Constitution. Article 92 of the Constitution also establish a general duty on state authorities to respect and ensure the human rights prescribed in the Constitution and in the human rights treaties that are binding on Norway. Furthermore, the Covenant is fully incorporated into Norwegian law through the Human Rights Act, and thus it takes precedence over other Norwegian laws in the event of conflict. Accordingly, it is ensured that the rights derived from the Covenant have a strong position in Norwegian law.

8. A master's degree in law is required to become a lawyer, a prosecuting attorney and a judge in Norway. The master's degree study programme includes training on international law, of which the present Covenant is an integral part.

9. The Lawyers Act section 30 (in force from 1 January 2025), provides that lawyers must act with professional skill and must have sufficient knowledge of the area of law on which they give advice. A general requirement for post-qualifying education has also been introduced.

10. The Norwegian Courts Administration is responsible for training of judges. Both the national training programme for all judges and ad hoc seminars have addressed elements of the rights enshrined in the Covenant, including updates on judgements from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The annual training programme for all judges in 2025 will dedicate an entire day to the application of human rights across relevant topics. The programme will focus on methodologies, reparations for human rights violations, human rights in criminal proceedings, and the presentation of checklists. The Courts Administration also organise annual visits to the ECHR in Strasbourg. There is moreover a strong emphasis within the judiciary on the specific needs related to e.g., children's rights and as regards the Sami.

11. Finally, the Director of Public Prosecutions annually sets out a national directive on priorities for the Norwegian Prosecuting Authority. By establishing such priorities and giving professional guidance on crimes related to sexual offences, domestic abuse and violence, human trafficking and labour crime, the Director of Public Prosecutions is contributing to ensuring that the Prosecution Authority as-a-whole is adequately equipped with the knowledge and means to prevent and combat all forms of violence, torture and discrimination and other human rights violations. Finally, within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions designated lawyers have human rights as their area of expertise. These lawyers are tasked with monitoring legal development in the area of human rights, as well as advising on human rights issues for the Prosecuting Authority.

12. Norway has not ratified the Optional Protocol to the Covenant. Ratification has been considered by the Government, cf. white paper *Meld. St. 39 (2015–2016)* to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) in 2016, in which it was concluded not to propose ratification. The recommendation against ratifying the Optional Protocol was made due to potential uncertainties about its consequences in the Norwegian legal system. It was pointed out that a ratification could limit national authorities' margin of discretion and that it could lead to increased judicialization, especially concerning economic and social rights. The question of ratification has not been considered since.

13. According to the official *Instructions for the Preparation of Central Government Measures* (the Instructions), all "fundamental questions" raised by a proposed government measure must be considered systematically and comprehensively. According to the guidelines to the Instructions, this includes an assessment and description of relevant human rights obligations, including obligations under the Covenant. For instance, where the

Covenant is relevant for draft legislation, considerations concerning compatibility with the Covenant are included in the Government's proposition to the Storting. Moreover, it follows from the guidelines that when assessing measures with direct or indirect significance for children, the effects on children must be considered to ensure that their best interests are taken into account. On 1 November 2024, the purpose clause of the Instructions was nonetheless revised. The first section of the Instructions now states that the purpose is also to establish a sound basis for sufficient assessment of the relation to the Constitution and international law, including human rights law. The importance of assessing implications for human rights is thus included explicitly.

Extraterritorial obligations under the Covenant

Concluding observations, paras 6-7

14. For information on Norway's sovereign wealth fund, the Government Pension Fund Global (GPFG), reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024), paras. 27-29, and to Norway's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) fourth cycle National Report of 2024, paras. 143-146.

15. The GPFG is a financial investor and not a strategic owner. According to the Government Pension Fund Act, the Fund has one objective, namely to achieve the highest possible return at an acceptable level of risk. Within the financial objective, the Fund shall be a responsible investor. The GPFG is invested in around 9,000 companies across 70 countries. On average the Fund owns 1,5 per cent of the companies in its portfolio. It shall only be invested outside Norway and not in Norwegian companies. As stated in the management mandate from the Ministry of Finance, the Fund's responsible investment principles shall be based on environmental, social, and corporate governance considerations in accordance with internationally recognized principles and standards, such as the UN Global Compact, the OECD Principles of Corporate Governance and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises principles.

16. In addition, the Ministry of Finance has adopted the *Guidelines for Observation and Exclusion of Companies from the GPFG* (the Guidelines). Under the Guidelines, the Fund may exclude companies whose products or conduct violate fundamental ethical norms, such as violations of the rights of individuals in situations of war or conflict, and serious or systematic human rights violations. The criteria in the Guidelines are formulated to provide room for their application to new issues arising in the areas concerned. The Guidelines were extensively reviewed by a government-appointed committee from 2019 to 2020, cf. Official Norwegian Report NOU 2020: 7. Concerning the human rights criterion in the Guidelines, the wording was revised to make it clear that the criterion encompasses all types of human rights. A new conduct-based criterion was also included to cover the sale of weapons to states involved in armed conflict where there is an unacceptable risk that the weapons are used in military operations that constitute serious and systematic violations of international humanitarian law.

17. In August 2024, the Council on Ethics issued a formal letter to the Ministry of Finance, describing the Council's work regarding the Israeli settlements and other activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Both the Government and the Council on Ethics has consistently taken the position that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank violate international law. Based on the recommendation of the Council on Ethics, nine companies have so far been excluded from the GPFG due to its activities on the West Bank. In the letter to the Ministry, the Council on Ethics described the recent development in international law, including the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice dated 19 July 2024, and the escalation of the Israel-Palestine conflict after 7 October 2023. On this background, the Council on Ethics informed in its letter to the Ministry, that it has started a thorough and wide review of companies in the GPFG's portfolio that carry out activities in the OPT area.

Concluding observations, paras 8-9

18. The *National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights* (NAP) is continuously monitored in relation to various governmental sustainability efforts, including free trade agreements. The Government ensures that business entities conduct thorough assessments of human rights risks associated with their operations, in accordance with the Transparency Act and our commitment to adhering to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct (OECD Guidelines). The Government takes note of the recommendation to fully implement the National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

19. The Government expects Norwegian companies to comply with international standards for responsible business conduct, including the UNGPs and the OECD Guidelines, as exemplified in e.g., the Government white paper on ownership policy, *Meld. St. 6 (2022–2023)*, where these expectations are explained. By setting expectations and requirements for Norwegian companies, the authorities facilitate business and trade that can contribute to sustainable development from both a national and global perspective.

20. The Transparency Act entered into force 1 July 2022. It aims to promote companies' respect for fundamental human rights and decent working conditions, as well as to ensure public access to information on how companies handle negative impacts in these areas. The law requires just under 9,000 companies to conduct due diligence assessments in line with the OECD Guidelines, including investigating and reporting on human rights violations in their supply chains. The Norwegian Consumer Authority has been given the duty and competence to provide enterprises guidance, and to supervise enterprises' compliance with the obligations in the Act. To ensure compliance with the Act, the Consumer Authority has also been given the competence to issue binding decisions, including prohibitions and orders.

21. The National Contact Point for Responsible Business Conduct Norway (NCP) raises awareness about the OECD Guidelines and gives advice and guidance in specific instances of alleged non-compliance of the Guidelines. The NCP conducts workshops, promotion, and collaboration with other Contact Points and also the Consumer Authority regarding guidance on the Transparency Act.

22. The Government is now in the process of evaluating the Transparency Act to identify its strengths and weaknesses. The aim is to publish an evaluation report summarising the findings from this work by summer 2025. As part of the evaluation, the Government will consider how the Directive (EU) 2024/1760 on corporate sustainability due diligence from 2024 (CSDDD) can be implemented in Norwegian law. This directive will, among other provisions, ensure that companies covered by the directive can be held responsible for damage caused to affected parties when the conditions for civil liability are met. Moreover, the European Union in November 2024 adopted a Regulation 2024/3015 on prohibiting products made with forced labour (FLR) from being placed on the EU market or exported from the EU. This regulation must also be considered in conjunction with the CSDDD in the ongoing evaluation of the Transparency Act.

Climate change

Concluding observations, paras 10-11

23. The 'Climate Status and Plan' summarises the Government's climate policy, and it is the Government's annual report on the information required by the Climate Change Act. An updated Climate Status and Plan was presented in a separate attachment to the proposition to the Storting on the Fiscal Budget for 2025 (Prop. 1 S (2024–2025)) in October 2024. In December 2024, Norway submitted its first 'Biennial Transparency Report' under the Paris Agreement (resubmitted in February 2025). This report describes how Norway follows up our climate goal under the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions in 2030 by at least 55 per

cent compared to 1990, in line with pathways needed to realize the Paris Agreement temperature goal.

24. In the international negotiations under the UN Climate Change regime, Norway puts great emphasis on human rights. This includes work to ensure that states respect, promote and consider human rights when taking action to address climate change, and civil society's meaningful participation in all UN processes, including under the UN Climate Change Convention and the Paris Agreement.

25. The Paris Agreement is arranged in a way in which each country is accountable for emissions from its own territory and its economic zone. The Norwegian climate policy is based on this framework. Iceland and Norway entered into an agreement with the EU in October 2019 to cooperate to fulfil their respective climate targets. Under the agreement, Norway will take part in EU climate legislation from 2021 to 2030. When we entered into the agreement, the EU legislation was designed to achieve emission reductions of at least 40 per cent compared with the 1990 level. Both the EU, Iceland and Norway have communicated more ambitious targets to the UN after the conclusion of the agreement of 2019, and the EU has adopted amendments to its legislation in order to ensure that the more ambitious target of a 55 per cent reduction in net emissions, is achieved. In November 2022, Norway updated its climate target for 2030 under the Paris Agreement. Norway's updated climate target ('Nationally Determined Contribution', NDC) for 2030 under the Paris Agreement is to reduce the total emissions of greenhouse gases by at least 55 per cent in 2030 compared to the level in 1990. The 2030 target under the Paris Agreement is enshrined in the Norwegian Climate Change Act. Norway seeks to fulfil the enhanced ambition through climate cooperation with the EU. Norway is part of the enhanced EU Emission Trading System, and is currently assessing whether, and if so, on what terms we should take part in the updated Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR) and the Regulation on land use, land use change, and forestry (LULUCF). The updated legislation will not apply in Norway until the Storting has given its consent.

26. In accordance with the Paris Agreement, in 2025, all countries must submit new climate targets for the period after 2030. Norway is working on a new target to be presented to the Storting and be reported to the UN in 2025. Norway supports more ambitious international climate policies, aiming at limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

27. The Government is compelled to point out that there is no decision in Norway to "increase oil and natural gas exploitation"; the forecasted production for the period up to 2030 shows a declining rate, which is expected to continue towards 2040 and beyond. The vast majority of Norwegian oil and gas production is exported to European neighbouring countries. Europe is highly dependent on imports of oil and gas from other regions and is expected to remain so for many years also in scenarios consistent with reaching ambitious climate targets. Norwegian oil and gas contribute to energy security and affordability for Norway's trading partners. Production and transportation of Norwegian oil and gas also has much lower greenhouse gas emissions than alternative sources for the European market. Norway is committed to conducting a responsible, predictable petroleum policy in its encounter with climate change challenges, where also Norway's human rights obligations is an important consideration. The Government will facilitate a continued stable level of activity on the Norwegian continental shelf, supplemented by increased activities in carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, offshore wind, aquaculture, and minerals. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10) para. 174 (submitted in 2021) for additional information.

28. There are continuous efforts in Norway on reducing the emissions from the production of oil and gas. Emissions from the oil and gas production in Norway are declining and are on average already significantly lower compared to most other petroleum producing countries.

The Government will, in close cooperation with the petroleum industry, work to reduce the emissions from the Norwegian continental shelf by 50 per cent by 2030 compared to 2005 levels and to net zero by 2050.

29. The solutions to the world's climate and energy challenges, as set out in the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, are global and must be solved through both global cooperation and domestic measures. Norway will contribute to achieve these goals, including helping the global energy transition and supporting the green transition. This includes committing large resources to technology development for mitigation, including offshore wind, hydrogen produced with zero or low emissions, and carbon capture and storage. More information on these efforts is described in Norway's first Transparency Biennial Report.

Sustainable development

Concluding observations, para 48

30. In Norway, progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is monitored by the Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance. Every year, a progress report is submitted to the Storting in the annual budgetary process. Furthermore, the Government regularly submits white papers to the Storting on the 2030 Agenda and it presents 'Voluntary National Reviews' (VNRs) of the progress to the UN. The latest white paper, *Meld. St. 40 (2020–2021)*, and VNR was completed in 2021 and both are due to be updated in 2025. To ensure an independent review, civil society will be invited to assess the Government's achievement of the SDGs in the upcoming VNR. The assessment will be included unedited and in its entirety.

31. Norway spends about one per cent of its gross national income to development aid each year to combat poverty and promote economic development and welfare in developing countries. Importance is attached on being consistent and predictable. In its efforts to reach all 17 SDGs, Norway is working to further develop national and global partnerships and strengthen cooperation with actors that can make constructive and innovative contributions, by providing financing and other solutions. Norwegian development cooperation is committed to strengthening human rights globally. 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. Norway cooperates with multilateral partners as well as partners from civil society, including national and international organisations. Local ownership, localisation and sustainability are all important dimensions of our development cooperation.

Data collection

Concluding observations, paras 12-13

32. Statistics Norway, the national statistical institute of Norway, does not produce statistics on ethnic background. According to official Norwegian guidelines, information about citizens' ethnicities is not recorded in Norway. Reference is made to Norway's combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports to CERD (CERD/C/NOR/25-27) paras. 4-12 (submitted in 2023) for additional information.

Legal aid

Concluding observations, paras 14-15

33. An independent public committee has reviewed the Legal Aid Act. It submitted its report, NOU 2020: 5, in 2020. The committee's recommendations regarding the financial terms for legal aid (means-testing) have resulted in changes in the legislation on this matter, which will strengthen the right to legal aid. When these changes enter into force, about 33 percent of the population in Norway will be financially eligible for means-tested legal aid. In

the meantime, the legal aid scheme has been strengthened by increasing the personal income and asset limits considerably. The committee's remaining recommendations are still under consideration. The Government aims to present a second proposal of changes in the Legal Aid Act in the spring of 2025.

Part II

A. General provisions of the Covenant

Article 1 Right of peoples to self-determination

34. Reference is made to Norway's common core document from 2024 (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 66-74 for more information specifically, and Norway's report on ILO Convention 169 from 2023 and Norway's combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports to CERD (CERD/C/NOR/25-27) (submitted in 2023) for more general information regarding the Sami people.

35. The Finnmark Act of 2005 initiated a still ongoing process of surveying and recognizing existing rights of use and ownership in Finnmark County, where most of the indigenous Sami people live. This identification process is performed by a public body called the Finnmark Commission. The Commission undertakes studies and makes assessments of ownership and usage rights on a field-by-field basis throughout Finnmark. The Commission has finalised reports on six fields, and it is currently investigating four more fields. In 2021, the findings of the Finnmark Commission concerning ownership to land in the municipality of Karasjok / Kárášjoga gielda in Finnmark County was brought before the courts in accordance with the Finnmark Act. In its Grand Chamber judgment of 31 May 2024 (cf. HR-2024-982-S), the majority of the Supreme Court of Norway, as opposed to the majority of the Finnmark Commission and the Uncultivated Land Tribunal for Finnmark, found that the unsold land in the municipality of Karasjok is not collectively owned by the inhabitants of the municipality. However, the Supreme Court explicitly stated that it has not decided as to whether individuals, village communities, *siidas* or others in Karasjok have acquired ownership rights to areas within the municipality. Finally, The Government has not yet decided how the Sami Rights Committee's proposal for rights surveying south of Finnmark County should be followed up.

Article 2 Realisation of rights, equality and non-discrimination

Realisation of rights

36. Reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) parts II and III.

International economic and technical assistance and cooperation

37. Norway's development policy is anchored in the SDGs, climate goals, and human rights. The main goal is to contribute to social change by combating inequality and poverty and promoting economic development and welfare in developing countries. Development aid and humanitarian efforts are based on human rights and shall contribute to promote participation in society, non-discrimination, and human dignity.

38. As climate change, conflicts, and rising global food and energy prices affect women harder than men, Norway is a driving force for girls' and women's rights in development cooperation, cf. e.g., the Government's action plan for women's rights and gender equality in Norway's foreign and development policy (2023–2030) *A Just World is an Equal World*. Efforts for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the right to decide

over their own bodies, shall be strengthened, and gender-based violence shall be combated. Women must also be given equal opportunities as men to participate in the workforce and have influence on societal and democratic development.

39. Digital inequality must also be reduced. Countries' digital capacities are more important than ever. Norway's leadership in the development and sharing of digital public goods and the promotion of basic digital public infrastructure is part of the effort for a safe, fair, and inclusive digital future for all. Norway also gives priority to closer international health cooperation and strengthened global health preparedness so that the world can prevent, detect early, and respond quickly to new or persistent infection threats and resistance development. Norway contributes to the financing, development, and equitable distribution of vaccines and other health technologies that the market alone does not deliver. Through political leadership, diplomacy, and financial support, Norway will continue to be an active advocate for fair global cooperation on pandemic management and health preparedness.

40. Norway is additionally working to ensure that the countries in need receive necessary and rapid debt relief. The debt situation continues to be serious, especially for the poorest countries. This threatens the fight against extreme poverty. Increased transparency about debt and robust, credible analyses of debt vulnerability are necessary prerequisites for solving debt challenges in a sustainable way. Norway continues to work for responsible borrowing and lending. Norwegian aid is provided through multilateral organisations, Norwegian and other non-governmental organisations, as well as the public and private sectors. Core support to the UN's funds, programs, and specialised agencies, the World Bank, and the regional development banks is particularly important to ensure a rapid, coordinated response in crisis situations.

41. Norwegian development policy and aid have defined four cross-cutting considerations: human rights, women's rights and gender equality, anti-corruption, and climate and environment. Where there is a risk of unintended negative consequences on cross-cutting considerations, it is expected that grant recipients implement measures to mitigate these risks.

Non-discrimination

42. Reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) part III. Norway has robust anti-discrimination legislation protecting individuals against discrimination, with particularly strong protection in employment. The principle of non-discrimination is enshrined in Article 98 of the Constitution, elevating a key human right to a part of the Constitution itself. According to Article 98 "Everyone is equal before the law" and "no human being must be subject to unfair or disproportional differential treatment".

43. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or any combination of these factors. "Ethnicity" includes national origin, descent, skin colour and language. Additionally, harassment that occurs due to any of these conditions is also prohibited, as is sexual harassment. The Act, which aims in particular to improve the position of women and minorities, applies to all sectors of society, including family life and other personal relationships. In order to achieve real equality, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act also allows for positive differential treatment in some cases, both for women and for men. Furthermore, the Working Environment Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of political views, membership of a trade union, and age, as well as discrimination against an employee who works part-time or on a temporary basis.

44. Persons subjected to discrimination may bring their case before the ordinary courts or the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. The Tribunal is a low threshold service, which reviews cases free of charge. With a few exceptions, the Tribunal can make binding decisions and

can order correction, cessation, and other measures that are necessary in order to bring the discriminatory situation to an end. The Tribunal can impose a coercive fine in order to ensure execution of an order. The Tribunal also has the competence to order redress in cases regarding employment and the employer's choice and treatment of self-employed persons and contracted workers. Additionally, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud has a statutory obligation to provide guidance under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act.

45. Although there has been positive development in many areas, many Sami still experience discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. For the first time, the Government launched a dedicated national *Action Plan Against Hate and Discrimination Against the Sami* in January 2025. The Government has collaborated with the *Sámediggi*, (the Sami Parliament) to ensure that Sami people's perspectives and experiences are integrated and addressed in the action plan. The action plan contains 32 measures aimed at preventing and combating harassment and discrimination of the Sami. Among them, is a pilot project on establishing a branch of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) in Northern Norway. The branch will provide guidance and assistance to Sami individuals facing discrimination and contribute to ensuring the development of equitable services for the Sami. Another measure is the adaptation of the "family council model" to better suit Sami families and support the unique needs of Sami children and families. The Government will also enhance the competence of municipal employees on racism and discrimination against Sami people and facilitate a regional gathering for knowledge sharing and competence building. These initiatives will contribute to a better understanding and handling of discrimination against Sami people within the local services. Furthermore, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) have made permanent its North Sami telephone line, ensuring that Sami-speaking users can communicate in their own language when in contact. Additionally, North Sámi will be used as a working language in the local social service NAV Ávjovárri partnership between Kautokeino / Guovdageaidnu and Karasjok / Kárášjohka. Within the police, measures will be implemented to increase knowledge and understanding of Sami culture, history, and rights, and to recruit staff with Sami language and cultural competence.

46. There has been raised concerns about the Norwegian police's creation of an overview of persons from the Roma community, which was done in relation to specific criminal investigations and for crime prevention purposes only. The Norwegian Data Protection Authority has reviewed the case, and has concluded that their investigations did not reveal any processing of personal data in violation of the Police Register Act. They considered it clear that the Act provides a legal basis for the overview and it was particularly emphasised that the starting point had been criminal offenses and concrete investigation complexes.

47. However, it is understood that this matter has been challenging for the Roma community, regardless of the legality assessment. The relevant police districts are working on dialogue and trust-building efforts towards the Roma community. The National Police Directorate has moreover initiated a significant effort to enhance the work of the police in general related to diversity, equality and anti-discrimination. The action plan *Diversity, dialogue and trust (2022–2025)* was created to enhance the police's work in this area.

48. The effects of specific anti-discrimination measures can rarely be analysed isolated from each other, since such measures often interact with each other over time, creating cumulative positive impacts and effect on equality. For an overview of development in equality in Norway, reference is made to the *Report on the Norwegian Government's follow-up of Beijing Declaration and Platform (2020–2024)* section two from 2024, and the report *Voluntary National Review 2021 Norway*.

49. However, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) conducts several research and evaluation projects each year as part of the implementation of

various white papers, action plans and strategies. In recent years, the Directorate has developed an indicator set that covers i.a., gender equality, discrimination and living conditions among vulnerable groups. The statistics provide information on e.g., different groups' experience with discrimination and harassment, participation in education and the labour market, and the population's attitude towards minorities. This information is currently only available in Norwegian on the Directorate's website. See also para. 50 below. The Research Council of Norway has been tasked with assisting the Ministry for Culture and Equality in developing proposals for a cross-sectoral strategy for research and development. The work aims to contribute to a more targeted and comprehensive effort for research and innovation in the fields of equality and anti-discrimination, across societal sectors and grounds of discrimination. The goal is to ensure relevant and up-to-date high-quality knowledge as a basis for policy, legislation, and service development in the coming years.

Article 3 Equality between men and women

50. In December 2024, the Government strengthened and renewed its commitment to gender equality through launching a new strategy, *Equality Between Women and Men 2025-2030*, as well as a white paper, *Meld. St. 7 (2024–2025)*, on sexual harassment. The strategy has six main goals that consolidate the national efforts to address important challenges in the field of gender equality for women and men. The Government's goals are: (1) economic independence and a gender-equal labour market, (2) fewer gender-divided educational choices, (3) a society free from violence, rape, sexual harassment, and online hate, (4) freedom from negative social control and honour-related violence, (5) better health for women and men, and (6) an effective toolkit for gender equality. Sets of indicators have been developed to annually track progress on each of the strategy's six main goals, making it possible to adjust the course if needed. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has been tasked with updating the indicators.

51. The white paper provides the first compilation of knowledge on the extent of sexual harassment across various areas in society, in the workplace, education and school, cultural and leisure activities, voluntary work, sports, and on the internet. It also offers a comprehensive overview of relevant regulations, actors, and tools in the work to prevent sexual harassment. Seven goals with corresponding measures are outlined in the white paper to guide future work to combat sexual harassment; an equal society, good and effective guidance and enforcement in cases of sexual harassment, a safe and decent working life free from sexual harassment, an educational setting free from sexual harassment, culture and leisure activities, sports, and voluntary work free from sexual harassment, a digital life free from sexual harassment and more knowledge and research on sexual harassment.

52. To ensure an effective gender equality policy, it is essential to also have a comprehensive overview of the equality challenges boys and men face throughout their lives. Therefore, the Government appointed a public committee on men's equality in 2022. The committee was tasked with examining the equality challenges that boys and men encounter throughout their lives, which contribute to social exclusion and hinder a gender-equal society. In the committee's report, NOU 2024: 8 *The Next Step for Gender Equality*, from 2024, the committee proposes 35 measures organised under four areas of action: "men as caregivers", "gender differences in the labour market and education", "vulnerability and health" and "a gender equality policy for all". The report has been on a public consultation. The Government has decided to follow up on the committee's report by presenting a white paper to the Storting on the equality of boys and men. The white paper is scheduled to be presented in 2026.

53. Through the Equality Centres, the Government contributes to a nationwide structure for equality work. In 2024, a new equality centre was established in Western Norway. This becomes the fifth centre in Norway dedicated to working with equality issues. With this centre, all regions of Norway are covered. The centres are important partners for the

authorities in several priority areas. One of the centres, *Reform*, has a particular focus on men's issues. All centres are to engage in long-term advocacy and development work for equality. The public, private, and voluntary sectors, as well as the general population, are target groups for this work. The centres should base their activities on the best available knowledge and help to disseminate and ensure that national professional advice is utilized. The centres also have a responsibility to develop an experiential knowledge base and manage expertise on practical equality work. Furthermore, the centres should stay updated on, develop, and disseminate knowledge about all grounds of discrimination. In the 2022, each of the centres received an increase in operational funds equivalent to 1-2 positions. This has contributed to increased activity at the centres. The funding was continued in 2023 and further strengthened by NOK 4 million from 2024 onwards, to establish the above-mentioned new equality centre in Western Norway. The equality centres received a total of NOK 27.5 million in 2024. With this, the Government continued its increased support for the equality centres.

54. To tackle the gender-segregated labour market and improve the gender balance in education, the Government supports several role model projects. For example, the Government funds the project "Boys into Healthcare Professions". The aim of the project is to recruit more boys into the health and care sector, by highlighting role models for boys, providing boys in lower and upper secondary schools with comprehensive and nuanced information about the opportunities in the sector, and helping school staff increase their knowledge of how gender influences educational choices and perceive the initiative as a tool. In 2024, the project was expanded into a regional initiative in the three northernmost counties in Norway. The Government also supports the "Girls and Technology programme". This project aims to increase the proportion of women studying technology subjects at all levels in the educational system. Key activities for the project in 2023 included a nationwide tour for pupils in the 9th and 10th grades, company visits, digital broadcasts, and the "Girls and Technology Days", which are aimed at girls in upper secondary school who are applying for education at university colleges, universities, and vocational schools. "Girls and Technology" physically engages with approximately 10,000 young people annually, and the majority of participants report that they have more knowledge about the opportunities within technological fields after participating.

Employers' duty to take action

Concluding observations, paras 16-17

55. The duty to promote gender equality and to issue a statement ("the activity duty") in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act was strengthened with effect from 1 January 2020. The Act now states explicitly that employers and public authorities, in all their equality efforts, must make active, targeted, and systematic efforts to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. For public authorities countering stereotyping is also explicitly listed in the Act. The public authorities also have a new obligation to issue a statement in accordance with the Act section 24. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10) para 20 (submitted in 2021).

56. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has developed guidance material, indicators, and webinars to help support public authorities at various administrative levels to improve their equality efforts in line with the strengthened requirements for public authorities to promote equality and report. Moreover, the Government has tasked County Governors to help drive the municipalities' active promotion of equality by, for example, helping to make the activity and reporting obligations known. The Directorate has therefore also engaged in close dialogue with County Governors and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) regarding the municipalities' work with equality. Furthermore, County Governors must ensure that equality issues, methods, and goals are known and practised within their own organisation and activities. In

the spring of 2024, the Directorate launched an e-learning course for employees and managers in the public sector on equality, inclusion, and diversity in the services and administration of the public sector. The course was launched at the Government's national equality conference, which focused on equality efforts at the local level.

57. For employers, the duty to issue a statement was also strengthened and made more comprehensive in 2020. All public and private employers with more than 50 employees are now obliged to follow a statutory activities methodology, in accordance with the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act section 26. Furthermore, private employers that ordinarily employ between 20 and 50 persons may be ordered to follow this methodology if requested to do so by one of the social partners. The methodology has also been expanded to include the duty to survey pay differences between women and men and involuntary part-time work. Cases regarding an employer's breach of the duty to issue a statement can be brought before the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. However, the Tribunal does not have the mandate to enforce breaches of the duty to issue a statement of public authorities. The duty to promote gender equality is enforced through the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud's monitoring. Norway's combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports to CERD (CERD/C/NOR/25-27) paras. 84-92 (submitted in 2023)

58. To equip employers in their work with equality and help them conduct surveys in line with the requirements in the Act, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has developed relevant guidance material, survey forms, templates, and webinars. Furthermore, the Directorate has implemented information campaigns to make employers aware of their obligations and inform them about the guidance material that is available.

59. The strengthened activity and reporting duties for employers that came into force in 2020, have yet to be evaluated. However, to know more about which factors that promote or inhibit active equality efforts, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is funding a major multi-year research project which aims to develop new knowledge about employers' and public authorities' activity and reporting duties. Furthermore, The Institute for Social Research (ISF) has looked into the significance of the duties for employers' and public authorities' active gender equality work. The Institute finds a marked increase in the prevalence of terms describing diversity and equality work according to the new requirements between 2019 and 2021, with a doubling of the terms "diversity" and "woman" in the surveyed companies' annual reports.

Parental leave and equal pay

Concluding observations, paras 22-23

60. Reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) para. 198. A more equal distribution of the parental leave period is a means of achieving greater equality in the workplace and at home, both in the short-term and long-term, which can help reduce the pay gap between men and women.

61. In 2021, 96 per cent of all families used their full entitlement to parental leave. Almost all parents in Norway therefore take the full parental leave benefit, which includes fathers being home with their child for at least 15 weeks. Families usually decide for the mother to take the entire shared period of the leave. In surveys, fathers generally respond that they are satisfied with the length of the father's period and do not want a larger part of the shared period. The Government could increase the parental leave period reserved to the father to increase the share, but this would lead to a shorter period available for mothers.

62. Discrimination in pay on the grounds stated in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act section 6 is illegal, cf. section 29. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10), paras. 118-119. Women still earn less than men,

but the pay gap, meaning the difference in women's and men's average monthly salary, has decreased over time, from 14.7 per cent in 2015 to 11.7 per cent in 2024.

63. Over several years, the Ministry of Culture and Equality has initiated multiple research projects to shed light on the persistent gender pay differences. In *Pay Mapping: A Tool for a More Gender-Equal Workplace?*, CORE – Centre for Gender Research analysed equality reports from 75 large Norwegian companies. The analysis showed that all companies in the study maps and reports on pay differences. The companies considered pay mapping a useful tool that could uncover differences in pay they had not been aware of and for which they had implemented concrete measures to correct. At the same time, the report shows that the companies found pay mapping to be extensive and resource intensive. Particularly, assessing jobs of equal value were found to be labour-intensive by many; at the same time, it was also these assessments that provided new insights for several companies. The researchers looked into the possibility of a national overview of the companies' pay mapping. They point to an alternative of establishing a national portal for uploading reports and equality statements.

64. A new report from the Institute for Social Research, *Unequal Pay for Equal Work? Pay Differences Between Women and Men, 2015–2022*, was launched in November 2024. The report shows that a significant portion of the wage gap can be explained by generally higher wages in male-dominated parts of the labour market than in the female-dominated parts of the labour market. Furthermore, the wage gap varies across sectors, industries, education groups, occupations, and labour market regions. The researchers find that women on average have longer education than men, but within fields of study with lower wages. The gap between men and women with equally long education is therefore larger than the gap between all men and women. The explanations for the wage gap can be divided into two: Firstly, more than half of the gap can be explained by unequal distribution of men and women in the labour market and of unequal education, experience, and part-time work. The rest can be explained by different wages for the same observable characteristics. However, unequal pay for equal characteristics is not necessarily discrimination but can also be due to differences along characteristics that are not included in the model. The Government is currently evaluating the results from these reports. The Ministry of Culture and Equality will acquire new knowledge about differences between women and men in income and other economic resources, such as wealth, ownership, and stocks.

B. Individual rights guaranteed by the Covenant

Article 6 Right to work

65. Reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 234, 236 and 241-242 for information on legislation and policies etc. regarding the right to work.

66. Immigrants, young people, long-term unemployed and the disabled are central target groups for Norwegian labour market policy. In October 2023, immigrants constituted 50 per cent of the (open, registered) unemployed, and the share of immigrants in the labour market measures (for unemployed) was 60 per cent. Refugees and their family members between the ages of 18 and 55 are offered the 'Introduction Programme'. The aim of the introduction programme is to give the participants basic knowledge of the Norwegian language and society and to prepare them for employment or further education. In addition to the legally regulated measures for newly arrived immigrants, such as the introduction programme and Norwegian language training, special measures have been developed for including immigrants in general into labour. For instance, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), the Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) and the Labour and Welfare

Administration are working to increase the use of professional and vocational training for adult immigrants. *IMDi* also manage the ‘Job Opportunity Programme’, which is a grant scheme with the aim of helping stay-at-home immigrant women into the labour market. The inclusion of immigrants into the labour market both occurs through the general work-orientated effort from the Labour and Welfare Administration and through the effort of municipalities and civil organisations. Reference is made to Norway’s common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 48-51 for more information.

67. The labour market policy also provides for specific guarantees for vulnerable groups. In July 2023, the Government introduced a new and reinforced “Youth Guarantee”. The Youth Guarantee will ensure that young people aged 16 to 30 receive early intervention and close follow-up for as long as necessary. This will help to reduce passive periods outside work and education. The aim is to get more young people into ordinary work.

68. In 2024, the Government published a white paper to the Storting on active labour market policies, *Meld. St. 33 (2023–2024)*. The white paper supports the right to work by promoting measures that ensure more opportunities in the labour market. Labour market measures are among the most important instruments for getting more people into work. In the white paper, the Government proposes to strengthen and enhance the overall use of labour market measures. In addition, the Government has several proposals to reinforce its efforts for young people, including a pilot project with a work-oriented youth programme. The white paper also emphasises the importance of cooperation between the labour-, health- and education sectors to get more people into work.

69. With effect from 1 January 2024, there has been amendments to the Working Environment Act sections 14-2 and 15-7 on preferential rights and protection against unfair dismissal. If an employee has been dismissed owing to circumstances relating to the undertaking and the employer belongs to a corporate group, the employee also has a preferential right to a new appointment with other undertakings in the group, unless the vacant post is one for which the employee is not qualified. Moreover, if the employer belongs to a corporate group, the dismissal is not objectively justified if there is other suitable work in other undertakings in the group to offer the employee.

Employment, persons with disabilities, universal design

Concluding observations, paras 18-19

70. The Government intends to draft a legislative proposal to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into the Human Rights Act in 2025. Norway is a dualist country, and international obligations have to be transferred into national law. CRPD was ratified by Norway in 2013. Conventions incorporated into the Human Rights Act apply as Norwegian law and take precedence over other legislation in case of conflict.

71. While the National Inclusion Initiative as such was not prolonged by the current Government, corresponding measures and priorities have been continued. Labour market measures aim at contributing to increased participation in employment, reduced unemployment and combating exclusion by helping people with problems on the labour market, to find work and become active. The measures should be customised to the individual’s needs and help to strengthen their chances of getting or keeping a job. The measures provide opportunities for adaptation so that people with disabilities can be in work and education. The ‘Functional assistance in the labour market’ measure is intended to help participants obtain and retain ordinary work and can be given to people with physical disabilities and to blind or severely visually impaired people. People with mobility difficulties due to a disability can be offered financial support for travel to work and education. Furthermore, the National Insurance Act provides benefits for improving the ability to work and are granted to insured persons who, due to illness, injury or defect, have

had a permanent reduction of their ability to work, or have had the choice of occupation or workplace considerably reduced. Benefits are granted in connection with measures that are necessary and appropriate in order to obtain or keep suitable work. Reference is also made to Norway's common core document ((HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 51-52.

72. The requirements for universal design of ICT are stipulated in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act section 18, cf. Regulations on universal design of ICT solutions. With reference to the preparatory work to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, *Prop. 81 L (2016-2017)*, ch. 22.10.7, it was informed that the Ministry of Culture and Equality would initiate assessments on whether businesses should be required to ensure universal design of both physical conditions and ICT in the workplace, only ICT, or only websites as required by the EU directive on web accessibility (Directive (EU) 2016/2102). In 2022, it was decided that the assessments should initially focus on ICT solutions. Following this decision, the Government obtained a legal assessment, in which it was concluded that the national legal requirements for universal design of ICT solutions in the workplace are limited, but that the potential for barriers within ICT were still significant. The Government also obtained a socio-economic analysis that assessed the consequences of imposing further obligations on businesses for universal design of ICT solutions in the workplace. This analysis concluded that an obligation for universal design can be economically beneficial for society. In October 2024, it was announced that the Ministry of Culture and Equality will, jointly with the Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance, review the legal framework to clarify the need for further regulation of universal design of ICT solutions in the workplace.

Employment, qualifications and housing, people with immigration background

Concluding observations, paras 20-21

73. The *Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination on the Grounds of Ethnicity and Religion (2020–2023)* included a total of 50 measures in nine different areas. The Government has collected new knowledge about racism and discrimination that foreign-born adoptees in Norway experience. A forum on anti-Muslim hostility was introduced. The Government has funded three surveys on the population's attitudes to ethnic and religious minorities, in 2012, 2017 and 2022, respectively. These have enabled the Government to follow developments over time, and to develop measures to combat antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred in particular. A new study will be finished in 2027.

Employment, qualifications and housing, people with immigration background

Concluding observations, paras 20-21

74. Building on this plan, the Government launched a renewed action plan in November 2023, *Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination – New Initiatives 2024–2027*, with 50 measures aimed at protecting all groups subjected to racism and discrimination. The plan has a special emphasis on inclusion in the labour market and challenges young people face. The action plan also prioritises initiatives in municipalities and local communities. The measures contained in the action plan will be implemented between 2024 and 2027. In accordance with one of the measures in the action plan, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (*Bufdir*) has prepared an e-learning course for municipalities and municipal employees on equality, diversity, and non-discrimination. The course offers inspiration and helps to ensure compliance with public authorities' duty to work actively on these matters and their reporting obligations, cf. the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. The Government will conduct a mid-term report on the status of the measures and will use this report as a basis for further efforts and discussions with, among others, municipalities, workers' and employers' organisations, and the voluntary sector to ensure the implementation of further measures to combat racism and discrimination.

75. In January 2021, the Introduction Act was replaced by the new Integration Act. One of the objectives of the Integration Act is that more refugees gain formal education through the Introduction Programme (cf. para. 66 above). The target group for this programme under the new act is the same as under the Introduction Act.

76. The Integration Act contains provisions concerning responsibilities of the municipalities and the counties for offering qualification to newly arrived refugees. The act includes so-called “early qualification”, the Introduction Programme and the scheme referred to as “Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies”. The Introduction Programme may last from three months to four years. The duration of the programme will vary depending on the participants’ educational background and competence, and the participants’ individual “programme goal”. Participants in the programme are entitled to an “Introduction Benefit”. For Norwegian language training and social studies, the requirement of having completed a fixed number of hours of training is in the new Integration Act replaced with the requirement of a minimum level of Norwegian language proficiency. The target group is the same as in the Introduction Act, but the age has been raised to 18 years. The same is now the case for the target group for the scheme “Norwegian language training and social studies for asylum seekers in reception centres”.

77. Proposals for changes to the Integration Act were sent for public consultation in the autumn of 2024. The proposals aim, among other things, to increase the use of formal qualifications and vocational training within the Introduction Programme, and follow up on proposals from the Government’s white paper on integration, *Meld. St. 17 (2023–2024)*, presented in March 2024. Approximately 100 responses were received during the consultation. The Government intends to present a legislative proposal in the spring of 2025.

78. Furthermore, the general right to education in Norway has been strengthened with the new Education Act, in force from 1 August 2024, which extends the right to upper secondary education, see more information on this in para. 214 below.

79. Persons with an immigrant background may also be eligible for the “Qualification Programme” (KVP). The Qualification Programme is a programme targeted at persons with significantly reduced earning ability and in need of extra follow-up to be able to get into work. The Qualification Programme is a full-time individually tailored programme consisting of both work-oriented measures combined with a broad range of other activities that facilitate and prepare for the transition to employment. The programme may include activities such as Norwegian language courses, housing follow-up, and individual follow-up and guidance. Participants in the Qualification Programme receive a standardised income support (‘qualification benefit’). The programme can be granted for a period of up to two years, but can be extended after an individual assessment. The Qualification Programme is administered locally by the municipalities.

80. Due to the high number of displaced persons from Ukraine, the Government has implemented temporary amendments to several laws, including the Integration Act. The purpose of the amendments is to ensure that the system is flexible enough to receive and include an extraordinarily high number of refugees. Another purpose of the amendments is to get displaced persons quickly into the labour market. Several measures to increase the employment rate among displaced persons from Ukraine have also been implemented. For example, the Government has established a national system for digital Norwegian language training, which will make the language training more flexible and easier to combine with work.

81. The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (*HK-dir*) is from 2023 responsible for recognition of foreign education and training, and for providing information and advice relating to the recognition of foreign education, training, and vocational qualifications. They provide a range of services related to recognition and information on

foreign education, for instance a scheme for general recognition of foreign higher education that includes verification and is primarily aimed at occupations for which there are no legal qualification requirements. Regarding the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons, or persons in a refugee-like situation, HK-dir is responsible for an interview-based recognition procedure for people with insufficient or unverifiable documentation of their higher education (the ‘UVD procedure’). In Norway, there are 17 different authorities with competence of recognition of professional qualifications, depending of the type of qualification. HK-dir is moreover the assistance centre for the EU Professional Qualifications Directive in Norway and provides information to professionals about the directive, Norwegian legislation, and regulated professions. As of February 1, 2023, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration implemented a policy extending the recognition of Ukrainian driving licenses in Norway from 12 months to the duration of collective protection for Ukrainian refugees, up to three years. Additionally, all driving license categories are now recognised, not just those for passenger cars.

82. The Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) offer services and measures to immigrants who are outside the labour market. The so-called ‘training measure’ is the labour market initiative that immigrants most frequently participate in. This can be explained by the fact that many non-employed immigrants have insufficient or unrecognised education from their home country and may need to enhance their skills to enter the workforce. The Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) is also an important partner for the municipalities in the Introduction Programme (cf. para. 66 above). They can assist with market and inclusion skills and job matching, and will consider participation in other labour market measures for participants in the Introduction Programme. Salary subsidies, job training, mentoring, and training measures are among several market initiatives that can be relevant in this regard.

83. The Norwegian housing laws contain general prohibitions against discrimination, including ethnic and religious discrimination. To further reduce prejudice in renting out dwellings to persons with immigrant background or others who are disadvantaged in the housing market, the Norwegian Tenants Association offers advice, courses and information material to all municipalities to assist them with housing. The Government will also initiate dialogue with actors in the rental market to reduce discrimination and increase knowledge on rights and responsibilities among tenants and landlords.

84. As a part of the renewed *Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination*, cf. para 74, the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) is tasked with ensuring the facilitation of multicultural competence and attitudinal awareness in the interactions between the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), its service users and employers. The Administration has developed guidelines to prevent discrimination in connection with its recruitment-, inclusion-, and mediation efforts. These guidelines address the value of ethnic diversity as a resource. The Administration’s employees are required to be well-versed in the guidance materials and the relevant anti-discrimination legislation. In collaboration with, among others, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), the Administration is to carry out activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the advantages of diverse hiring practices.

85. Everyone should be able to use public services regardless of which language they speak. Therefore, anyone who receives guidance and advice from the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), including social services administered by the municipalities, is entitled to an assessment of their need for a professional interpreter. Good communication and mutual understanding between the service user and the adviser is critical to assure user involvement and that the users have access to good and well-adapted services.

86. Finally, the Government introduced a new *Action Plan Against Antisemitism 2025–2030* in November 2024 and a new *Action Plan Against Anti-Muslim Sentiment 2025–2030* to further combat racism and discrimination against Muslims in December 2024. These action plans are part of the Government’s work to strengthen and renew efforts against

racism, hate speech and discrimination based on ethnicity and religion. The action plan on combatting racism and discrimination against Muslims introduces a number of different measures including obtaining knowledge on Muslims' experiences with discrimination in interactions with local authorities, maintaining a good dialogue between the police and Muslim faith communities, updating a national guide on hate speech, harassment and threats against politicians, obtaining information on the impact of racism, discrimination and hate speech on social participation, facilitating diversity training for managers in health and care services and obtaining knowledge on racism in sport.

Article 7 Right to just and favourable conditions of work

Wages and working conditions

87. Reference is made to previous reports to the Committee, including the fifth periodic report paras. 183-202, and Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10), paras. 116-124, as well as Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) para. 233.

88. The salary level in Norway is comparatively high. According to Statistics Norway, the average monthly wage for all occupations in 2023 was NOK 56,360. The 10 per cent of employees with the lowest salary were paid NOK 29,760 per month in 2023, and NOK 27,920 in 2022. Wage growth from 2022 to 2023 was 5.3 per cent on average, compared with 4.1 per cent the previous year. Monthly earnings include agreed salaries paid, irregular increases in salary, bonuses and commissions. Supplements for overtime work are not included.

89. With effect from 1 January 2024, there has been an amendment to the Working Environment Act section 7-1, the threshold for obligation to establish 'working environment committees' has been lowered, so that undertakings that regularly employ 30 employees shall have a working environment committee on which the employer, the employees and the occupational health service are represented. (Before the amendment, the number was set at 50 employees.)

90. More information on the Labour Inspection Authority may, if of interest, be found in the Norwegian Government's report to the ILO on Convention No. 81 concerning Labour Inspection in Industry and Commerce from 2024.

91. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW, paras. 18, 41-42 and 135-144.

92. The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal decided in the following number of cases regarding sexual harassment in the period 2021-2024: 26 cases in 2021, 23 cases in 2022, 23 in 2023 and 19 cases in 2024. These numbers include both cases regarding violation of the prohibition against sexual harassment (cf. the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act section 13, para. 1), and violations of the employer's obligation to preclude and to prevent sexual harassment (cf. the Act section 13, para. 6).

93. From 2020 to 2024, the Tribunal made an administrative decision in a total of 35 cases for violation of the prohibition against sexual harassment. Most of the cases, 30, concerned sexual harassment in working life. Of the 35 cases in this period, a violation was found in 16. The Tribunal awarded redress in five cases and compensation in two.

94. In the same period, the Tribunal has made an administrative decision in a total of 21 cases regarding violation of the employer's and management's duty in organisations and educational institutions to prevent and seek to prevent sexual harassment. A total of 18 of the cases concerned sexual harassment in working life. A violation was found in four of these. The Tribunal does not have the competence to award redress or compensation in cases regarding the Act's section 13, para. 6 (obligation to preclude and to prevent).

95. Between 2019 and 2024, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud received the following number of requests for guidance regarding sexual harassment: 71 in 2019, 78 in 2020, 94, in 2021, 78 in 2022, and 87 in 2023. The majority of the requests are from individuals in concrete cases.

96. Few cases regarding sexual harassment are brought before the ordinary courts. For information regarding the first case regarding sexual harassment before the Supreme Court, see Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10), paras. 26 and 27.

Occupational safety and health

Concluding observations, paras 24-25

97. Accidents at work can occur in all industries, although, as is noted by the Committee, some industries are more exposed than others because they to a greater extent perform work tasks characterised by higher risk. Building and construction activities, transport and storage, industry and agriculture, forestry and fishing are industries where many occupational accidents occur. Within these industries, there are some work operations that are riskier than others, and there may also be certain groups of workers who are more exposed to risk than others, for example young workers and foreign workers.

98. The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority contributes to prevent work-related accidents through the use of both inspection and guidance to raise awareness and train employers and workers about relevant risk conditions and how these should be handled in order to prevent accidents at work. In recent years, the Labour Inspection Authority has received a budget increase to strengthen its inspection activities. The Authority organise their work in a risk assessment-based manner and it prioritises its efforts against work-related accidents in accident-prone industries i.e., where the Authority's efforts will have the greatest effect. Since 2014, a special collaboration has been carried out between the working environment authorities, including the Labour Inspection Authority, and the construction industry. The collaboration produces an annual report which provides an updated status of trends and knowledge of occupational fatalities. The report aims to identify characteristics and causes of fatal accidents in the Norwegian land-based working life and to propose priorities and recommendations for better prevention of work-related accidents.

99. Based on a methodology that has been designed through statistical cooperation in Eurostat, Statistics Norway initiated a project in 2023 to strengthen the knowledge base related to occupational diseases in Norway. The purpose of the project is to establish new official statistics on occupational diseases in Norway.

100. Through the tripartite cooperation for a more inclusive working life ('IA Agreement'), a national working environment initiative was established in 2019. Labour authorities, including the Labour Inspection Authority, the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the Ocean Industry Authority and the National Institute of Occupational Health (STAMI), develop and organise this strategy initiative which contributes to more enterprises working systematically, knowledge-based and preventively with work environment efforts. The national working environment initiative strengthens and motivates joint efforts, and includes targeted industry and workplace-oriented knowledge, communication and guidance in preventive working environment efforts.

101. The National Occupational Health Surveillance (NOA) is established as a department at the National Institute of Occupational Health (STAMI). The main tasks of NOA include data collection and coordinating, systematising, and disseminating knowledge about working environment factors, occupational safety and health outcomes – to the public, the Storting and the Government. Surveillance activity involves data on labour force demographics, the occurrence and distribution of health hazards in Norwegian workplaces, work-related health outcomes including injuries, and activities aimed at modifying or elimination of risks.

102. An *occupational death* is defined as a death caused by a workplace accident, where the injured person dies within one year after the accident. A *workplace accident* is defined as a sudden or unexpected external strain or burden that someone has been exposed to at work. *Work-related fatalities* resulting from violent acts are also included in the statistics. The Labour Inspection Authority collects and produces statistical data over occupational deaths that have occurred within land-based activity in Norway. Occupational deaths that occur offshore, at sea or as part of aviation activities are not, however, included in these statistics. Occupational deaths that occur in connection with military activities are included, with the exception of deaths in combat.

103. During the period 2019–2023, the Labour Inspection Authority registered a total of 141 cases of occupational deaths in connection with land-based activity. There were fewer occupational deaths in 2023 compared to recent years with 26 registered deaths in 2023 compared to 29 in 2019. Although the variations are small, the Labour Inspection Authority observe a slight downward trend. The two industries with most occupational deaths were construction and transportation and storage.

104. The table below shows the number of occupational deaths per year and total (2019–2023), organised by main activity area.

Main activity area	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	5	6	5	6	3	25
Mining and quarrying	1	0	0	1	1	3
Manufacturing	3	2	6	1	3	15
Water supply, sewerage and waste	2	0	0	1	0	3
Construction	9	8	9	8	6	40
Wholesale and retail trade: repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1	0	0	0	3	4
Transportation and storage	5	7	7	7	6	32
Accommodation and food service activities	0	1	1	0	1	3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	0	0	0	0	1	1
Administrative and support service activities	2	3	2	2	1	10
Public administration and defence	1	0	1	0	0	2
Education	0	0	0	0	1	1
Human health and social work activities	0	1	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	29	28	31	27	26	141

Article 8 Right to form and join trade unions

105. The Norwegian Government reports to the ILO on the implementation of ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and ILO Convention No. 98 concerning the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, and reference is made to these reports (submitted in 2024).

Article 9 Right to social security

Social security coverage

106. Reference is made to Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) para. 26 and paras. 243–245 for information concerning Norway's National Insurance Scheme. Reference is also made to Norway's report from June 2024 on the application of ILO Conventions Nos 12, 42, 102, 128, 130, 168, 183 & the European Code of Social Security part I and the brochure *The Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme 2025*, sections 1 and 2, available in English at the Government website regjeringen.no.

107. The legal framework for public health services in Norway is designed to ensure that everyone in Norway has equal and professionally adequate health services, regardless of gender, age, type of illness, place of residence or income. Norwegian residents contribute through co-payments for certain services, but once the annual cost threshold is met, further co-payments are waived under the 'free card' (*frikort*) system, ensuring equitable access to necessary health care. The fee rates are adjusted annually.

108. Reference is made to Norway's fourth periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) paras. 214-221 regarding child maintenance payments. Reference is additionally made to the periodic report paras. 333-339 regarding social security and child care services. Reference is furthermore made to the *The Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme 2025* section 10.3 regarding cash benefits in the case of maternity and adoption. As of January 1, 2025, the child benefit rate is NOK 1,766 for all children under 18 years of age. In addition, a change has been made from July 1, 2024, so that parental benefits with an 80 percent pay out have increased from 59 weeks to 61 weeks and one day.

109. Reference is made to *The Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme 2025* section 4 regarding old-age pension and Norway's latest report on the implementation of ILO Conventions Nos 12, 42, 102, 128, 130, 168, 183 & the European Code of Social Security part V regarding old-age benefit. By an Act of 5 June 2009 (in force from 2011), a new, general old-age pension system was introduced, allowing flexible drawing of old-age pensions for persons aged 62 to 75. According to old provisions, old-age pension consists of a basic pension, a supplementary pension and/or a special supplement. According to the new provisions, old-age pension consists of an income-based pension, calculated on the basis of previous income. A guaranteed pension will be granted to persons who have earned no, or only a small, income-based pension. The current minimum pension according to old rules is NOK 446,716 a year and the current guaranteed pension according to new rules is NOK 432,452 for a household with two pensioners who each have resided in Norway for at least 40 years between the ages of 16 and 66.

110. Most benefits from the National Insurance Scheme are determined in relation to a basic amount. This amount is adjusted by the Storting at the latest by 1 May each year in accordance with changes in the general income level. The basic amount as of 1 May 2024 is NOK 124,028. These annual adjustments result in increases in the pension amounts received by the pensioners, including those who receive the minimum pension.

111. The OECD draws the poverty line at households with a disposable income of less than 50 per cent of the median disposable income per household. Within the EU, people who fall below 60 per cent of the median income are said to be at risk of poverty. In 2022, the median income in Norway was NOK 590,400 per household, after tax. 50 per cent of this is NOK 295,200, and 60 per cent is NOK 354,240. As mentioned above, a household with two pensioners will receive a minimum pension of NOK 446,716 or a guaranteed pension of 432,452 per year, from which no deductions for tax or social security contributions will be made. The Government thus concludes that the Norwegian minimum pensions are sufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living for the recipients and their families.

112. Women who do not qualify for parental benefits are entitled to a lump sum maternity grant, which as of 2024 is NOK 92,648. The size of the lump sum grant is fixed by the Storting. The grant is not subject to tax. In the case of multiple births or adoptions, the grant is payable for each child. Women who are entitled to a maternity grant from the State Educational Loan Fund will receive this in addition to the lump sum grant.

113. Child benefit is paid for all children under the age of 18 years who live in Norway. Child benefit is granted as a fixed sum. As of January 2024, the monthly amount is NOK 1,766 per child aged 0-5 (or a total of NOK 21,192 per year) and NOK 1,510 per child aged

6-17 (or a total of NOK 18,120 per year). Extended child benefit and supplements may be paid to single parents.

114. The other benefits from the National Insurance Scheme e.g., unemployment benefits and sickness benefit, are based on previous earnings.

115. The provisions of the National Insurance Act are gender neutral, and only make reference to “members” of the scheme. Thus, the pensionable age and the requirements for qualifying periods, etc., are the same for men and women. The pension amounts are identical for persons with identical pension earning profiles, irrespective of gender.

Social security assistance and programmes

116. According to the Act on social services in the labour and welfare administration (Social Services Act), persons who are not able to support themselves by working or by other means are entitled to financial social assistance. The local labour and welfare administration at municipal level is responsible for providing financial social assistance. The Social Services Act contains no fixed amounts concerning the level of financial assistance provided, but every person must be secured an adequate living. The benefit amount is determined on the basis of an assessment of the needs of each individual applicant. Financial social assistance is the bottom financial safety net in the social security schemes, and is a subsidiary benefit for the individual recipient.

117. Since 2001, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion has issued guidelines with recommended rates of financial social assistance. The governmental guidelines include everyday living expenses. Housing expenses, electricity and heating costs and other special expenses are not included in the recommended rates, and are covered separately. The rates are adjusted every year according to the consumer price index. In order to improve the economic situation and living conditions for those receiving social assistance benefits, the recommended rates for financial social assistance were increased by 10 per cent from 1 July 2023. On behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, the Consumption Research Norway (SIFO) has updated the scientific basis for daily living expenses that are included in the governmental guidelines. SIFO recommends that all rates should be increased, especially those for the oldest children. The report from SIFO is being assessed by the Ministry in a wider context, including how the level of the rates can affect the transition to work, and the relationship to other benefits.

118. Child benefit is excluded from the means-tested assessment of financial social assistance to families with children, following an amendment in 2022 to the Social Services Act section 18.

119. Children’s special needs and interest is to be taken into consideration in the calculation of financial social assistance to families with children. Children must be ensured a safe upbringing and be able to participate in normal school and leisure activities. The Directorate of Labour and Welfare has issued a guide to all employees in the Labour and Welfare Administration, *The best interests of the child*. The aim of the guide is to build competence and ensure that children's interests and rights are included in all assessments which directly or indirectly have an impact on children.

120. Moreover, a number of voluntary organisations, groups and associations are important arenas for participation, influence and social cohesion. Some organisations offer assistance to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who are not able to cover their basic needs.

121. For information regarding labour immigrants, reference is made to Norway’s common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 221 og 233-235.

122. The provisions concerning services and measures in Social Services Act apply to everyone staying in Norway. Under the Act, the local authorities are responsible for offering social protection to any person present in the municipality. Non-nationals have the same rights as nationals, with some exceptions. According to the Regulation of 16 December 2011, issued pursuant to section 2 of the Act, a distinction is made between non-nationals who have legal and habitual residence in Norway, non-nationals who are staying lawfully in the country, and persons staying on the territory unlawfully. As a main rule, EEA citizens have the same right to social assistance as Norwegian citizens. Other non-nationals who are visiting the country for a limited period are eligible for emergency social assistance until they are able to leave the country. Persons staying unlawfully are not entitled to economic social assistance to continue their stay, but are eligible for emergency social assistance for a short period until they can leave the country, unless they have a right to stay in a reception centre. Any person present in the country (lawfully or unlawfully) is to be provided with information, advice and guidance that can help to resolve or prevent social problems.

123. Persons staying in Norway who are not covered by the National Insurance Scheme or corresponding reciprocal agreement with another state, must pay for the medical treatment they receive. This also includes undocumented migrants. It is, however, not permitted to refuse to give emergency health care to a person on grounds that the person is unable to pay.

Concluding observations, paras 26-27

124. In 2024, the Storting agreed on a pension settlement as a follow-up to the pension reform from 2011. Important elements in the settlement are:

- From the 1964 cohort and onwards, age limits in the pension system will be increased in line with life expectancy.
- The unconditional retirement age for the National Insurance Scheme's old-age pension, currently at 67 years, will be referred to as the 'standard pensionable age' (SPA).
- All age limits in the pension system will be adjusted in line with the adjustment of the SPA.
- The upper age limit for other income security schemes in the National Insurance Scheme system (including disability pensions) will also increase in line with the SPA.
- The minimum pension level will follow the general economic development, by adjusting minimum levels at the standard retirement age with the basic amount (wage indexation).
- People on disability benefits will earn pension rights until the age of 65 under the new accrual model, providing them with a pension level comparable to individuals who retire at the current average retirement age.

125. These adjustments will lead to higher income security levels for the elderly population.

126. With the current pension rules, people who receive disability benefits are transferred to old age pension at a fixed age, that is 67 years. Disabled persons in younger cohorts will face higher annuity divisors, resulting in lower replacement rates compared to older cohorts. This issue is partly solved with an increasing SPA – the pension levels to disabled persons in younger cohorts will now be increasing due to higher transfer age and correspondingly lower annuity divisors.

127. Under current assumptions about the future average retirement age, old-age pensions to disabled persons will follow the old-age pension levels of the working population. With the pension settlement, there is an agreement that broad evaluations of the pension system should be carried out every 10 years. This also includes an evaluation of the pension level to former disability benefit recipients compared to other old age pensioners.

Article 10 Right of families, mothers, children and young people to protection and assistance

128. It follows from the Marriage Act that marriage should be entered into voluntarily and with the consent of both parties. To prevent child marriages, it is prohibited to enter into marriage with someone under the age of 18 in Norway. To further combat child marriages, the Government proposed that marriages entered into with a person under the age of 18 abroad should not be recognised in Norway, unless there are strong reasons to do so. The proposal was adopted by the Storting and entered into force on 1 January 2025.

129. Marriage between parties who are related in a direct ascending or descending line or between siblings, is prohibited according to Norwegian law. The Government furthermore proposed a ban on entering into marriage between other close relatives, i.e., that it would be prohibited to enter into marriage with, for example, an uncle or aunt, and a cousin. The aim is to avoid health issues in children, and it is also considered that a ban can have an effect with regards to counteract forced marriages. It was also proposed that marriages with close relatives entered into abroad should not be recognised in Norway, unless there are strong reasons to do so. This proposal was also adopted by the Storting, and entered into force on 1 January 2025.

130. Mothers in Norway are entitled to leave with full pay after childbirth through the parental benefit scheme. The family receives a total of 49 weeks of paid leave with 100 per cent wage compensation. This includes three weeks for the mother before the due date. If the mother has a type of job that could pose a risk to her or the foetus, she is also entitled to paid leave with full pay during pregnancy through maternity benefits.

Violence against children and domestic violence

131. An escalation plan to combat and prevent violence against children and domestic violence were launched by the Government in a proposition in December 2023 and adopted by the Storting in May 2024. The escalation plan will help meet the obligations in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention), which was ratified by Norway in 2017. The escalation plan is developed between nine ministries and contains 122 measures. The plan will contribute to more targeted prevention, better help and protection of victims and more effective prosecution and treatment of perpetrators. This will be achieved through a more holistic and coordinated policy. The escalation plan contains a separate section on violence and abuse in Sami communities. This part of the plan has been developed in close collaboration with the *Sámediggi*. The *Sámediggi* has also prepared a separate action plan against violence in Sami communities for the period 2023 to 2025.

132. With funds from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Regional Resource Centre on Violence, Traumatic Stress, and Suicide Prevention (RVTS) Region North has established a forum for the development of efforts to combat violence and abuse in Sami communities and the exchange of experience and expertise between participants. The participants in the forum come from both the public and the voluntary sectors.

133. The ‘State Children Houses’ (*Statens barnehus*) is a central actor in ensuring that children’s rights are safeguarded, and that help given to children subjected to violence and abuse, or to children who witness violence, is well co-ordinated. To help ensure that Sami children are provided services that are adapted to their own language and culture, a separate children’s house is being established in Finnmark County.

134. The police have a number of protection measures at their disposal, including restraining orders, so-called reverse violence alarms, mobile violence alarms, and “address blocking”. In 2023, amendments regarding the reverse violence alarm were made to the Criminal Procedure Act, the Penal Code, and the Execution of Sentences Act. The aim is to

improve compliance with restraining orders and visitation bans. The amendments facilitate the increased use of electronic control, known as the reverse violence alarm, and are intended to strengthen the protection of individuals at risk of violence, threats, and other forms of unwanted contact. The new regulations allow the prosecution authority to impose electronic control of a visitation ban where it is an appropriate and proportionate means.

135. The Government has established a permanent National Intimate Partner Homicide Commission, which shall continuously review all intimate partner homicide cases. The purpose of the Commission is to reduce the occurrence of cases of serious violence in close relationships, uncover system failures, learn from mistakes, and further develop efforts to prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicide. The Commission's secretariat is at the Norwegian Civil Affairs Authority. Annual funding of NOK 10 million has been allocated for the Commission's work.

136. In 2025, an 'investigation system' has been established at the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision for cases concerning homicide, and serious cases of violence, abuse and neglect against children. The main purpose is to identify shortcomings in the system, contribute to learning, strengthen preventive work, and improve collaboration across services. NOK 10 million has been allocated to this task in 2025.

Trafficking

137. Norway is a destination country for trafficking in human beings. Nearly all victims are foreign citizens, often being exploited by perpetrators originating from the same countries. Some of these traffickers are based in Norway, and recruit victims from their home country. Moreover, purchasing sexual services is criminalised in Norway, and has contributed to a reduced level of prostitution. The police have specialised staff to investigate trafficking, and there is ongoing cooperation between the police, labour inspection authorities and other authorities in tackling exploitative practices in workplaces.

138. In June 2024, the Government decided to develop a national strategy against trafficking, in order to strengthen efforts to support victims, to prevent trafficking, and to improve our law enforcement response. Work on the strategy is ongoing. Broad consultation meetings with civil society stakeholders have been held.

Negative social control

139. The action plan *Freedom from negative social control and honour-based violence (2021–2024)* was launched by the Government in 2021. It contains 33 measures to protect newly arrived refugees, strengthen competence in support services, strengthen legal protection, preventing involuntary stays abroad and to strengthen international cooperation. It is part of Norway's implementation of the Istanbul Convention. It is also seen in the context of the *Escalation Plan Against Violence and Abuse (2017–2021)* and action plans *Freedom from Violence (2021–2024)* and *Safety, diversity and openness – The Norwegian Government's Action Plan Against Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Gender Characteristics (2021–2024)*.

140. The Government is in the process of drawing up a new action plan against negative social control and honour-based violence that will be launched in 2025. It will be seen in the context of the aforementioned escalation plan to combat and prevent violence against children and domestic violence (2024–2028). It will contain measures on legal protection, prevention, competence in support services, involuntary stays abroad and negative social control on digital platforms.

Sexual offences

141. Offences against sexual self-determination are broadly regulated in the Penal Code. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10)

paras. 74-76 in this regard. Obtaining sexual intercourse or similar sexual activities with a person who has not consented thereto is punishable, even if the conditions in the provision in the Penal Code (cf. section 291) on rape are not met. Nonetheless, in 2021, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security commissioned the Criminal Law Council (*Straffelovrådet*) to conduct a comprehensive review of the Penal Code's chapter on sexual offences, and to propose a regulation that safeguards the individual's right to sexual self-determination and other fundamental requirements to the legislation in the field of criminal law. In its report from 2022, the Council recommended several changes. The Council proposed i.a., a new provision that includes the actions currently covered by section 291 in the Penal Code, as well as situations where someone engages in sexual intercourse or similar sexual activities with a person who does not want to, and who expresses this in words or actions. The report was sent on public consultation in 2023 and the Government is currently considering the proposed changes, in light of the consultation submissions received.

142. A public committee was appointed by the Government in February 2023 with a mandate to investigate issues related to the prevention of rape, support services for rape victims, and the prosecution of rape cases. The committee submitted its report NOU 2024: 4 to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in March 2024. The committee's investigation concludes that rape is an unsolved societal problem and that the authorities have not succeeded in preventing or combating rape in Norway. Among other things, the committee found that too little is done to prevent rape, that there is too much variation in health services for rape victims, and that the investigation of rape cases is not sufficiently prioritised by the police and prosecution authorities. The committee's recommendations are aimed at strengthening the prioritisation at the authority level and in the service apparatus. The committee's report was sent for public consultation in 2024. The report is now being considered by the Ministry.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Concluding observations, paras 28-29

143. Reference is made to Norway's follow-up report to the Committee from 2022 (E/C.12/NOR/FCO/6) regarding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 15 to 18.

144. All unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors need a level of care and accommodation adapted to their special needs. Norway accordingly has an age-adjusted reception system. In our understanding, this does not involve discrimination against the 15–18-year age group, as long as the care for this group is professionally sound and in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors between the ages of 15 and 18 has been strengthened in recent years. Their situation in reception centres is regulated by law and more detailed rules are given about the content of the responsibility for care and the follow-up of the child, as well as requirements for sufficient formal expertise. A number of measures have been put in place to improve the situation for minors in asylum reception centres, including increased staffing and strengthened expertise on children. A separate and independent supervision of care mechanism for this group was also established in 2022, with the County Governor of Østfold, Buskerud, Oslo og Akershus. This Country Governor is responsible for supervision of care at reception centres with unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors throughout the country.

145. The reception centres have a duty to ensure that the minors living there receive necessary services, including health care and child welfare services. The Health and Care Services Act states that municipalities must ensure access to and provide necessary care, including mental health care, for all those residing within the municipality. This includes minors in reception centres. In 2020, the Act was revised to further specify the municipalities' responsibility to ensure access to psychologists contracted by the municipality.

Children in foster care

Concluding observations, paras 30-31

146. Norway has continued to make legislative and systemic amendments in the child welfare services sector, to strengthen the quality of Norwegian child welfare services, strengthen legal protections for children and families, and to ensure the best interests of the child. The new Child Welfare Act entered into force on January 1, 2023. The law emphasises that a care order to place a child in alternative care is only viable as a measure of last resort. A care order can only be issued when it is considered necessary, and voluntary assistance measures have not succeeded. A care order can only be issued if there are serious deficiencies in the everyday care, if the child is mistreated or subjected to other serious harm such as violence, abuse or neglect at home. It is also a requirement that the care order is necessary due to the child's situation and in the child's best interest. The principle of least intervention is thus overarching in assessing child welfare measures according to the law.

147. The law also states that children's cultural, linguistic, and religious background must be a consideration within all aspects of the work of the child welfare service. This principle has also been highlighted in the new Child Welfare Act as an overarching principle. In the process of finding a suitable foster home for a child of minority background, the law states that the child welfare service must attempt to find a foster home that can maintain the child's connection to their cultural, linguistic, and religious background.

148. The Government presented a white paper *Meld. St. 29 (2023–2024)* on foster care to the Storting in June 2024. One of the main proposals of the white paper is to strengthen the municipalities in their task of providing support and supervision to foster homes. Among the range of other measures proposed in the white paper, the Government signals a commitment to strengthen the recruitment of foster parents with minority backgrounds. In the event that foster parents' backgrounds do not mirror that of the child, other measures must be taken to ensure that the child's connection to their cultural, linguistic and religious background can be maintained. In the white paper, the Government also proposes to develop specific schemes for the training, supervision, and follow-up of foster parents who provide care for children of a different cultural, linguistic and/or religious background. The white paper also signals the Government's intention to develop specific support schemes for parents whose children are in foster care.

149. The child welfare reform of 2022 transferred some of the child welfare tasks from the state to the municipalities, giving the municipalities a more comprehensive responsibility for child welfare services locally. The reform included increased financial responsibility for municipalities, for which they are compensated within the general municipal framework grant. This is meant to incentivise municipalities to focus on preventive measures and early intervention. The aim of the reform is to strengthen the overall child welfare system by prioritising the protection and well-being of children and vulnerable families at an early stage.

150. Additionally, the framing of contact arrangements between parents and children in care has undergone revisions, following the rulings from European Court of Human Rights and the Norwegian Supreme Court on how these arrangements have been practised in certain cases. It has been clarified in the Child Welfare Act that the level of contact must be assessed concretely in each individual case. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has also issued new guidelines for determining visitation in cases of care orders and is working on guidelines to improve the quality of contact sessions. There has been an increase in the level of contact between children and parents after the judgements from the European Court of Human Rights. It is however vital that the level of contact is in the best interests of the child and does not expose children to undue hardship.

151. Pursuant to section 3-9a of the Health and Care Services Act, municipalities are required to ensure that children placed outside their homes under the Child Welfare Act have access to the necessary health and care services. A 'structured procedure' between the child

welfare and health sectors has been developed to ensure that children in the child welfare system receive the necessary healthcare and the appropriate measures from child welfare services. While it is voluntary for the municipalities to initiate the procedure, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families (Bufdir), and the Directorate of Health have been tasked with implementing and expanding the use of the procedure. The procedure includes assessment and investigation of mental, somatic, dental, and sexual health, as well as substance abuse issues. The procedure consists of several steps: 1) Assessment and initiation: The child welfare service assesses the child's needs and initiates the procedure. 2) Collaboration: Cooperation between child welfare services and health services to ensure comprehensive follow-up. 3) Assessment and investigation: Conducted by health services to identify the child's health needs. 4) Status Meeting: Evaluation of the child's situation and planning of further measures. 5) Conclusion: The procedure concludes when the goals are achieved but can be reactivated if needed.

152. While the structured procedure can be initiated for all children who come into contact with child welfare services, there has also been developed an interdisciplinary health screening specifically aimed at children who are to be placed outside the home. The Government aims to further develop measures for screening children's health and other needs and to ensure that children in care have access to the best available health and other welfare services. In 2024, the Government published a new cross-sectoral strategy, *Our Common Responsibility*, for institutional child welfare. The strategy signalled the Government's ambition to ensure that all child welfare institutions are connected to an established team of health professionals. The team will both arrange for the necessary healthcare and supervise employees in matters of health. A role has already been established for a child welfare officer in mental health services for children and adolescents to simplify the collaboration.

153. The Child Welfare Act and its regulations contain requirements for the regular supervision and oversight of the care provided to children in foster homes and child welfare institutions. For children in foster homes, the responsible municipality is required to monitor the child's situation regularly until the child reaches the age of 18, to ensure that the child receives proper care in the foster home and that the conditions for the placement are being followed up. The municipality must ensure that those who carry out the supervision receive the necessary training and guidance. The supervision must take place on-site, as often as necessary, and at least four times a year. Additionally, the county governors have a general responsibility to supervise that the municipalities fulfil their statutory duties.

154. The County Governors are responsible for the supervision and oversight of the care provided to children living in child welfare institutions. The regulations state that purpose of supervision is to ensure that the institution provides each child with proper care and treatment, and that the County Governor should pay attention to all matters that are important for the children's development, well-being, welfare, and legal security. As part of the supervision, the County Governor must ensure: a) That there is a valid ruling for the placement, b) that the institution complies with the conditions in the ruling, c) that there are individual plans for each child, d) that the institution safeguards each child's rights under the Child Welfare Act and its regulations, e) that the institution takes into account each child's ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious background in accordance with the purpose of the placement, and f) that the institution follows up on the special right of Sami children to maintain their linguistic and cultural background.

155. The County Governor must continuously assess the need for supervision of each institution based on risk assessments. The County Governor can examine all aspects that are important for the institution to provide services and measures that are proper and in the best interest of each child. It is stated in the regulations that supervision must take place on-site as often as necessary, and at least twice a year. Institutions that receive children based on the child's own behaviour must be supervised on-site at least four times a year. The County

Governor prepares an annual report that includes an overview of the number of on-site supervisions carried out and an overview of supervision conversations with children.

156. An additional level of supervision and oversight is provided by the Board of Health Supervision. The Board selects topics for nationwide supervision that complement the local supervision carried out by the County Governors. The Board has published reports based on nationwide supervision on the municipalities' work following up foster homes in 2024, and on child welfare service's work with investigations in 2022. The Board also prepares guidelines and provides training to the County Governors to ensure that the supervisions are conducted in accordance with the law and that similar cases are treated consistently. They also have the authority to overturn decisions made by the County Governors in principle-based appeal cases.

Article 11 Right to an adequate standard of living

Agriculture and food production

157. An annual agricultural agreement is negotiated between the two farmers' organisations and the Government, and this agreement sets key parameters and determines the product prices the farmers receive, the size of the budget transfers to the agricultural sector, and how these funds are distributed. The annual agreement is key to achieve agriculture throughout the country, which is a main policy objective.

158. An emergency storage for grains will be established, in order to ensure food security in an emergency situation. By 2029, the emergency storage will correspond to a three months' consumption of grains.

159. Agri-environmental measures have been a priority, both regulatory and economic measures. Agri-environmental measures are structured under the 'National Agri-environmental Programme' (NAP), which provides a central framework and national goals and includes key grant schemes for the whole country. Measures are in place to make sure that arable cropping can be environmentally sustainable and that soil health is ensured. Open pasture grazing is a priority.

160. Border protection through custom duties is one of the most important measures in Norwegian agricultural policy, in order to maintain national food production.

Poverty

Concluding observations, paras 32-33

161. Lack of regular employment is the main cause of poverty in Norway. Children of immigrant parents, children with parents with low labour market participation, and children in single-parent families are particularly at risk. The increase in the number of children in persistently low-income households has been particularly high among families with an immigrant background. Many have come to Norway as refugees. This group faces barriers to the labour market, by lacking formal qualifications or necessary language skills.

162. The main strategy to combat poverty is to increase the participation in the labour market. This also applies to child poverty. The Government presented in September 2024 a white paper *Meld. St. 33 (2023–2024)* to the Storting on active labour market policies and strengthened overall labour market measures. The 'Youth Guarantee' is introduced, cf. para. 67 above. The Introduction Programme for newly arrived immigrants has been made more work-oriented. The Government has invested further in a targeted job-scheme ('The Job Opportunity') so that more immigrant women can gain qualifications and enter the labour market.

163. In October 2023, the Government received a report from an appointed expert group on children living in poor families, with recommendations on how to improve the living

conditions of children growing up in poverty and prevent poverty from being passed down to future generations. The report highlights the importance of universal public welfare services and child benefits.

164. In recent years, the Government has implemented several measures to improve conditions for low-income families, in line with the report's recommendations. Child benefits have been increased significantly in recent years. The extended child benefit for single parents is increased separately. According to an amendment to the Social Services Act in force from 2022, child benefit is since 2022 excluded from the means-tested assessment of financial social assistance to families with children, see also para. 118 above. After-school programmes and kindergartens have also become more affordable which helps to ensure participation for children from low-income families. A strategy with measures for children growing up in low-income families (2020–2023), *Equal Opportunities*, has been prolonged for 2024. An action plan for equal opportunities to participate in cultural, sports and outdoor activities (2024–2026), *Everyone Included*, was launched by the Government in spring 2024. The national grant scheme for including children and youth in leisure and holiday activities has been strengthened. Furthermore, the Government is preparing a white paper to the Storting on social mobility and social equality in spring 2025.

165. The share of children living in low-income families has in recent years decreased somewhat. The decline may be partly explained by the increase in child benefit for the youngest children, and lower immigration to Norway in the period up to 2020.

Housing

Concluding observations, paras 34-35

166. In March 2024 the Government presented a white paper on housing that outlines the main objectives for the Norwegian housing policy going forward, *Meld. St. 13 (2023–2024)*. The white paper replaces the previous national strategy for housing and support services. Among the range of measures proposed in the white paper, the Government signals to strengthen the efforts to enable persons with disabilities to be able to purchase suitable homes, the Government promote measures that advocate for a more sustainable municipal housing sector, strengthened efforts for persons who can't obtain a home and reinforced efforts on the rental market.

167. With effect from 1 July 2023, the Social Housing Act defines the municipalities responsibility for the rights and protection of suitable housing for all citizens. The purpose of the Act is to prevent social housing challenges and to help ensure that disadvantaged and marginalized people on the housing market receive assistance to obtain and retain suitable housing.

168. The municipalities have approximately 110,000 rental homes including care homes at their disposal. In 2022, 22,150 households were allocated municipal housing, while 3,666 households were on a waiting list. Half of the municipalities state that they have too few suitable municipal homes for their residents. The challenges are greatest in the smallest municipalities and in the districts. The municipalities report that settlement of refugees may have possible displacement effects for other target groups. There is need for more suitable municipal housing for the most disadvantaged, persons with disabilities and large households with children.

169. The state support municipalities in the provision of housing for disadvantaged and marginalised persons through the Norwegian State Housing Bank. The State Housing Bank provides loans for rental housing to private developers or municipalities that are going to build or buy housing for rental. In 2023, the State Housing Bank pledged loan for rental housing to 601 homes.

170. Municipalities can receive loan funding for private rental properties with a municipal right of disposal. The municipality has the right of disposal for all the dwellings in the project but only a percentage of them (up to 40 per cent) is earmarked for disadvantaged people in the housing market. In 2023, 302 out of 601 homes financed by loans to rental accommodation were allocated through municipal right of disposal.

171. In 2023, all municipalities got the opportunity to use 'Kobo', a new system for applying, assigning and administrating municipal social housing. More than 100 municipalities have signed an agreement to use Kobo. In 2024, the Kobo project entered a phase of management and further development with a focus of better functionality and to get more municipalities to use the system. The Government will offer digital support for the management of municipal social housing for all municipalities.

172. The majority of persons with developmental disabilities reside in municipal rental housing. They often reside in shared housing where their home is connected to a personal care base. Among adults with disabilities, only 25 per cent own their own residence. 20 per cent live in the parental home several years after they have turned 18 years. 80 per cent of families of persons with developmental disabilities over 30 years old state that they wish for an opportunity for the to move out as quick as possible. Many wish to purchase a home but have restricted options when it comes to types of homes and who they will live with.

173. The State Housing Bank provides loans to housing quality. The loan contributes to develop housing qualities that improves sustainability and accessibility. The loan is given to projects that entail more comprehensive accessibility and sustainability than what the Planning and Building Act and Regulations on technical requirements for construction works require. In 2023, the State Housing Bank contributed to building and upgrading 1,198 homes with high quality requirements of accessibility.

174. The start-up loan can be used for improvement of existing housing. It is used by, for example families who have children with disabilities. In some cases, the start-up loan is combined with purchase of housing. With start-up loan, households can adapt the home or move to a more suitable home. In 2023, seven per cent of granted start-up loans went to this type of home improvement.

175. Around one million people rent their home in Norway. Recent general housing price increases, interest rate increases, lower housing construction and continued high settlement of refugees has contributed to increasing demand for rental housing. The share of renters is higher among households with low income. 52 per cent of the households in the lowest quartile of income rent their residence. Increased interest rates and housing costs affect everyone, however, single parents, families with children, low-income households, and disadvantaged and marginalised people are more vulnerable for the economic burden this entails. This further entails a risk of displacing the disadvantaged on the rental market.

176. In the white paper for housing, *Meld. St. 13 (2023-2024)*, the Government presents the rental market as one of four main priorities in the housing policies going forward. The white paper supports better conditions on the rental market by promoting measures that ensure more available and affordable rental housing. The white paper's main objectives for the rental market are safe tenancies, sufficient supply of rental housing, solid knowledge on the rental market and a sustainable municipal rental sector.

177. The housing allowance system is a government-financed support scheme for partial coverage of housing expenses for households with low income and high housing expenses. The housing allowance scheme was strengthened in 2023 by simplifying requirements. 152 718 households received housing allowance one or more times in 2023. The number of households receiving housing allowance increased by 15,000 from 2022 to 2023.

178. Start-up loans are housing mortgages administered by the municipalities and are offered to enhance owner-occupation among young people and low-income households. People who cannot get loans from private banks, are offered only high-interest mortgages, or lack equity capital may apply for start-up loan. 7,830 households received start-up loan in 2023. The majority of recipients of start-up loans are renters. By enabling more home-ownership the scheme helps to free up more homes on the rental market.

179. In October 2024, the ‘Tenancy Act Committee’ presented its report, NOU 2024: 19, on the Tenancy Act. The report evaluates the Act and suggests changes that can strengthen tenants’ rights and ensure fundamental residential security and better compliance between the law and the current situation in the rental market.

180. The State Housing Bank are responsible for a national mapping number of homeless persons every fourth year. The mapping of homeless persons from 2020 shows that among half of homeless persons are long-term homeless. The main cause of homelessness is evictions and loss of housing because of damage and disturbance. To monitor the development of homeless persons between every national mapping, the State Housing Bank obtain information from 25 larger municipalities, which in 2020 had around 70 per cent of the homeless population. The number of homeless persons has increased in the last two years, after several years of decline. In 2022, the number of homeless persons was 3,800. In November 2023, the State Housing Bank estimated among 4,200 homeless persons.

181. Efforts to prevent and combat homelessness sort under a number of ministries and other public agencies, and a number of tools and measures have been developed to deal with the problem. The municipalities play a major role in this work. In accordance with legislation on social services, the local authority is responsible for assisting less advantaged people into housing, and for providing social services for the municipality’s population. All individuals without a place to stay or sleep within the forthcoming 24 hours have a right to temporary housing in the municipality.

Article 12 Right to health

182. The right to health is ensured in Norway by providing a comprehensive healthcare system that offers high-quality services to all without discrimination. Healthcare services are grounded in scientific and medical standards, respect for medical ethics, and are tailored to individuals’ cultural backgrounds, gender, and life stages.

183. To safeguard public health, Norway actively implements measures to improve environmental and industrial hygiene, prevent and treat diseases, and combat drug abuse. The healthcare system ensures access to necessary medical treatment and care during illness, creating conditions where everyone can receive appropriate healthcare when needed. Through these efforts, Norway demonstrates its commitment to realising the right to health for individuals, in line with its obligations under the present Covenant.

184. Norway is obliged by international law to offer equal health services for the Sami population and ensure that the Sami perspective is taken care of in health policy initiatives, national plans and strategies. The Government will appoint a committee to examine the need for changes to ensure that the state’s obligations to the Sami population are safeguarded in regard to the right to co-determination, participation and cooperation in the planning, design and management of the specialist health services. It will be included in the committee’s mandate to decide on whether the current organisation of the *Sami klinihkka*, a health centre offering specialist health services aimed particularly at the Sami population, is appropriate and how SÁNAG/SANKS’s national functions, health services on mental health and substance addiction, can be developed, as well as assessing how to recruit and ensure stable access to staff with this expertise in the administrative area for Sami languages and at SÁNAG/SANKS and the *Sami klinihkka*.

185. The Sami's rights as an indigenous population, in relation to health and care services, are regulated by national legislation and international conventions. In order for the municipal health and care services to meet the Sami population with adapted services of good quality, knowledge and competence about the Sami language, culture and social conditions are required. The Government will therefore continue the work on development and skills to meet the Sami population.

Mental health care

186. The organisation of mental health care in Norway broadly resembles that of other Western European countries, including shifting care to outpatient/community settings, with care in place for mild to moderate disorders, severe disorders and substance addiction disorders with a good degree of cross-sectional collaboration. At the municipality level, care is provided in outpatient settings by general practitioners and/or mental health professionals often in cross-sectional collaboration with specialised inpatient care. Mild to moderate mental health conditions are largely cared for in outpatient settings by general practitioners, both in charge of providing treatment as well as serving as a focal point in the coordination of the care. Municipalities are required to employ psychologists within their health and social care services. They play an important role both in developing health promoting and preventive initiatives in the development of mental health services and in measures aimed at individuals. There is also a growing private market of psychologists. General practitioners are also central in managing severe mental illnesses, where general practitioners generally serve as gate keepers of specialised services and are also key personnel when patients are discharged from specialised care, playing a role in managing and coordinating the ongoing care of individuals with acute mental health needs living in the community.

187. Mental health is one of the Government's main priorities. The Government launched an *Escalation Plan for Mental Health (2023–2033)*, outlining the ambitions for mental health over the next decade. The Government proposes to increase funding for mental health by NOK 3 billion from 2023–2033. The Plan's overarching aim is for more people to enjoy good mental health and quality of life, and for those who need mental health care to receive good quality and easily accessible care. The Escalation plan is organised along three axes. Each dimension is followed by selected thematic areas with associated measures. The axes are:

- Health promotion and preventive mental health work
- Good and accessible services where people live
- Services for people with long-term and complex needs

Older persons

Concluding observations, paras 36-37

188. 'TryggEst' is a model developed to help municipalities prevent, detect, and handle violence and abuse against vulnerable adult residents, as a relevant measure in accordance with obligations under the Health and Care Services Act section 3-3a. This includes those with physical or cognitive disabilities, the elderly, people with dementia, somatic diseases, mental health issues, substance abuse problems, or long-term illnesses. *TryggEst* aims to ensure that cases are uncovered, not overlooked or forgotten, and that the individuals concerned are taken care of through collaboration between relevant services. The training and competence enhancement measures in *TryggEst* are particularly aimed at employees in municipal health and care services. The number of municipalities that have adopted the model has increased from 28 in 2022 to 55 in 2023. Applications have been received from 27 new municipalities that wish to start with *TryggEst* in 2024. *TryggEst* is funded by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Health and Care Services.

189. A national strategy for good diet and nutrition for elderly people in nursing homes and who receive home care has been developed and implemented. National advice is that

everyone who is admitted to a nursing home must be assessed for the risk of malnutrition within a week of admission and monthly thereafter. For patients at risk of malnutrition, individual nutrition plans must be developed. The state implements implementation support measures for systematic nutrition work, skills development and compliance with the professional councils in the municipalities. In addition, status is monitored through national quality indicators for nutritional assessment in nursing homes and through supervision. The work will continue to ensure the strategy is fully implemented.

190. Norway has established national professional advice and guidelines for good nutritional practices in health and care services. These guidelines include the assessment of patients' nutritional status, interventions, and follow-up. National quality indicators have been developed to measure the extent to which nutritional status assessments are conducted in home-based services and nursing homes. Although the number of individuals having their nutritional status assessed is still insufficient, the proportion is increasing.

191. A proper and balanced diet is essential for maintaining good health and quality of life throughout one's life. Through the *Strategy for Good Diet and Nutrition for Older People in Nursing Homes and Receiving Home Care Services*, Norway has improved the competence and systematic nutritional follow-up for older individuals in these services. Additionally, measures have been implemented to strengthen the food and nutrition sector, through the Government's 'Stay Safe at Home' reform (cf. whitepaper *Meld. St. 24 (2022–2023)*).

Concluding observations, paras 38-39

Asylum seekers' access to health-care services

192. All patients and users with permanent and legal residence in Norway are entitled to necessary health care services from both the municipal health and care services as well as specialist health services. However, there are specific regulations regarding the right to health and care services for individuals who do not have permanent and legal residence. Everyone residing in Norway is entitled to necessary health care that cannot be postponed, including necessary assistance before and after childbirth, abortion services, and communicable disease prevention and treatment. Children generally have the same rights to health care regardless of their residency status. Thus, everyone residing in Norway has the same right to healthcare services. However, if an individual's application for residence has been rejected, they are required to leave the country and their entitlement to healthcare services ceases as a natural consequence of their obligation to exit the territory.

193. Nevertheless, individuals who continue to remain in Norway unlawfully are entitled to emergency care and essential health services that cannot be delayed, including maternity care, childbirth, postnatal care, and abortion services. While patients are generally expected to pay for such services, upfront payment is not required, and costs may be covered by the healthcare institution if the patient lacks the financial means. Additionally, everyone has the right to preventive care and treatment for communicable diseases, including vaccinations and necessary treatment, free of charge.

194. Furthermore, children, regardless of their legal status, have the same right to health and care services as other children, including access to general practitioner services. According to Norwegian regulations, any individual considered a resident in a municipality is entitled to register with a general practitioner. Residency is defined as being registered as a resident in the National Population Register, pursuant to the Regulation on Patient Rights, General Practitioner Services section 2. Since individuals without legal residence lack a registered address in a municipality, they are consequently unable to be assigned to a general practitioner in a specific municipality.

195. It is acknowledged that it can be challenging for irregular migrants to understand and navigate the healthcare regulations. To address this, efforts to improve guidance and

information about the healthcare rights of individuals without legal residence in Norway will be initiated.

Mental health care in prisons

Concluding observations, paras 40-41

196. Persons with mental health problems who are in prison have the same right to health and care services as the general population. The municipalities are responsible for primary health and care, which normally are provided in prison settings. The health trusts are responsible for specialised health services, and persons in prisons are referred to such services in the same manner as the general population. In order to improve access to mental health and substance addiction services for persons in prisons, the Government has instructed the regional health trusts to provide such services directly in prison. Persons who outside prisons would have been referred to day treatment in a mental health institution, are entitled to equal access to such treatment as the general population. The right of free and informed consent is the principal rule in Norwegian health care legislation, including persons in nursing homes. Coercive measures can be employed according to the Patient and User Rights Act, Chapter 4A.

197. Pursuant to section 3-9 a. of the Health and Care Services Act, municipalities hosting correctional facilities are required to provide health and care services to inmates. The municipality in which the correctional facility is located has the statutory responsibility, as well as the recruitment and training responsibility for medical personnel in the correctional facility. The host municipality is responsible for offering primary health and care services to inmates. A government grant is provided to help cover the municipalities' additional expenses for primary care services for inmates. Specialist health care services are provided by the state through the four regional health trusts (referred to as the "import model"). Both physicians and nurses in correctional facilities have the same education as medical personnel in the society-at-large. Furthermore, approximately half of all nurses in the prison health services have additional education in mental health and substance abuse treatment.

198. In June 2023, a public committee was appointed with a mandate to examine issues related to criminal reactions and mental health. This independent committee shall investigate the conditions and care of prisoners with serious mental disorders or developmental disabilities, during imprisonment and detention. The committee's report is to be submitted in March 2025.

199. The right of free and informed consent is the principal rule in Norwegian mental health care legislation. The majority of patients receive voluntarily assistance from the mental health care services. A great number of assertive and ambulatory mental health care services have been established and are active in many municipalities, providing patients and relatives with valuable outpatient assistance, thereby reducing the need for hospitalisation. National professional advice for the prevention of use of coercion in mental health care for adults was effectuated from 1 March 2022. The purpose of the advice is to provide the services with a tool that can contribute to a more uniform understanding of how the use of coercion can be prevented, and that coercion is used in a caring manner, only when it is necessary in order to deliver health care. In order to enhance the implementation, the Directorate of Health and the regional health trusts held annual meetings on topics related to compulsory mental health care after the advice was published. This work continues as part of the Government's *Escalation Plan for Mental Health (2023–2033)*.

200. In November 2024, the Government presented a legislative proposal to follow up on the recommendations of the 'Consent Committee' and certain proposals from the 'Coercion Law Committee'. The proposal included, among other measures, the repeal of the requirement that lack of capacity to consent must be caused by illness, the lowering of the standard of proof for lack of decision-making capacity to "predominantly likely," the

codification of a requirement for continuous assessment of whether the conditions under the Mental Health Care Act for the use of coercion are met, and the codification of a narrow framework for the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) as a life-saving measure.

201. The Coercion Law Committee, appointed in June 2016, was tasked with revising the legislation governing the use of coercion with individuals suffering from severe mental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse disorders, and patients lacking capacity to consent who oppose healthcare interventions. The committee submitted its report in June 2019. It proposed unified, more diagnosis-neutral rules on coercion and interventions without consent in health and care services.

202. In May 2022, the Government appointed an expert committee (the Consent Committee) tasked with evaluating the 2017 legislative amendment that introduced “lack of capacity to consent” as a criterion for the use of compulsory observation, involuntary mental health care, and examination and treatment without consent. The Committee submitted its report in June 2023. The Committee recommended maintaining the criterion but emphasised the need for adjustments to the legislation. It furthermore referred extensively to the Coercion Law Committee’s assessments and legislative proposals but recommended, among other things, that the standard of proof for lack of capacity to consent be lowered from “manifestly” to “predominantly likely.”

203. In November 2024, the Government presented a legislative proposal that, i.e., suggested codifying the requirement for continuous assessment of whether the conditions under the Mental Health Care Act for the use of coercion are met and codifying the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) as a life-saving measure. Decisions on the use of ECT can be made if the failure to administer the treatment within a few weeks would pose a severe risk to the patient’s life, and the patient does not oppose the treatment. Decisions may apply for up to two weeks within the same treatment series. New decisions cannot be made within the same series. Patients and their closest relatives can appeal decisions on the use of ECT to the Mental Health Care Supervisory Commission. The Government also announced that it would continue to follow up on the Coercion Law Committee’s recommendations. Furthermore, the Directorate of Health has been tasked with assessing how children’s rights concerning the use of coercion in mental health care can be clarified and strengthened within the current legislative framework.

204. The regional health authorities are in 2025 commissioned with the task to review the use of coercive measures and forced admissions in mental health care as a basis for improved prevention of coercion, and to ensure that all decisions on coercive measures are registered in the Electronic Patient Journal according to the current template.

Drug use policy

Concluding observations, paras 42-43

205. A government-appointed public committee (the ‘Drug Reform Committee’) recommended in its report from 2019, NOU 2019: 26, that use and possession etc. of smaller quantities of illegal drugs intended for personal use should no longer be considered a criminal offence. This proposal, which was submitted to the Storting in 2021, did not receive sufficient parliamentary support. However, a broad political majority in the Storting expressed that substance-dependent individuals should not be met with punishment, but instead with help. These legislative signals were emphasised by the Supreme Court, which decided in two subsequent cases in 2022 that substance-dependent individuals no longer should be prosecuted or punished for the use and possession etc. of smaller amounts of drugs meant for personal use, see HR-2022-732-A and HR-2022-731-A.

206. The current law in Norway is thus that all use and possession etc. of illegal drugs still is considered a criminal offence. However, substance-dependent individuals are not to be

prosecuted or punished for use and possession etc. of smaller amounts of drugs (considered as five grams in respect of heroin, amphetamine, or cocaine) meant for personal use. The current policy is that these persons shall be met with assistance and help in lieu of prosecution.

207. The review in the Storting of the proposal for decriminalisation of illegal drug use etc. from 2021 and the subsequent judgements from the Supreme Court from 2022 have raised a number of criminal and procedural legal issues concerning the regulation of illegal drug use etc., which another public committee, appointed in 2023, (the 'Drug Enforcement Committee') has assessed. The Committee delivered its report in June 2024, NOU 2024: 12 and it has recently been sent for public consultation. The Government is currently assessing the legislative recommendations from the Committee and has signalled that it will submit a proposal to the Storting with legislative amendments in spring 2025. The proposal is considered to be part II of the Government's 'prevention and treatment reform' on the topic of illegal drug use. Part I of the reform, which was initiated in the fall of 2024, concerned health policy measures, see para. 210 below.

208. The Committee in its report has proposed several changes to the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Act concerning minor illegal drug offences. With regard to drug use and possession etc. of smaller amounts of drugs for personal use, the Committee has proposed a new criminal provision in the Penal Code which among other things regulates the current special sentencing rules for drug-dependent individuals. Furthermore, the Committee has proposed measures to enhance the use of the municipal advisory unit for drug related cases (cf. section 3-9 b. of the Health and Care Services Act). The advisory unit has special expertise in prevention and drug related problems and may offer individual follow-up programmes if desired. For example, for persons under the age of 18 who are found guilty after the proposed provision on drug use and possession etc. of smaller amounts of drugs for personal use, the person should normally receive a suspended sentence on the condition that the person attends a meeting with the advisory unit. An important goal is to prevent younger persons from getting involved in illegal drugs.

209. The Committee has also proposed a new procedural provision that clarifies that the police may refer a person who is charged with illegal drug use or possession etc. of smaller amounts of drugs for personal use to the advisory unit, instead of pursuing a criminal case against the person. Furthermore, the Committee has proposed amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act related to the police's use of drug testing and the use of coercive measures when investigating minor drug offences. As mentioned, the Government is currently assessing the recommendations from the Committee, and will submit a proposal to the Storting in 2025.

210. The Government is at the same time concerned about health issues related to use of illegal drugs. In October 2024, the Government launched a white paper *Meld. St. 5 (2024–2025) Safety, community, and dignity. The prevention and treatment reform to address substance use – Part I. A new policy for prevention, harm reduction and treatment*. The prevention and treatment reform part I paves the way for increased and targeted efforts on prevention, for harm reduction, early intervention and treatment and follow-up services, aiming to reduce potential negative consequences related to the existence and use of alcohol, addictive drugs, illegal drugs, and doping agents. The reform also aims to reduce the gap in life expectancy between people with substance use disorders and the general population.

211. The reform includes six priority areas: 1) Promote equal treatment and fulfil the right to health and quality of life; 2) strengthen the effort to prevent overdoses (including preventing alcohol related deaths); 3) promote knowledge-based prevention efforts; 4) promote the user, family and next of kin perspective; 5) further develop treatment and follow-up services; and 6) further develop and build competence.

212. The white paper recognises the right to health, cf. Article 12 in the present Covenant, and aims i.a., to reduce stigma and prevent discrimination of people with problematic use of psychoactive substances. The Government will establish a plan to systematically counter stigmatisation and prejudice related to people with problems related to use of psychoactive substances, also following up on recommendations from the Norwegian Human Rights Institution (NIM) on protection against discrimination (see the reports *Drug use and Human rights*, NIM, March 2022 and *You don't belong here*, NIM, February 2024).

213. Among other important measures relating to the reform is an initiative to make it easier for municipalities to establish supervised drug consumption rooms, by proposing amendments to the Consumption Rooms Act and to develop a new action plan on preventing overdoses. Local clinics on street-level/low-threshold services, shall be established to offer integrated specialised treatment and municipal healthcare services for people with complex needs. The Government will also establish treatment services for children and young people and women with substance use disorders who suffers abuse and in need of sheltering. Furthermore, the Government will assess a comprehensive system for monitoring the situation on psychoactive substances for data on trends and developments, including drug-checking services. Such facilities enable individual users to have their illegal substances chemically analysed, providing information on the content of the samples to prevent harm.

Articles 13 and 14 Right to education

214. Reference is made to Norway's common core document from 2024 (HRI/CORE/NOR/2024) paras. 37-46 for information on the right to education and the education system in Norway. With the new Education Act, in force from 1 August 2024, the general right to education in Norway has been further strengthened. Among the changes is the extension of the right to upper secondary education and training, which now applies until study qualifications or vocational qualifications have been obtained, cf. section 5-1 of the Act. (This is a change from the old Education Act, which gave the right to three years of upper secondary education.) Additionally, the right to upper secondary education for adults is set out in section 18-3. The new Education Act also introduces a free right to re-election of study programme until the student is 19 years old, in contrast to the previous right to one re-election. Those who have not exercised the right to re-election before they are 19 years old, have the right to one re-election later, cf. section 5-5.

215. Completion rates in upper secondary education in Norway have increased steadily over the past two decades, and has continued to increase throughout the covid-19 pandemic years, although somewhat less than in previous years. 81 per cent of pupils who started upper secondary school in 2016 completed within five/six years, up 9 percentage points from the 2006 cohort. 85 per cent of girls finished within five/six years, compared to 77 per cent of boys. 80 per cent of Norwegians born to immigrant parents and 65 per cent of immigrants finished within five/six years compared to 83 per cent of the majority pupils. There are still large social differences within upper secondary education in Norway, but there have been fewer differences during the last decade. Among pupils with parents with primary school as their highest education, 61 per cent completed, up 13 percentage points from the 2006 cohort. Moreover, a 'completion reform' was adopted by the Storting in 2021. Over 100 measures aimed at upper secondary education were proposed here. Continued follow-up of this reform will help ensure that young people and adults are qualified to meet the requirements of further education and working life, and that they can update their skills throughout their lives. Several of the rights have been introduced with the new Education Act.

216. A white paper to the Storting on grades 5-10 in primary school was presented in autumn 2024. This white paper focuses on making school more practical and relevant for pupils in grades 5-10 and the main goals are to improve learning, increase motivation, and enhance students' well-being. Among the measures included are increased practical teaching

which emphasis on practical skills and the application of knowledge in real-life situations. Adapted training that better adapts the teaching to each pupil's individual needs and abilities. Enhanced cooperation between school, home, and the local community to support students' learning and development. Focus on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment that promotes well-being and motivation. The overall aim is to make school more engaging, and for the pupils to achieve better learning outcomes and enjoy their school experience more.

Access to and quality of education

Concluding observations, paras 44-45

217. Equal opportunities for all children and young people are one of the Government's most important priorities. The Government will continue its efforts to reduce economic and social differences among the population, which requires broad cross-sectoral cooperation. The Government has therefore initiated work on a white paper to be presented in the spring of 2025, cf. para. 164. Education will be central to this work. In 2024, NOK 205 million was allocated for increased teacher density and increased basic staffing in kindergartens in disadvantaged areas.

218. Decentralised and flexible education is one of the Governments main priorities, to ensure that high quality education is made available for the whole population, independent of the individual's background and place of residence. The professions' educations have been prioritised within this effort to strengthen decentralised and flexible education. The Directorate of Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) have managed a competition-based funding programme in this regard. In 2023, the Directorate announced a call for action for a total of NOK 200 million for flexible and decentralised education that the educational institutions and study centres could apply for. The education offers are distributed across all of Norway according to local, regional and national needs, and includes e.g., professions' educations, and educations related to technology and the green transition. From 2024, the competition-based funds have been moved directly to the university colleges and universities as part of their 'main framework allocation', funded through the Ministry of Education and Research.

219. Children living in reception centres for asylum seekers are not entitled to attend kindergarten. These children can attend (be allocated a place) when they are granted a residence permit, are settled in a municipality, and meet the other conditions specified in the Kindergarten Act. However, municipalities can offer places in kindergarten to children living in reception centres for asylum seekers. The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) then reimburse the municipality with a grant.

220. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development finances the City of Oslo's school guidance programme *Skolelostjeneste*. The purpose of the programme is to improve learning outcomes, reduce absence and increase the chances of pupils with a Roma background completing primary and lower secondary education. The programme i.a. facilitates coordination between the school, the pupil and their home. Most Roma families live in Oslo or the nearby municipalities. The school guidance programme also assists pupils who live in nearby municipalities.

221. Lately, many Roma families have transferred to Lørenskog municipality, bordering Oslo. The municipality has taken measures to promote beneficial and comprehensive services for Roma people, reduce the challenges that Roma experience in dealings with the municipal services and the local community, and to facilitate good relations with schools. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Ministry of Education and Research co-fund these measures.

222. The Government presented a white paper about the professions' educations in 2024. The white paper presents measures for educating more teachers and for promoting equality

and diversity in the educational programs. Following this white paper, the Government has also made changes to the rules of admission for teacher educations, to make the educations accessible to larger groups of applicants. The regulatory changes contribute to a concerted effort to improve teacher recruitment. To this end, there is also a national recruitment project and a recruitment strategy that was developed in close cooperation with employer organisations and professions organisations/unions. There is also ongoing work on making the governance of teacher educations less detailed, so that the educational institutions attain greater freedom and flexibility in carrying out and developing their educational programs.

Sami languages

Concluding observations, paras 46-47

223. In 2023, the Government presented a white paper on Sami language, culture and society – Competence and recruitment in kindergartens, schools and higher education. This will be followed up in cooperation with the *Sámediggi*. All pupils of primary school age who live in language development municipalities or language revitalisation municipalities have, according to section 3-1 of the Sami Act, the right to education in and on Sami, cf. Education Act section 3-2. These students must have training in accordance with the *Curriculum – Sami*, cf. the training regulations section 1-2 para. 1. Sami students in upper secondary education have the right to education in Sami, cf. section 6-2 of the Education Act. This applies even if they did not have training in Sami in primary school, and regardless of where they live in the country. The pupils choose which Sami language they will be trained in, North Sami, Lule Sami or South Sami.

224. All pupils (regardless of whether they have a Sami background or not) who have had training in and on Sami in primary school, have the right to training in Sami in upper secondary education.

Return of Sami cultural objects to Sápmi

225. A prerequisite for preserving and exhibiting Sami cultural artefacts is appropriate facilities at the six Sami museums in Norway. In the last decade it has been a central issue to contribute to making it possible for the Sami museums to receive the Sami cultural artefacts distributed between six Sami museums as part of the ‘Bååstede Repatriation Project’. Through the Bååstede Repatriation Project approx. 1,600 objects are scheduled to be returned to six Sami museums, from collections held by the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History and the Museum of Cultural History of the University of Oslo.

226. The Skolt Sami/East Sami, and the South Sami cultural objects from the *Bååstede* Project have been returned and are now exhibited at *Ávv Skolt Sami Museum* in Neiden, and *Saemien Sijte* in Snåsa. They opened to the public in 2017, and 2022, respectively. These museums have been built by the Government’s building commissioner *Statsbygg* on behalf of the Ministry of Culture and Equality. It is the *Sámediggi*, that lays down the guidelines for which Sami cultural buildings should be prioritised.

227. *Statsbygg* is planning a new museum building for the Sami museum *RiddoDuottarMuseat* in Karasjok. The project planning includes exhibition space for the Sami art collection, which is owned by the *Sámediggi* and currently in storage in Karasjok, as well as space to be able to receive items from the *Bååstede* Repatriation Project for the North Sami area. For the three remaining Sami museums, investments in exhibition and magazine facilities, has made it possible to receive and exhibit *Bååstede* objects. The Government has contributed with investment funds to two of these museums.

228. Ceremonial object such as Sami drums are of particular value for the Sami people. In January 2022, the ownership of Anders Poulson’s Sami drum was transferred from the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen to the *RiddoDuottarMuseat* in Karasjok. Furthermore, a South Sami ceremonial drum, *Frøyningsfjelltromma*, was repatriated from a

German museum to *Saemien Sijte* in 2023. The return of this ceremonial object to its place of origin happened 300 years after it was originally confiscated by Norwegian clergy. The Ministry of Culture and Equality considers the repatriation of the *Frøyningsfelltromma* to be very important in view of the possible later return of drums and other objects from Germany to Sápmi.

229. In 2021, the codicil *Lappekodisillen*, was moved from the National Archives' magazine in Oslo to Sápmi, now deposited at the Sami archives in Kautokeino. *Lappekodisillen* forms the basis for the Sami's legal rights. It is an annex to the border treaty between Sweden (with Finland) and Norway concluded in 1751.

Article 15 Right to participate in cultural life and enjoy the benefits of scientific progress

Cultural life

230. In 2021, the Government presented a white paper on museum policy to the Storting, *Meld. St. 23 (2020-2021)*. The paper aims to secure the development and stability of state-founded museums in Norway, to ensure easy access to common cultural heritage, new knowledge on museum collections and a broader discussion on development of different parts of society at different times in history.

231. A white paper on artist policy to the Storting, *Meld. St. 22 (2022-2023)*, that proposes 50 measures aimed at reinforcing the position of the arts and the artists, was presented in 2023. The white paper examines other policy areas pertinent to artists' working and living conditions, such as labour and welfare policies, pensions, taxation, and business policies. It also suggests measures to strengthen the social rights for freelancers and self-employed artists and to ensure fair and equitable payment for artistic work.

232. The Government launched its first 'Cultural Volunteer' Strategy (2023-2025) in 2023. The strategy presented cultural volunteerism as a unified political focus area at the national level for the first time. The purpose of the strategy is to highlight the diversity of cultural volunteer activities and their intrinsic value, as well as to showcase the societal contribution of cultural volunteerism. One of the focus areas in the strategy is broad participation and inclusion, and the Government aims to ensure that people have access to art and culture regardless of their background or social and financial status. The strategy put forward the goal that everyone should have the opportunity to engage and take responsibility for cultural environments, and children and young people should be able to participate in cultural volunteerism.

233. Even though most children and teens join organised leisure activities in Norway, some get left out. A number of factors, including gender, the parents' financial situation, background, disabilities, and where they live are relevant in this regard. To counteract socio-economic disparities and other barriers to children's participation in leisure activities, the Government is implementing measures in the *Action Plan for Participation in Cultural, Sports, and Outdoor Activities 2024-2026 – All Included!*

234. Key policy measures include reducing costs, providing accessible information, access to a variety of leisure activities and professional art and culture, empowering youth voices, encouraging collaboration, and gaining insights into social inequality and the effects of interventions. In 2024, an additional NOK 258 million was allocated to organizations within sport, the music field, and youth clubs. These funds were directed to areas with a high proportion of low-income families, fostering more local activities in youth clubs. In 2024, grants for sports facilities and organizations contributing to recreational activities totalled more than NOK 4.3 billion. In 2024, The Government also allocated an extra NOK 255 million to include all children in culture and sports.

235. In 2021, a white paper to the Storting, *Meld. St. 18 (2020–2021)*, on children's and youth culture was presented. The goal is to provide all children and young people, regardless of background, with access to high-quality art and culture, and to ensure they have the opportunity to experience and create culture on their own terms. To ensure that all school pupils in Norway experience professional arts and culture, the so-called 'Cultural Schoolbag' is a nationwide programme and a key tool to achieve these goals and are important topics in the report. Another tool is schools of music and performing arts, that since 1997 is founded by law and says that all municipalities in Norway shall provide music and art programmes for children and youth.

236. In 2024, a new strategy was launched by the Government on enhancing the joy of reading among children and young people. The strategy was developed in collaboration between the Ministry of Culture and Equality, and the Ministry of Education and Research, and aims to create a stronger reading culture among children and young people through several different initiatives. Among the most important elements are to ensure that children and young people have good access to a variety of literature, to invest in school libraries, to strengthen cooperation between libraries and kindergartens, to strengthen the distribution of literature and to prioritise printed books in schools.

Research policies

237. The fundamental significance of academic freedom has only become clearer over the last years, and the topic has been addressed by Norwegian policy makers in relevant processes. As part of the development of the white paper *Long-term plan for research and higher education (2023–2032)*, the Ministry of Education and Research established a committee with a mandate to investigate possible threats to academic freedom of expression. The committee's report, NOU 2022: 2, provides a basis for discussing the prerequisites for scholarly contributions to public debates and proposes measures to provide a clearer framework for scholars' academic freedom of expression and the responsibilities incumbent on the institutions to promote this. Conclusions and recommendations were addressed in the mentioned long-term plan.

238. Better incentives and structures for data sharing holds a significant potential for increased research outcome. In 2021, the Research Council of Norway published the report *How should we share research data?*, providing analyses and recommendations on licensing and making data accessible. In the report, recommendations are presented on how fair and effective actions should be prioritised to make sure that data are shared when possible, according to the "FAIR principles".

239. The increase in global conflicts and associated security challenges makes the topic of data sharing of data more complicated. In 2023, the Research Council of Norway (RCN), the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) and the Norwegian National Security Authority (NSM) in a report provide recommendations on how a comprehensive national research system should facilitate for open research and at the same time secure protected and classified research, based on the current research system for open research and the defence sector's research system.

240. In 2024, a committee presented the report NOU 2024: 14 on data governance and sharing. The report was on public consultation until December 2024. The report suggests regulations to facilitate for open science and a common access to research data. The Government will now take the recommendations in the report into consideration, as well as comments received during the consultation.