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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

Third Opinion on Norway adopted on 30 June 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Norway has continued its constructive attitude towards the Framework Convention and its monitoring system, and has followed an overall inclusive and positive approach with regard to its personal scope of application.

The Norwegian Government has launched several initiatives aiming at strengthening protection against discrimination. The office of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson was set up in 2006 and the Anti-discrimination Act was amended in 2009 to increase the role of employers in combating discrimination in the workplace.

An Action Plan (2009-2012) for Equality and Prevention of Ethnic Discrimination has been developed and an innovative project to promote the social inclusion of the Roma in different spheres of life has been established.

During the last few years, the authorities have also produced several reports on Norway's general approach towards integration, migration and minority issues, which could be used as material for a thorough analysis of the Norwegian policy in these fields.

A Commission for Romani/Tatars was established in 2009 in order to remedy the injustices committed against these groups under the past policies of assimilation. Nevertheless, some difficulties regarding access to individual compensation continue to be reported.

Despite these positive developments and the general climate of dialogue existing in Norwegian society, there are still some manifestations of intolerance by the media and on the Internet. Some manifestations of intolerance, in particular from children and youngsters, towards Jews, have also been reported. Furthermore, the Roma and the Romani/Tatars are often faced with difficulties during their seasonal travels, especially in their access to commercial camping sites who deny them access. In this context, hostile attitudes on the part of the police force are also frequently reported.

Despite the measures taken to revitalise and to promote the Kven culture and language, such as the standardisation of the Kven language, its situation seems still precarious.

Issues for immediate action

- **Take more resolute measures to promote tolerance, mutual respect and social cohesion in Norwegian society, and to ensure a regular inclusive review of such measures; take the necessary measures in order for the media to comply fully with their rules of ethical conduct, with all due regard for media independence;**
- **Take effective measures to enable persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Tatars minorities who have been victims of the forced assimilation policy in the past to exercise their rights; take all possible measures without delay, including a more proactive attitude, such as using the public archives and other documentary evidence in order to enable all persons concerned to be identified according to their own particular cultural origin; set up a national scheme for awarding appropriate financial compensation, in close consultation with the persons concerned;**
- **Continue the efforts to revitalize the Kven language and to provide the additional resources which the Kven Institute needs in order to finalise the standardisation of the Kven language within a reasonable timeframe; additional measures should be taken to develop the teaching of the Kven language for children of pre-school age.**

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**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

THIRD OPINION ON NORWAY

1. The Advisory Committee adopted the present Opinion on 30 June 2011 in accordance with Article 26 (1) of the Framework Convention and Rule 23 of Resolution (97) 10 of the Committee of Ministers. The findings are based on information contained in the State Report (hereinafter the State Report), received in due time on 1 July 2010, and other written sources and on information obtained by the Advisory Committee from governmental and non-governmental contacts during its visit to Oslo and Tromsø on 2-5 May 2011.

2. Section I below contains the Advisory Committee's main findings on key issues pertaining to the implementation of the Framework Convention in Norway. These findings reflect the more detailed article-by-article findings contained in Section II, which cover those provisions of the Framework Convention on which the Advisory Committee has substantive issues to raise.

3. Both sections make extensive reference to the follow-up given to the findings of the monitoring of the Framework Convention, contained in the Advisory Committee's first and second Opinions on Norway, adopted on 12 September 2002 and 5 October 2006 respectively, and in the Committee of Ministers' corresponding Resolutions, adopted on 8 April 2003 and 20 June 2007.

4. The concluding remarks, contained in Section III, could serve as the basis for the Committee of Ministers' forthcoming conclusions and recommendations on Norway.

5. The Advisory Committee looks forward to continuing its dialogue with the authorities of Norway as well as with representatives of national minorities and others involved in the implementation of the Framework Convention. In order to promote an inclusive and transparent process, the Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to make the present Opinion public upon its receipt. The Advisory Committee would also like to bring to the attention of States Parties that on 16 April 2009, the Committee of Ministers adopted new rules for the publication of the Advisory Committee's Opinion and other monitoring documents, aiming at increasing transparency and at sharing the information on the monitoring findings and conclusions with all the parties involved at an early stage (see Resolution CM/Res(2009)3 amending Resolution (97) 10 on the monitoring arrangements under Articles 24-26 of the Framework Convention for the protection of National Minorities).

I. MAIN FINDINGS

Monitoring process

6. Norway has maintained a constructive approach to the Framework Convention monitoring procedure. The Advisory Committee notes that Norway published the second Opinion immediately after its adoption and that this document and the corresponding Committee of Ministers Resolution were placed on the website of the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs (FAD) so that information on the Framework Convention and the Opinions of the Advisory Committee are accessible to a wide public. However, these documents have only been translated into Norwegian, but not in minority languages.

7. The Advisory Committee particularly welcomes the organisation in June 2008 of a follow-up seminar which enabled the representatives of the authorities, minorities, including groups not officially recognised as national minorities, civil society organisations and the media to discuss the conclusions of the second monitoring cycle and the way ahead for implementing the Framework Convention.

8. The Advisory Committee visited Norway from 2 to 5 May 2011. It finds that this visit, organised at the invitation of the Norwegian Government, provided a good opportunity to have a direct dialogue with the parties concerned. The additional information provided by the government and by other sources, including representatives of national minorities, has proved to be most valuable. The meetings took place not only in Oslo, but also in Tromsø.

9. Concerning the 3rd State Report the Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that extensive consultations were organised during the drafting of the report, with the associations representing the national minorities and that they were associated with this process. The authorities also consulted the Sami Parliament and civil society on this matter, and contributed to the English translation of an alternative report produced by a national minority as a contribution to the monitoring process. The Advisory Committee, to ensure still greater transparency in the monitoring procedure, calls for wide dissemination of this Opinion in all the minority languages concerned.

General overview of the implementation of the Framework Convention after two monitoring cycles

10. Since the second monitoring cycle, Norway has maintained a consistent policy of support to persons belonging to national minorities. Firstly, several programmes were launched in an effort to remedy the problems encountered by Roma and Romani/Tatars in several areas, especially in access to education and employment. In addition, consultation of all national minorities has continued via such representation structures as the “Inter Ministerial Coordinating Committee for National Minorities” and the “Contact Forum between National Minorities and the Central Authorities”, which are bodies responsible for devising a coherent policy for national minorities and increasing the visibility of these groups in Norwegian society.

11. The Advisory Committee notes that the Norwegian Sami are protected as an indigenous people under the ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries and that this community maintains the position stated in the past, namely that of not wishing to benefit from the protection of the Framework Convention.

12. A number of general policies affecting the implementation of the Framework Convention have evolved since the previous monitoring cycle. The fight against discrimination continues, and various targeted measures have been taken to combat intolerance and racism. Policies to further the integration of migrants have been sustained, and a climate of tolerance continues to prevail in general in Norwegian society. During the last few years, the authorities have produced several reports on Norway's general approach towards integration, migration and minorities issues, which could be used as materials for a thorough analysis of the Norwegian policy in these fields.

Legislative and institutional framework

13. The Norwegian authorities have maintained their positive approach towards the personal scope of application of the Framework Convention. In particular, migrants who wish to identify with ethnic groups granted national minority status in Norway, although they arrived recently in Norway, are entitled to benefit from the same measures as those intended for the national minorities.

14. As regards the Kven minority, there are internal debates and divergences of opinion within this group over the use of the term "Kven" employed by the authorities.¹ Norway respects the right to free self-identification, particularly in the event of disagreement within a minority group and the authorities opened a dialogue with the Kven associations concerned in 2010 on the terminology to be used.

15. In general, while the protection of minority rights is well developed, it seems that sometimes the local authorities are not fully aware of the existing legal provisions. It is therefore important that the authorities ensure the effective implementation of the legislative framework for minority rights at all levels, in particular by regional and local authorities.

Combating discrimination

16. The Anti-Discrimination Act of 2006 was amended in 2009 to increase the role of employers in combating discrimination in the workplace. A new proposal to draw up a comprehensive law on non-discrimination is currently under consideration. This would create a consolidated text comprising the Anti-Discrimination Act of 2006 and the various amendments made to sectoral legislative and regulatory provisions in this field.

17. The office of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson was set up in 2006 in order to monitor the implementation of legal provisions and in particular to receive complaints from individuals, propose amendments to existing legal acts and make recommendations to the state on the elimination of discriminatory practices. However, few complaints of discrimination based on ethnic origin have been lodged and it appears that the Ombudsperson lacks the resources necessary in order to increase the visibility of its office, particularly in respect of persons belonging to national minorities. Additional human and financial resources are needed to enable the Ombudsperson to play an active role in protecting human rights. The question of broadening its mandate to allow it to provide legal assistance to alleged victims of discrimination should be examined by the authorities.

18. Even though the authorities have increased efforts to combat discrimination and integrate Roma into society, cases of discrimination against Roma and Romani/Tatars continue to be reported. These groups are also often faced with difficulties during their seasonal travels,

¹ The Advisory Committee uses the terminology of the State Report for designating the persons belonging to the Kven minority.

especially from owners of camping sites who deny them access. In this context, hostile attitudes on the part of the police force are also frequently reported.

Combating intolerance

19. Given the increased diversity of Norwegian society, the authorities are endeavouring to develop initiatives for promoting knowledge of other cultures and the positive input of diversity in society, such as the project conducted by the Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities which analyses how Judaism and Islam are perceived by the Norwegian population.

20. Although there is a general climate of tolerance and dialogue in Norwegian society, expressions of hostility towards immigrants in political and public debate have increased in the last few years. The principle of respect for freedom of expression often justifies the lack of sanctions of hate speech. It seems that there is a lack of appropriate reaction by the majority population, the media and the political leaders, who do not condemn these hostile attitudes firmly enough. Furthermore, some manifestations of intolerance, in particular from children and youngsters, towards Jews, have been reported. The authorities should take more determined steps to combat all forms of intolerance.

21. Efforts made in recent years to remedy the injustices committed under the past policies of assimilation against the persons belonging to the Romani/Tatars minority have been intensified. The establishment of the Commission for Romani/Tatars is particularly welcome. Nevertheless, it is sometimes difficult for victims to prove their cultural origin due to the lack of judicial decisions on placement in foster families or other convincing evidence. Some difficulties continue to be reported as regards access to individual compensation in the absence of a national scheme for awarding financial compensation.

Support for minority culture and language

22. Following the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority languages by Norway, the Kven language was officially recognised as a language in its own right in Norway in 2005. The authorities continue to provide financial support for the educational and cultural activities run by the representatives of national minorities. The system consists in an annual subsidy which allows funding to be provided on a regular basis and ensures continuity in the activities and programmes. Additional measures have been taken to revitalise and to promote the Kven culture, such as the standardisation of the Kven language. Despite all these efforts, the situation of the Kven language still seems precarious and more determined action is needed to create an environment conducive to the use of minority languages. It is also regrettable that the national radio broadcasts only one weekly programme in the Finnish and Kven languages, lasting twelve minutes, directed at persons belonging to the Kven minority, which is altogether inadequate.

23. Even if the Roma and Romani/Tatars cultural activities receive financial support, more attention should be given to the current concerns expressed by the persons belonging to these groups. For instance, these persons regret that, although their traditional lifestyle is nomadic and travel forms an integral part of their identity, very few resources are deployed by the authorities to support their seasonal travels. It is therefore important for the authorities to put particular emphasis on arranging the social environment so that the national minorities can keep their language and culture alive.

Minority education

24. The situation regarding the education of Roma children has improved since the previous monitoring cycle. The implementation of specific measures, such as working in partnership with Roma parents has reduced absenteeism and improved performance levels among Roma pupils. It

is however crucial to maintain an ongoing dialogue between the authorities and the Roma representatives, especially parents, so that the initiatives in place continue to have a positive long-term impact.

25. Despite these positive developments, it is regrettable that the schooling of a large number of Roma and Romani/Tatars children seems inadequately ensured during the summer when they are travelling with their parents. New facilities are needed to give lessons under distance teaching programmes.

26. The teaching of the Kven and Finnish languages is provided at primary and secondary level and at the University although the number of students taking courses in Kven is diminishing. The absence of kindergartens providing Kven language education prevents these children from being taught their minority language at pre-school level. There is also a lack of qualified teachers speaking the Kven language and of teaching materials.

Participation of minorities in public affairs

27. Consultation with the national minorities is carried out via the “Inter-ministerial Coordinating Committee for National Minorities” and “the Contact Forum between the National Minorities and the Central Authorities”. The coordination of the policies on national minorities was transferred in 2010 to the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs (FAD) which should enhance dialogue between the national minorities and state institutions. However, even if this reform seeks to optimise the involvement and accountability of regional and local administrations with regard to minority issues, it seems that these authorities are not always aware of their obligations in this sphere.

II. ARTICLE-BY-ARTICLE FINDINGS

Article 3 of the Framework Convention

Personal scope of application of the Framework Convention

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

28. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were encouraged to further develop the measures of protection taken in respect of persons not included in the scope of the Framework Convention and to consider the possibility of their inclusion.

Present situation

29. The national minorities which the Norwegian authorities include in the scope of application of the Framework Convention are Jews, Kvens, Roma, Romani/Taters and Skogfinns. Nonetheless, Norway pursues an inclusive approach in respect of other groups. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that migrants who have recently arrived in Norway, and who wish to identify with ethnic groups with national minority status in Norway, can benefit from the same measures as those intended for the national minorities.

30. The Advisory Committee takes note that the Norwegian Sami are protected in Norway as an indigenous people and have expressed the wish not to benefit from the protection under the Framework Convention.²

31. As regards the Kven minority, the Advisory Committee has been informed that for some years there have been internal debates and differences of opinion within this group over the use of the term “Kven” employed by the authorities. For instance, the representatives of the Norwegian-Finnish Association (“Norsk-Finsk Forbund”) would like the authorities to call them “Kvens/Norwegian Finns”. Other persons belonging to this minority regret that the authorities sometimes designate their language as “Kven/Finnish”, which does not reflect that Kven is a separate language. Information available to the Advisory Committee also indicates that a number of persons of Kven origin do not wish to be identified as belonging to a national minority.

32. In this context, bearing in mind that the right to free self-identification is applied in Norway, particularly in the event of disagreement within a minority group,³ the authorities opened a dialogue in 2010 with the Kven associations concerned.

33. The Advisory Committee stresses the importance of respecting the choice of persons belonging to national minorities as regards the way in which they are to be designated by the authorities. This implies an obligation for the authorities to continue the dialogue with the persons belonging to the Kven minority and to take due account of their wishes as to changing or maintaining of names.

² The Norwegian Sami are covered by ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. Relations between the Norwegian authorities and the Sami are governed by several laws, including the law on Finnmark of 2005 concerning legal relations and management of lands and natural resources, as well as by a 2005 agreement providing for consultation procedures between the central authorities and the Sami Parliament on legislation and measures affecting the Sami population.

³ In 2005 the authorities decided, at the drafting of the second State Report, as well as more generally, to comply with the decision of the Romani People Association of Norway to change its name and replace the term “Romani” with “Romani/Taters”.

Recommendation

34. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to pursue an approach based on dialogue and compliance with the right to free self identification in their dealings with persons belonging to the Kven minority. It also calls upon them to maintain their flexible and open approach to the scope of application of the Framework Convention, in particular regarding migrants who have recently arrived in Norway and who wish to identify with ethnic groups with national minority status.

Collection of ethnic data

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

35. In the two previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were invited to develop initiatives for obtaining reliable data on the situation of persons belonging to national minorities in various sectors.

Present situation

36. The Advisory Committee notes that no census is organised in Norway and that the legislation does not permit the collection of data on ethnic origin. It is further informed that persons belonging to national minorities express reluctance over the collection and dissemination of personal data, especially on ethnic origin.

37. The Advisory Committee understands this attitude in view of very negative experiences in the past, but reiterates the importance of obtaining reliable information on the situation of persons belonging to national minorities in order to implement adequate measures and policies concerning them. This information can be obtained by the collection of statistical data or by other means, such as selective studies, or enquiries. The authorities could make use of such data, while complying with the existing personal data protection standards,⁴ in order to be in a position to meet the needs expressed by national minorities more fully and to remedy any form of discrimination. In this context, it notes with interest that an enquiry is expected to be conducted in co-operation with the Norwegian Association of Local Authorities in order to understand better the situation of minorities at local level (see also comments under Article 4 below).

Recommendation

38. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to seek means of obtaining more reliable data on the situation of national minorities, in close consultation with the persons concerned, while fully complying with international standards on personal data protection.

Article 4 of the Framework Convention

Anti-discrimination legislation: legal framework and institutional structures

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

39. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee stressed the need firstly to raise public awareness of the legislative framework for combating discrimination and secondly to grant the Ombudsperson the necessary resources for carrying out her functions.

⁴ See, for example, the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108) and Recommendation R (97) 18 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning the protection of personal data collected and processed for statistical purposes.

Present situation

40. The Advisory Committee welcomes the amendment, in 2009, to the Anti-Discrimination Act of 2006 which aims at providing better guarantees of full and effective protection against discrimination. Henceforth, all public and private sector employers employing over 50 workers are required to organise promotion and awareness-raising activities in their companies and to assess the impact of these measures annually. This new responsibility should improve anti-discrimination awareness in the work place and stimulate a fairer human resources policy on the part of employers.

41. The Advisory Committee also welcomes the fact that a proposal to draw up a comprehensive law on non-discrimination is currently under consideration. This would create a consolidated text comprising the Anti-Discrimination Act of 2006 and the various amendments made to sectoral legislative and regulatory provisions in this field.

42. The Advisory Committee's interlocutors in the Jewish, Kven and Skogfinn minorities have not reported suffering discrimination, unlike persons belonging to the Romani/Taters minority who often consider themselves victims of discriminatory acts. An identical situation exists regarding persons who belong to the Roma minority.

43. In this context, the Advisory Committee takes note of the low number of complaints of discrimination based on ethnic origin lodged with the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson established in 2006. Over the period 2006-2009, the Ombudsperson examined only 11 complaints and performed counselling in 47 cases.⁵ According to the Advisory Committee's interlocutors, the Ombudsperson's office lacks the resources necessary to increase its visibility and perform its proactive role, particularly in respect of persons belonging to national minorities.

44. The Advisory Committee has been informed that persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities, who consider themselves victims of discriminatory acts, hesitate to approach the Ombudsperson either because they have insufficient knowledge of the legislation in force and of the available remedies, or because they consider the Ombudsperson's means of action unsuited to their needs and their itinerant lifestyle. Several interlocutors also regretted that the Ombudsperson is not able to grant legal aid to alleged victims of discriminatory acts in spite of requests in this regard.

45. The Advisory Committee considers that the implementation of the legislative framework for combating discrimination would be strengthened if the Ombudsperson's work were the subject of awareness-raising campaigns aimed at society as a whole and especially at the groups most exposed to discrimination.

Recommendations

46. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to increase public awareness about the work of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson's office and to provide the additional resources which this office needs to carry out its mission effectively. Additional efforts should also be made to support persons belonging to national minorities who wish to obtain legal aid in order to exercise their rights in alleged cases of discrimination

⁵ Between 2006 and 2009, 4 complaints were lodged by Sami, 2 by Romani/Taters, 4 by Roma and 1 by Jews. As regards the Ombudsperson's counselling activities, 28 concerned Sami, 9 Romani/Taters, 4 Roma, 2 Jews, 3 Kvens and 1 in respect of Skogfinns.

47. The Advisory Committee also encourages the authorities to pay close attention to the Ombudsperson's request to expand its mandate in order to be able to grant legal aid to persons who consider themselves victims of discriminatory acts.

Roma and Romani/Taters

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

48. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were encouraged to step up their efforts to remove the difficulties encountered by Roma and Romani/Taters in the fields of housing, employment and education.

Present situation

49. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that the authorities have taken several important measures over the last few years to improve the situation of Roma and Romani/Taters in several areas including housing, employment and education. It notes in particular the value of the project set up to address these issues by the municipality of Oslo, offering personalised training courses to adults to support their integration in the labour market (see also the comments under Articles 6, 12 and 15 below). Moreover, a 2009-2012 Action Plan for Equality and Prevention of Ethnic Discrimination introduces 66 measures to facilitate access to welfare entitlements and services for migrants and persons belonging to national minorities. This plan is also aimed at improving knowledge of the extent and the causes of the discrimination suffered by these groups so as to remedy it through targeted policies, which should have a positive impact on the vulnerable situation of Roma and Romani/Taters (see also the comments under Article 3 above).

50. The Advisory Committee notes that despite the considerable progress achieved, many Roma and Romani/Taters are still victims of discrimination in access to accommodation. It is especially concerned over indications that members of these groups are often faced with difficulties during their seasonal travel. It would seem that many owners of commercial camping sites deny them access or evict them, thereby preventing these groups from stopping when required (see also comments in paragraph 72). Several interlocutors also mentioned a discriminatory attitude on the part of the police force when it is summoned, by persons belonging to these groups, who wish to exercise their right to make use of a commercial camping site on the same terms as all other persons. The Advisory Committee considers that this discriminatory attitude from law enforcement officers is incompatible with the obligations of the authorities to implement the provisions of Article 4 of the Framework Convention.

Recommendations

51. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to take resolute measures to improve the situation of persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities during their seasonal travel.

52. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to ensure that all forms of discrimination against persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities in the provision of services be firmly opposed. Discriminatory attitudes from the police must also be effectively and appropriately sanctioned.

53. The authorities should ensure that the policies and programmes intended to improve the situation of Roma and Romani/Taters are implemented effectively in close consultation with the persons concerned.

Article 5 of the Framework Convention

Financial support for the cultures of national minorities

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

54. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee invited the authorities to step up their efforts to support the cultural activities of national minorities and to ensure that the measures suited the needs of these groups, particularly in the sphere of languages. The authorities were also encouraged to pursue the establishment of a Roma Community Centre in Oslo.

55. The authorities were also invited to ensure that the museum reform⁶ take proper account of the needs of the national minorities, particularly by consulting them in the decision-making processes affecting the preservation of their cultures and traditions.

Present situation

56. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that the authorities continue to give substantial support to the preservation of the national minorities' cultural institutions. It is pleased to note that the system established consists of an annual subsidy which allows funding to be provided on a regular basis and ensures continuity in the activities and programmes. In addition, it is possible to request additional funding for occasional projects. The Advisory Committee notes with interest that grants have been allocated for increasing support for minority languages, resulting inter alia in the opening of a Norwegian, Kven/Finnish and Sami Languages and Cultural Centre in Storffjord municipality. The Advisory Committee also notes that the subsidies allocated to the various museums presenting the culture and history of national minorities increased between 2007 and 2010.

57. The Advisory Committee notes that the museum reform, aimed at merging smaller establishments into larger entities belonging to the network of Norwegian museums, was completed in 2009. The representatives of the Skogfinn minority, who had earlier expressed strong reservations about this restructuring, have stated that their museum (Norsk Skogfinsk Museum) has continued to receive public funds and that the question of its possible attachment to the new Hedmark County museum, which opened in January 2010 in the context of the reform, might be considered in the near future.

58. While acknowledging that education in Finnish is provided to their children, the representatives of the Skogfinn minority are concerned by the forthcoming closure of several primary schools because of insufficient enrolment of pupils. They fear that the closures might have a negative impact on the preservation of their culture, their language and their identity.

59. The representatives of the Kven minority also drew the attention of the Advisory Committee to the need for additional financial resources to promote their language and to set up a cultural fund.

60. Moreover, the representatives of the Roma and Romani/Taters regret the insufficient concern taken by the authorities for their culture and traditions. They observe that many projects concern the creation of spaces, such as archives and museums reflecting the past history of the Roma people, but not necessarily its current concerns. They stress that although their traditional

⁶ The reform of the museums network was started up in 2006 under the leadership of the Oslo Museum. The network now comprises 21 widely-differing museums. All of the museums focus on issues relating to indigenous peoples, national minorities or recent immigration.

lifestyle is nomadic and travel forms an integral part of their identity, few resources are deployed by the authorities to aid their seasonal travels and to make Norwegian society aware of the importance of travel for the preservation of their culture. In this context, the Advisory Committee regrets that no progress has been made concerning the establishment of a Roma Community Center in Oslo. It also notes that, despite the announcement made by the authorities, the support for a programme of research on national minority issues has not yet been provided.

61. In general, representatives of all national minorities expressed regret that financial aid supports projects mainly presenting their historical image, to the detriment of projects which would help them to keep their contemporary cultures alive. They would like the authorities to find ways of creating an environment conducive to the use of their minority languages.

62. The Advisory Committee recalls that the learning and use of minority languages form one of the essential ways of transmitting and preserving the culture of national minorities, and that it remains the responsibility of the authorities to take appropriate measures to support minority cultures, in particular by preserving their languages. The Advisory Committee believes that the authorities should take account of the wishes expressed by the persons belonging to national minorities, in particular those referring to their perception of culture, and increase the awareness of minority cultures within the majority population. It considers that cultural projects should be suited to the needs which the national minorities consider most important to them. The Advisory Committee recalls that the meaning of Article 5 is not only to preserve but also to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture.

Recommendations

63. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to take appropriate measures to support effectively the cultures of persons belonging to national minorities, in particular by preserving their languages.

64. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to pay more attention to the needs expressed by the persons belonging to national minorities in order to promote not only the historical image but also the contemporary aspects of their identities including culture and languages, in close consultation with the persons concerned.

Article 6 of the Framework Convention

Combating intolerance

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

65. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were invited to take additional measures to foster greater awareness of the history and culture of national minorities and of the various groups making up Norwegian society, and to ensure that the media performed an active role in this field.

66. The Advisory Committee also encouraged the authorities to train the law enforcement bodies in order to improve mutual trust between the Roma and the police.

Present situation

67. The Advisory Committee notes that Norway continues to be characterised by a general climate of tolerance. Moreover, given the increased diversity of Norwegian society, the authorities are endeavouring to develop initiatives for promoting knowledge of other cultures and the positive input of diversity to society. During the last few years, the authorities have

produced several reports on Norway's general approach towards integration, migration and minorities issues, which could be used as materials for a thorough political analysis of the Norwegian policy in these fields. The Advisory Committee welcomes in particular the research conducted by the Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities. It takes note of the project to ascertain how Judaism and Islam are perceived by the Norwegian population and to understand the reasons that sometimes drive teenagers to intolerant behaviour towards certain minority groups. Consequently, debates are held with teachers to find tools to teach contemporary history, for example the Holocaust and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to classes comprising pupils of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. In this context, in view of the information received concerning some manifestations of intolerance, in particular from children and youngsters towards Jews, the Advisory Committee points out the importance of promoting mutual respect in schools.

68. Furthermore, in spite of the funds provided by the authorities since 2006 to ensure the safety of the places of worship of the Jewish community in Oslo and Trondheim, information received from the representatives of this minority indicated that the security of their community is often threatened.

69. The Advisory Committee observes an upsurge of expressions of racism and intolerance towards persons belonging to minority groups. The representatives of civil society state that the frequency of expressions of hostility towards immigrants in political and public debate has increased in the last few years. The principle of respect for freedom of expression often justifies the lack of sanctions of hate speech. The Advisory Committee is concerned by the apparent lack of appropriate reactions by the majority population, the media and the political leaders, who do not condemn these hostile attitudes firmly enough. For instance, the Advisory Committee has been informed that it is commonplace at the beginning of summer to read warnings in the local press against the arrival in municipalities of the Roma and Romani/Tatars due to their seasonal movements. This attitude contributes to reinforcing the negative prejudice against persons belonging to these groups.

70. Although the press' regulatory body seldom receives complaints regarding ethnic discrimination, the Advisory Committee is convinced that the repetition of intolerant conduct without sanction leads to acceptance and impunity of hate speech and encourages intolerance among the population. It considers that appropriate sanctions should be applied to the media which does not observe the rules of ethical conduct.

71. With regard to relations between members of national minorities and the police, the Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction the continuation of the existing measures to step up the recruitment of persons belonging to national minorities and to train as many police officers as possible about cultural diversity.

72. Nonetheless, the Advisory Committee remains concerned about the repeated discriminatory attitudes of the law enforcement authorities to Roma and Romani/Tatars, who complain of not being able to rely on the support of the police when they encounter problems regarding access to encampment areas. The Advisory Committee considers that in order to combat prejudice against the Roma and Romani/Tatars and facilitate their access to commercial camping sites, the authorities should inform the law enforcement bodies and the settled population, especially owners of camping grounds and holidaymakers staying in these places of the reasons why these people are travelling and the importance of travelling in order to preserve this essential component of the cultural identity of these groups. The Advisory Committee considers that efforts to further integration in a multicultural society should be accompanied by specific measures to support minority groups in preserving their own cultural identity.

Recommendations

73. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to take more resolute measures to promote tolerance, mutual respect and social cohesion in Norwegian society, and to ensure a regular inclusive review of such measures. The authorities should also encourage the media to comply fully with the rules of ethical conduct, with all due regard for media independence.

74. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to place emphasis, in police training, on the specificity of the traditional lifestyle of the Roma and Romani/Taters communities as an essential component of their cultural identity and to promote the recruitment of persons with Roma background into the police force.

75. The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to ensure that Roma and Romani/Taters are not denied access to commercial camping sites on arbitrary grounds.

76. The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to ensure the security of all persons belonging to national minorities especially in and around their places of worship in consultation with representatives of these groups.

The Commission on the Romani/Taters

Present situation

77. The Advisory Committee notes with interest the setting up in 2009 of a Commission on the Romani/Taters. The Commission, comprising five independent experts and three representatives of Romani/Taters organisations, has been instructed to investigate the way in which a policy of forced assimilation of the persons belonging to these minorities was implemented between 1930 and 1960, particularly the placement of approximately 2000 children in foster homes and the sterilisation of approximately 450 women. The findings of this wide-ranging investigation are expected to be available at the end of 2013, and should make it possible for all the victims to be identified and to be offered appropriate compensation.

78. The interlocutors of the Advisory Committee emphasised that it is sometimes difficult for victims to prove their identity and personal history due to the lack of judicial decisions on placement in foster families or other convincing evidence. They regretted that the procedure was too bureaucratic and that the local authorities, which are responsible for managing these matters, did not give them the full requisite priority. They also expressed concern about the absence of a national scheme for awarding financial compensation.

79. Whilst acknowledging the efforts made by the authorities, the Advisory Committee considers that, the deprivation of these persons of the possibility to identify with their culture constitutes an injustice on a large scale.

Recommendations

80. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to take effective measures to enable persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities who have been victims of the forced assimilation policy in the past to exercise their rights. It further encourages the authorities to take without delay all possible measures, including a more proactive attitude, such as using the public archives and other documentary evidence in order to enable all the persons concerned to be identified according to their own particular cultural origin. The authorities should also set up a national scheme for awarding appropriate financial compensation, in close consultation with the persons concerned.

Article 7 of the Framework Convention

Exercise of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

81. During the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were invited to ensure that the application of the new provisions on religious instruction would not subject pupils to lessons emphasising a particular religion or belief.

Present situation

82. The Advisory Committee notes with satisfaction that the established system operates well and that freedom of conscience and religion is upheld.⁷ It expects that the authorities will continue ensuring full respect for these principles as a part of religious instruction.

Article 9 of the Framework Convention

Access to the media and presence of persons belonging to national minorities in the media

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

83. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were invited to increase the proportion of programmes targeting the Kven minority and to take proper account of the needs of national minorities in the media in order to reflect more accurately the diversity prevailing in Norwegian society.

Present situation

84. The Advisory Committee welcomes the inclusion in the charter of the public television, by an amendment to its statutes in June 2009, of the obligation to promote the culture of the various minority groups in the media and to contribute through new programmes to the development of a multicultural society.

85. Moreover, the Advisory Committee notes that the state continues to provide subsidies for the monthly periodical of the Kven community (*Ruijan Kaiku*). According to the representatives of the Kven community, these grants are however not sufficient to cover their needs.

86. The Advisory Committee is concerned that national radio only broadcasts one weekly programme in the Finnish and Kven languages, lasting twelve minutes directed at persons belonging to the Kven minority and Finnish speakers, including recent immigrants, which is totally inadequate to meet the needs of this minority. The Advisory Committee regrets the lack of progress since the first monitoring cycle, despite requests in this regard lodged by the representatives of this minority over several years. The authorities are aware of this problem but declare that they cannot intervene in this debate, being bound to uphold the independence of the media. While agreeing that the principle of the independence of the media must be respected, the Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the authorities should ensure that public media adequately reflects diversity in society.

⁷ Norway has implemented the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Folgerø and Others v. Norway of 29 June 2007, Application n° 15472/02.

Recommendation

87. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to ensure that the needs of persons belonging to the Kven minority are duly accommodated by increased public radio broadcasting, while respecting the independence of the media.

Article 10 of the Framework Convention

Use of minority languages in dealings with the administrative authorities

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

88. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were encouraged to examine the requisite measures for improving the possibilities for persons belonging to the Kven minority to use their language in their contacts with the local administrative authorities.

Present situation

89. The Advisory Committee notes the report adopted in 2010 by the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, indicating that despite the recognition of Kven as a language in its own right, its situation remains precarious.⁸

90. According to information available to the Advisory Committee, the Kven language is not often spoken by and with the local authorities and no written public documents are issued. This situation is apparently less due to a lack of proficiency or the will to speak this language but more due to the diminishing presence of this language in the public domain. The Advisory Committee underlines the necessity for the authorities to encourage effectively the use of a recognised minority language and seek ways to promote its acceptance and its use in society.

Recommendation

91. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to promote further the use of Kven in public affairs, in close consultation with the representatives of the Kven minority.

Article 11 of the Framework Convention

Use of minority languages for surnames

Present situation

92. The Advisory Committee notes that since 2009, most Kven and Finnish characters have been used in the national population register, so that persons belonging to these groups now have their names spelt correctly.

93. The authorities indicate that they have been informed of a few cases where persons belonging to national minorities have not been able to reclaim their old name for lack of documents establishing with certainty that the name had been used in the past. According to the authorities, this could be due to a misinterpretation of the principles of the Personal Names Act and the Framework Convention by the local authorities (see also observations under Article 15 below).

⁸ See the 4th Report on Norway by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages adopted on 10 March 2010, ECRML(2010)3.

94. The Advisory Committee stresses that it is the duty of the central government to ensure that the statutory provisions protecting persons belonging to national minorities are correctly and effectively applied throughout the territory.

Recommendation

95. The Advisory Committee encourages the government to ensure that the local authorities apply the legislation on personal names correctly in respect of persons belonging to national minorities, throughout the territory of Norway, in conformity with the principles of the Framework Convention.

Place names in minority languages

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

96. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to take all necessary steps to guarantee that the current national legislation on place names was correctly implemented at local level.

Present situation

97. The Advisory Committee welcomes the fact that the Place Names Act was amended in 2008 in order to ensure more opportunities to provide additional place names in Kven.

98. According to the Advisory Committee's interlocutors, Kven place names are however uncommon and the representatives of this minority still meet with reluctance on the part of some municipalities and state authorities who do not regard the provision of topographical indications in minority languages as a priority.

Recommendation

99. The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to take more proactive measures to ensure that the provisions of Article 11.3 of the Framework Convention are effectively implemented at the regional and local levels.

Article 12 of the Framework Convention

Situation of Roma and Romani/Taters children in the education system

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

100. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to continue to improve the integration and schooling of Roma and Romani/Taters children. The authorities were also invited to devise and implement initiatives to enhance mutual knowledge and raise teachers' awareness of a multicultural environment.

Present situation

101. The Advisory Committee notes with interest the project conducted since 2009 in Oslo by the municipal authority to resolve the difficulties faced by Roma and Romani/Taters children,⁹ particularly pupil absenteeism (see also comments under Article 4 above). The Advisory Committee highly commends the pragmatic and inclusive approach adopted by the authorities in this case, working in partnership with those parents who have expressed the wish to learn how to

⁹ The project concerns about 80 children.

read and write and with a "contact person" belonging to the Roma community. Thanks to this interaction, mutual trust now seems firmly established between all actors, and pupil absenteeism has consequently dropped. Furthermore, school support measures are offered to all pupils with specific needs, irrespective of their ethnic origin. The Advisory Committee welcomes the fact that this project is open to children of immigrant origin who have resided in Norway for at least three months. It also notes with satisfaction that the impact of the project is positively assessed by the authorities, who are considering its conversion into a permanent programme. In addition, this project has also helped to make Roma and Romani/Tatars culture known to teachers. The Advisory Committee is pleased to note that teachers are increasingly aware of the multicultural environment, particularly following the curriculum reform "Knowledge Promotion", one of whose goals is to ensure that all pupils have acquired a sound knowledge of the history and culture of the national minorities by the end of the 7th grade.

102. Despite these positive developments, the Advisory Committee is concerned that the schooling of a large number of Roma and Romani/Tatars children seems not to be properly ensured during the summer months when they are travelling with their parents. According to the Advisory Committee's interlocutors, insufficient facilities are provided for the Roma children to be able to continue studying during this period although modern technologies should enable them to study under distance learning programmes.

103. The Advisory Committee considers that persons belonging to the Roma and the Romani/Tatars communities should be able to preserve their traditional lifestyle which is an integral part of their cultural identity without this having a negative effect on the education of their children (see also the observations under Article 5 above).

Recommendations

104. The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to continue and to intensify the measures taken with a view to remedying the difficulties encountered by Roma and Romani/Tatars children in the education system within the framework of an ongoing dialogue with the representatives of these minorities.

105. The Advisory Committee also urges the authorities to find solutions suited to the particular lifestyle of Roma and Romani/Tatars children in order to grant them equality in access to quality education while preserving their culture by developing adopted educational programmes, including by distance learning.

Article 14 of the Framework Convention

Teaching of minority languages and in minority languages

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

106. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to establish the necessary conditions for the teaching of Kven.

107. The authorities were also invited to look at the needs and the demand for teaching of/in minority languages and to meet any demands in that respect.

Present situation

108. The Advisory Committee welcomes the fact that Kven and Finnish are taught in the primary and secondary schools in Tromsø and in a number of other municipalities in the counties of Troms and Finnmark, although the number of pupils following schooling in Kven is decreasing. There is a similar situation at Tromsø University, where the language department

provides year-round courses in Kven and Finnish at all university levels but finds that the number of students enrolled in the Kven course is much lower than those choosing Finnish. Furthermore, the absence of kindergartens providing Kven language education prevents the children from being taught their minority language at pre-school level. The Advisory Committee considers that in view of the precarious situation of the Kven language, there should be support for all measures aimed at enabling Kven speakers to use their language, including for children of pre-school age, in order to create a social environment conducive to the learning and use of this language.

109. The Advisory Committee notes with interest that the process of standardisation of the Kven language is proceeding with the support of the authorities, who in 2006 financed the establishment of a Kven Language Council, responsible for conducting this work under the auspices of the Kven Institute. This government policy comes within the scope of the 2008 white paper on language policy indicating the measures which the authorities should undertake to revitalise the Kven language. These include consideration for the standardisation of the Kven language when fixing the budget and the mandate of the Kven Institute.

110. Despite these developments, the representatives of the Kven minority regret that teacher training remains problematic and that there is still a lack of teaching materials available. The Kven Institute also drew the Advisory Committee's attention to the magnitude of the task represented by the standardisation of the language and to the inadequacy of the financial and human resources at its disposal for bringing this work to completion within a reasonable timeframe. Finally, all the Advisory Committee's interlocutors regret that, in spite of the efforts made by the authorities, there is no comprehensive and appropriate policy on the protection and promotion of the Kven language.

111. The Advisory Committee, while recognising the current involvement of the authorities, considers that efforts should be intensified to promote the Kven language. It considers that the authorities should pay particular attention to the needs of the Kven Institute so that the standardisation process may be finalised within a reasonable timeframe.

Recommendations

112. The Advisory Committee calls upon the authorities to design, adopt and implement effectively a comprehensive and appropriate policy on the protection and the promotion of the Kven language in consultation with the representatives of this minority.

113. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue the efforts to revitalise the Kven language and to provide the additional resources which the Kven Institute needs in order to finalise the standardisation of the Kven language within a reasonable timeframe. Additional measures should be taken to develop the teaching of the Kven language for children of pre-school age.

Article 15 of the Framework Convention

Participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public affairs

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

114. In the previous monitoring cycles, the Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to reinforce the existing arrangements for consulting the national minorities and involving them in the decision making process.

115. The authorities were also requested to ensure due application of the Finnmark Act in respect of all the persons concerned and especially the Kvens.

Present situation

116. The Advisory Committee notes that consultation of the national minorities is carried out via the Inter-ministerial Co-ordinating Committee for National Minorities and the Contact Forum between the National Minorities and the Central Authorities. It observes that other channels of communication and consultation are used, such as the bilateral meetings regularly organised by specialised ministries with the associations of the national minorities and other stakeholders in civil society to ascertain their views on draft legislation or other questions affecting them.

117. Furthermore, according to the authorities, the transfer of all policies on national minorities to the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs (FAD), which occurred in 2010, should enhance dialogue with the national minorities, as the FAD is responsible for furthering relations between the state institutions concerned and the national minorities. The reform also seeks to optimise the involvement and accountability of the regional and local administrations with regard to these questions, as the government acknowledges that these authorities are not always aware of their obligations in this sphere, particularly those arising from the Framework Convention (see also comments under Article 11 above).

118. According to the Advisory Committee's interlocutors, this recent change of responsibility within the government has on the contrary caused a lack of co-ordination that often results in repetitive and unproductive formalities for the associations of national minorities which approach the public authorities for the management of their grant applications or other requests.

119. The Advisory Committee understands that the FAD is responsible for the co-ordination and that the specialised ministries retain competence for the implementation of policies and the handling of substantive issues. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee reiterates that it rests with the authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure effective communication with persons belonging to national minorities in order to guarantee the effective exercise of their rights.

120. Moreover, the representatives of the Kven minority have complained to the Advisory Committee of not being consulted when decisions are taken concerning the management of natural resources, for example the maintenance of fishing and hunting rights in newly created nature parks, in pursuance of the Finnmark Act of 2005.

121. The authorities emphasise that, in accordance with the Finnmark Act, all inhabitants have the same fishing and hunting rights, irrespective of their ethnic origin or identity. The act furthermore instituted a special commission for Finnmark to consider the question of existing rights, and the parties to any disagreement may apply to the tribunal established for that purpose. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee considers that it remains important to ensure that all the persons concerned are consulted on issues affecting them.

Recommendations

122. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to persevere with their dialogue-based approach in order to sustain effective participation by the representatives of the national minorities in all decision-making processes affecting them and ensure coordination between all state authorities and national minorities concerned.

123. It also invites the authorities to take steps to increase the visibility and the understanding of the Framework Convention as well as its effective implementation at regional and local level.

Participation of Roma and Romani/Tatars in socio-economic life

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

124. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were invited to adopt specific measures of support in respect of Roma and Romani/Tatars, having regard to the difficulties encountered by these groups, particularly in employment.

Present situation

125. The Advisory Committee was informed that the participation of persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Tatars minorities in socio-economic life remains difficult, despite the introduction of innovative projects to aid the access of these groups to the labour market (see comments under Articles 4 and 12 above). The Advisory Committee was also informed that the impact of these measures nevertheless remains limited even though some persons belonging to Roma and Romani/Tatars have obtained financial assistance for opening small businesses.

Recommendation

126. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to assess the measures already taken with a view to increase participation of Roma and Romani/Tatars to socio-economic life and consider the adoption of new measures, in consultation with the persons belonging to national minorities.

Article 18 of the Framework Convention

Bilateral and regional co-operation on minority-related issues

Recommendations from the two previous cycles of monitoring

127. In the previous monitoring cycles, the authorities were encouraged to develop regional co-operation for the protection of national minorities.

Present situation

128. The Advisory Committee is pleased to note that the Nordic Working Group for National Minorities¹⁰ continues to meet annually in order to examine policies and other questions related to minority issues. However, according to information received, transfrontier co-operation on regional level is insufficient.

Recommendation

129. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to co-operate with neighbouring countries including in the context of the Nordic Working Group for National Minorities.

¹⁰ The Nordic Working Group for National Minorities is a governmental structure, set up in 2004, composed of representatives of Swedish, Finnish, Danish and Norwegian ministries.

III. CONCLUSIONS

130. The Advisory Committee considers that the present concluding remarks could serve as the basis for the conclusions and recommendations to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers with respect to Norway.

Positive developments following two cycles of monitoring

131. Norway has maintained a consistent policy of support to persons belonging to national minorities and has followed an overall inclusive and positive approach with regards to the personal scope of the Framework Convention. In particular, migrants who belong to ethnic groups with national minority status, although they have arrived recently in Norway, are entitled to benefit from the same measures as those intended for the national minorities.

132. The Anti-Discrimination Act of 2006 was amended in 2009 to increase the role of employers in combating discrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, the office of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson was established in 2006 to monitor the implementation of legal provisions, to assess practices and to receive complaints from individuals. An Action Plan (2009-2012) for Equality and Prevention of Ethnic Discrimination has been developed and an educational project to promote the social inclusion of the Roma in different spheres of life is being implemented in Oslo.

133. Given the increased diversity of Norwegian society, the authorities are endeavouring to develop initiatives for promoting knowledge of other cultures and the positive input of diversity to society, such as the project conducted by the Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities which analyses how Judaism and Islam are perceived by the Norwegian population.

134. Norway continues to support measures to step up the recruitment of persons belonging to national minorities into the police force and to train as many police officers as possible about cultural diversity.

135. The efforts made in recent years to remedy the injustices committed under the past policies of assimilation against the Romani/Tatars have been intensified, in particular with the establishment of the Commission for Romani/Tatars.

136. Norway continues to support by annual financial subsidies the educational and cultural activities organised by the representatives of national minorities. Additional measures have also been taken to revitalise and to promote the Kven culture, such as the standardisation process of the Kven language.

Issues of concern following two cycles of monitoring

137. Persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Tatars minorities, who consider themselves victims of discriminatory acts, hesitate to approach the Ombudsperson either because they have insufficient knowledge of the legislation in force and of the possible remedies, or because they consider the Ombudsperson's means of action unsuited to their needs and their itinerant lifestyle. Only few complaints of discrimination based on ethnic origin have been lodged. It appears that the Ombudsperson lacks the resources necessary to increase its visibility, particularly in respect of persons belonging to national minorities. In this context, the current resources available for the Ombudsperson's office are insufficient to enable it to carry out its mission effectively.

138. The frequency of expressions of hostility towards immigrants in political and public debate has increased in the last few years. It seems that there is a lack of appropriate reaction by the majority population, the media and the political leaders, who do not condemn these hostile attitudes firmly enough. The principle of respect for freedom of expression often justifies the lack of sanctions of hate speech.

139. Hostile and discriminatory attitudes on the part of the police force has been reported against persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Tatars minorities, who complain of not being able to rely on the support of the police when they encounter problems regarding access to commercial camping sites during their seasonal travel.

140. Some difficulties continue to be reported in terms of access to individual compensation by Romani/Tatars who have been victims of the past policies of assimilation and who are unable to prove their cultural origin due to the lack of judicial decisions on placement in foster families, or other convincing evidence. Some difficulties continue to be reported in terms of access to individual compensation due to the absence of a national scheme for awarding financial compensation.

141. The national radio only broadcasts one weekly programme in the Finnish and Kven languages lasting twelve minutes directed at persons belonging to the Kven minority.

142. The situation of the Kven language is still precarious and more determined action is needed to create an environment more likely to encourage the use of this minority language. The absence of kindergartens providing Kven language education prevents the children belonging to this minority from being taught their minority language at pre-school level. There is also a lack of qualified teachers speaking the Kven language and of teaching materials.

143. It is regrettable that the schooling of a large number of Roma and Romani/Tatars children is not properly ensured during the summer months when they are travelling with their parents. New facilities are needed to provide these children with lessons under distance teaching programmes.

Recommendations

144. In addition to the measures to be taken to implement the detailed recommendations contained in Sections I and II of the Advisory Committee's Opinion, the authorities are invited to take the following measures to improve further the implementation of the Framework Convention:

Issues for immediate action¹¹

- **Take more resolute measures to promote tolerance, mutual respect and social cohesion in Norwegian society, and to ensure a regular inclusive review of such measures; take the necessary measures in order for the media to comply fully with their rules of ethical conduct, with all due regard for media independence;**

¹¹ The recommendations below are listed in the order of the corresponding articles of the Framework Convention.

- **Take effective measures to enable persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities who are victims of the forced assimilation policy in the past to exercise their rights; take all possible measures without delay, including a more proactive attitude, such as using the public archives and other documentary evidence in order to enable all the persons concerned to be identified according to their own particular cultural origin; set up a national scheme for awarding appropriate financial compensation, in close consultation with the persons concerned;**
- **Continue the efforts to revitalize the Kven language and to provide the additional resources which the Kven Institute needs in order to finalise the standardisation of the Kven language within a reasonable timeframe; provide additional measures to develop the teaching of the Kven language for children of pre-school age.**

Further recommendations¹²

- Ensure the effective implementation of the legislative framework for minority rights at all levels, in particular by regional and local authorities;
- Carry out actions to increase public awareness about the work of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsperson;
- Provide the additional resources which the Ombudsperson's office needs to carry on its mission effectively;
- Take resolute measures to improve the situation of persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities during their seasonal travel;
- Ensure that all forms of discrimination against persons belonging to the Roma and Romani/Taters minorities in the provision of services are firmly opposed and in particular that Roma and Romani/Taters are not denied access to commercial camping sites on arbitrary grounds. Discriminatory attitudes from the police must also be effectively and appropriately sanctioned;
- Place emphasis, in police training, on the specificity of the traditional lifestyle of the Roma and Romani/Tater minorities as an essential component of their cultural identity and promote the recruitment of Roma into the police force;
- Ensure to meet the needs of persons belonging to the Kven minority are duly accommodated by increased public radio broadcasting, while respecting the independence of the media;
- Seek appropriate solutions suited to the particular lifestyle of Roma and Romani/Taters children in order to grant them equality in access to quality education, while preserving their culture, by developing adopted educational programmes, including by distance learning.

¹² The recommendations below are listed in the order of the corresponding articles of the Framework Convention.