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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Seventh periodic report submitted by Norway under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, due in 2025* **

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



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 Covenant). The report covers the period 2020 to 1 May 2025 and was completed on 28 May 2025. In the preparation of the 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 (CCD) (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 with contributions from relevant ministries and other authorities. Civil society was included in the process. The Ministry held a public meeting where civil society was invited to share its concerns. Civil society, as well as the Sámediggi (Sami Parliament) and others, were also invited to submit contributions to a draft report. Contributions were communicated to the relevant ministries and taken into account during the drafting.

4. The concluding observations of the Committee on the sixth report are addressed in the present report, with references to the relevant paragraphs.

5. Further information and all references and sources to legislation, white papers, action plans etc. cited in the report, are available in annex 1.

Paragraph 49 of the concluding observations (E/C.12/NOR/CO/6)

6. The concluding observations by the Committee received in 2020 were published on the official Government website.

7. Responsibility for following up on recommendations received from the Committee and other human rights treaty bodies is delegated to the relevant ministry, since managing such follow-up is most adeptly carried out by the ministry which oversees the relevant subject. The constructive dialogue between relevant ministries and the Norwegian Human Rights Institution (NIM) 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, NIM, and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud.

B. General recommendations by the Committee

Domestic application of the Covenant

Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the concluding observations

8. 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. Hence, many of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Covenant have been incorporated in the Constitution. The Constitution Article 92 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 to which Norway is bound. Furthermore, the Covenant is fully incorporated into Norwegian law through the Human Rights Act, and

thus 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.

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

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

11. The Norwegian Courts Administration is responsible for the training of judges. Both the national training programme for judges and ad hoc seminars have addressed elements of the rights enshrined in the Covenant, including updates on judgments from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The Courts Administration also organises annual visits to the ECHR. There is moreover a strong emphasis within the judiciary on the specific needs related to children's rights and the Sami, among other areas.

12. The Director of Public Prosecutions annually sets out a national directive on priorities for the Prosecuting Authority. By establishing such priorities and giving guidance on crimes related to sexual offences, domestic abuse and violence, human trafficking and labour crime, the Director 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. 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 the Prosecuting Authority on related issues.

13. Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Covenant has been considered by the Government in 2016, when 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 maintained that ratification could limit national authorities' margin of discretion and that it could lead to increased judicialisation, especially concerning economic and social rights. The question of ratification has not been considered since.

14. According to the "Instructions for Official Studies of Central Government Measures" (The Instructions), "fundamental questions" raised by a proposed government measure must be considered in a balanced, systematic and integrated manner. This includes an assessment of relevant human rights obligations, including the Covenant. For instance, where the Covenant is relevant for draft legislation, considerations concerning conformity are included in the Government's proposition to the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). In 2024, the purpose clause of the Instructions was revised. The Instructions now state 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 made explicit.

Extraterritorial obligations

Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the concluding observations

15. For information on the Government Pension Fund Global (GPGF), reference is made to Norway's CCD, paras. 27-29, and to Norway's Universal Periodic Review fourth cycle National Report (2024), paras. 143-146.

16. The GPGF is a financial investor and not a strategic owner. As is stated in the GPGF's 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 recognised principles and standards, such as the UN Global Compact, the OECD Principles of Corporate Governance and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct principles (OECD Guidelines).

17. In addition, the Ministry of Finance has adopted "Guidelines for Observation and Exclusion of Companies from the GPGF" (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 an independent Committee in 2019-20, cf. Official Norwegian Report NOU 2020: 7. For the human rights criterion specifically, the wording was revised to clarify that it 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 may be used in military operations that constitute serious and systematic violations of international humanitarian law.

18. In August 2024, the Council on Ethics issued a letter to the Ministry of Finance, describing the Council's work regarding Israeli settlements and other activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). Both the Government and the Council has consistently taken the position that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank violate international law. Based on the recommendation of the Council, ten companies have so far been excluded from the GPFG due to their activities on the West Bank. In the letter to the Ministry, the Council described the recent developments 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 reported that it has started a thorough and wide review of companies in the GPFG's portfolio that carry out activities in the OPT area.

Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the concluding observations

19. The "National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Guiding Principles" is continually 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 Norway's commitment to adhering to the OECD Guidelines.

20. The Government expects all Norwegian companies to comply with international standards for responsible business conduct, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the OECD Guidelines. In addition, as owner, the Government has specific expectations for state-owned companies on responsible business conduct and sustainability, as exemplified in e.g., the Government's 2022 white paper on state ownership policy. For instance, state-owned companies are expected to lead the field in the work on responsible conduct, to respect human rights and workers' rights and to promote decent working conditions in the company's own activities and in its supply chain.

21. The Transparency Act (in force 1 July 2022) 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 approximately 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 the duty and competence to provide guidance, and to supervise enterprises' compliance with the obligations in the Act. To ensure compliance, it has also been given the authority to issue administrative decisions, including prohibitions and orders.

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

23. The Government is in the process of evaluating the Transparency Act to identify its strengths and weaknesses. The aim is to publish a report by summer 2025. As part of the evaluation, the Government will consider how the Directive (EU) 2024/1760 on corporate sustainability due diligence (CSDDD) can be implemented in Norwegian law. The Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 on prohibiting products made with forced labour from being

placed on the EU market or being exported from the EU will also be considered in conjunction with the CSDDD as part of the ongoing evaluation.

Climate change

Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the concluding observations

24. The *Climate Status and Plan* summarises the Government's climate policy. 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 an appendix to the proposition to the Storting on the Fiscal Budget for 2025. 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 its climate goal under the Paris Agreement in line with pathways needed to realise the Agreement's temperature goal.

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

26. The Paris Agreement is arranged in a way in which each country is accountable for emissions from its own territory and economic zone. Norwegian climate policy is based on this framework. Norway and Iceland entered into an agreement with the EU in 2019 to cooperate to fulfil their respective climate targets for 2030. Under the agreement, Norway will take part in EU climate legislation from 2021 to 2030. When Norway entered into the agreement, the EU legislation was designed to achieve emission reductions of at least 40 per cent compared with the 1990 level. The EU, Iceland and Norway have all 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.

27. In November 2022, Norway updated its climate target for 2030 under the Paris Agreement. Norway's updated climate target ("Nationally Determined Contribution", NDC) 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. This target is enshrined in the Climate Change Act. Norway seeks to fulfil its increased ambition through climate cooperation with the EU. Norway is part of the enhanced EU Emission Trading System and is currently assessing whether it should take part in the updated Effort Sharing Regulation and the Regulation on land use, land use change, and forestry, and, if so, on what terms. The updated legislation will not apply in Norway until the Storting has given its consent.

28. In accordance with the Paris Agreement, in 2025, all countries must submit new climate targets for the period after 2030. In April 2025, the Government proposed a new reduction of emissions target to the Storting; at least 70-75 per cent by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. It will 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.

29. 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 neighbouring European countries. Europe is highly dependent on imports of oil and gas from other regions and is expected to remain so for many years to come, including in scenarios consistent with reaching ambitious climate targets.

30. Norwegian oil and gas contribute to energy security and affordability for Norway's trading partners. In addition, the production and transportation of Norwegian oil and gas generates much lower greenhouse gas emissions than alternative sources for the European market. Norway is committed to conducting a responsible and predictable petroleum policy in dealing with climate change challenges, where Norway's human rights obligations also constitute 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 (CCS), hydrogen, offshore wind, aquaculture, and mineral-based industries. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report (2021) to CEDAW (CEDAW/C/NOR/10) para. 174 for additional information.

31. There are continuous efforts on reducing emissions from the production of oil and gas in Norway. Emissions from oil and gas production in Norway are declining and are already significantly lower on average compared to most other petroleum producing countries. In close cooperation with the petroleum industry, the Government will work to reduce emissions from the Norwegian continental shelf by 50 per cent by 2030 compared to 2005 levels and to net zero by 2050.

32. The solutions to the world's climate and energy challenges, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement, are global and must be solved through both global cooperation and domestic measures. Norway will contribute to achieving these goals, including helping the global energy transition and supporting the green transition. This includes committing major resources to technology development for mitigation, including offshore wind, hydrogen produced with zero or low emissions, and CCS. See the "Biennial Transparency Report" for more information.

Sustainable development

Paragraph 48 of the concluding observations

33. Progress on achieving the SDGs is monitored by the Government. A progress report is submitted to the Storting annually, as part of the budgetary process. Additionally, the Government regularly submits white papers on the SDGs and it presents "Voluntary National Reviews" (VNRs) of the progress to the UN. The latest white paper and VNR were 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 progress in the upcoming VNR. The assessment will be included unedited and in its entirety.

34. Norway spends approximately one per cent of its gross national income on 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 achieve all of the 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. Inclusion and empowerment of groups in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, children and young people, as well as the LGBTIQ+ community, are emphasised. 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 aspects of Norwegian development cooperation.

Data collection

Paragraphs 12 and 13 of the concluding observations

35. Statistics Norway, the national statistical institute, does not produce statistics on ethnic background. Reference is made to Norway's combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports to CERD (2023) (CERD/C/NOR/25-27) paras. 4-12 for further information.

Legal aid

Paragraphs 14 and 15 of the concluding observations

36. The Legal Aid Act was reviewed by an independent committee in 2018-20. The Committee's recommendations regarding the financial terms for legal aid (means testing) have resulted in amendments to the legislation, which will strengthen the right to legal aid. When these amendments enter into force, about 33 per cent of the population 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. In April 2025,

the Government presented a second proposition for amendments to the Act, regarding the types of cases covered by the scheme. If these changes are adopted by the Storting, the legal aid scheme will be further strengthened.

Part II

A. General provisions of the Covenant

Article 2

Realisation of rights, equality and non-discrimination

Realisation of rights

37. Reference is made to Norway's CCD parts II and III.

International economic and technical assistance and cooperation

38. For information on Norwegian development cooperation, see para. 34 above. Norwegian development policy and aid have defined four intersecting 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 intersecting considerations, it is expected that grant recipients shall implement measures to mitigate these risks.

39. Since 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 2023 action plan for women's rights and gender equality in Norway's foreign and development policy. 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 to participate in the workforce and have influence on societal and democratic development.

40. Digital inequality must be reduced. Norway's leadership in the development and sharing of digital public goods and the promotion of basic public digital infrastructure is part of its effort to achieve a safe, fair, and inclusive digital future for all. Norway gives priority to closer international health cooperation and strengthened global health preparedness so that the world can prevent, detect at an early stage, 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.

41. Norway is additionally working to ensure that countries in need receive necessary and rapid debt relief. 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, programmes, and specialised agencies, the World Bank, and the regional development banks is particularly important to ensuring a rapid, coordinated response in crisis situations.

Non-discrimination

42. Reference is made to Norway's CCD part III and to Norway's tenth periodic report (2021) to CEDAW, paras. 18 and 20-21. Norway has robust anti-discrimination legislation protecting individuals against discrimination, with particularly strong protection in employment, cf. the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and the Working Environment Act. The principle of non-discrimination is also enshrined in Article 98 of the Constitution, elevating a key human right to a part of the Constitution itself.

43. The equality and anti-discrimination legislation is enforced by the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, while the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) promotes equality and offers guidance to individuals on their rights. A 2024 legal review of this enforcement mechanism, commissioned by the Government, indicates that it largely functions as intended. The review suggests some legislative and administrative adjustments, and the Government is considering following up the recommendations.

44. Norway is a diverse society, and it is important that this is reflected in boards, committees, and tribunals. There has been some concern regarding diversity amongst the members of the Tribunal. When new members were appointed to the Tribunal in 2024, the Government strived to ensure greater diversity among its members.

45. The Government intends to draft a legislative proposal in 2025 to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into the Human Rights Act.

46. Although there has been positive development in many areas, many Sami still experience discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. In January 2025, the Government for the first time launched a dedicated national action plan against hate and discrimination against the Sami. The Government collaborated with the Sámediggi, 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 LDO in Northern Norway. The branch will provide guidance and assistance to Sami persons facing discrimination and contribute to ensuring the development of equitable services for them.

47. 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 the Sami and facilitate a regional gathering for knowledge sharing and competence building. These initiatives will contribute to a better understanding and handling of discrimination against the Sami people within local services. Furthermore, the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) has made its North Sami telephone line permanent, ensuring that Sami-speaking users can communicate in their own language. Additionally, North Sami 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.

48. Concern has been raised about the 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 Data Protection Authority has reviewed the case, and has concluded that their investigation did not reveal any processing of personal data in violation of the Police Databases Act. The Authority 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 investigations. However, it is understood that this matter has been challenging for the Roma community, regardless of the legality assessment. The police are working on dialogue and trust-building efforts towards the Roma community. The National Police Directorate has moreover initiated significant efforts to enhance the work of the police in general related to diversity, equality and anti-discrimination. The measures include the creation of an action plan on diversity, dialogue and trust.

49. It is understood that persons with a national minority background have experienced difficulties in changing their names to their traditional family names. As a result of previous assimilation policies, names have in some cases been subject to "Norwegianisation" and thus fallen out of use. However, the Names Act allows individuals belonging to a national minority to adopt a name that has fallen out of use. The Act section 4, para. 1, number 9, allows the use of protected surnames to which one has a special connection, through family or otherwise, regardless of the restrictions on protected surnames set out in section 3. The aim is to allow individuals with connections to national minorities the opportunity to adopt previous family names. The preparatory works explain that this may, for example, apply to a

name that has disappeared from the family due to previous assimilation policies. In such cases, particular flexibility is to be exercised by public authorities regarding e.g., the documentation requirements when applying for the name change.

50. Concerns have been raised by civil society about whether the implementation of the Security Act regarding personnel security may be in conflict with Norway's human rights obligations. Requirements for personnel security are necessary to counter insider threats, thereby strengthening national security. In light of the current international security situation, it is crucial to have control over who gets access to classified information and our protected objects and infrastructure. Security clearance decisions are based on individual complex, discretionary, and security-related assessments. The Security Act imposes strict requirements on clearance authorities to safeguard the individual's legal rights, including requirements for case information and to provide information about the concerns which led to security clearance being denied, when relevant. At the same time, it is important that the clearance regime balances this concern against that of national security, as both concerns are very important for the trust and legitimacy in the clearance system. It follows from current provisions on security clearance that decisions on security clearances shall be based on individual assessments in accordance with the law and the rights of the person being subject to security clearance. In a 2025 white paper on total preparedness, the Government states that it will strengthen personnel security through a clearance system that is fit for the future. It is important that the authorities' work on security clearances effectively contributes to countering threats, while concurrently safeguarding the individuals' rights.

Paragraphs 20 and 21 of the concluding observations

51. The 2020 action plan on racism and discrimination contained 50 measures in nine different areas. The Government has, among other things, 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 (2012/2017/2022). 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 completed in 2027.

52. Building on the 2020-2023 action plan, the Government launched a renewed action plan in November 2023, "Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination – New Initiatives 2024–2027", which contains 50 measures aimed at protecting all groups subject to racism and discrimination. The plan has a particular emphasis on inclusion in the labour market and the 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.

53. In accordance with 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 which it will use as a basis for further efforts and discussions with, amongst others, municipalities, workers' and employers' organisations, and the voluntary sector to ensure the implementation of further measures to combat racism and discrimination.

54. In 2021, the Introduction Act was replaced by the new Integration Act. One of the objectives of the Integration Act is that more refugees shall gain formal education through the Introduction Programme. The target group for this programme under the new act is however the same as under the Introduction Act.

55. 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 participant's educational background and competence, and the participant's individual "programme goal". Participants in the programme are entitled to an 'Introductory Benefit'.

56. Proposals for changes to the Integration Act were sent for public consultation in the autumn of 2024. The proposals aim, i.a., to increase the use of formal qualifications and vocational training within the Introduction Programme, and follow up on proposals from the Government's 2024 white paper on integration. The Government presented a legislative proposal in April 2025.

57. Persons with an immigrant background may also be eligible for the Qualification Programme. The Qualification Programme is targeted at persons with significantly reduced earning ability and who need extra follow-up to be able to enter employment. The programme may include activities such as Norwegian language courses, housing follow-up, and individual follow-up and guidance. Participants receive a standardised income support ('Qualification Benefit'). The programme can be granted for a period of up to two years but can be extended following an individual assessment.

58. 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 is to help displaced persons enter the labour market quickly. Several measures to increase the employment rate among this group have also been implemented. For example, the Government has established a national system for digital Norwegian language training, which will make language training more flexible and easier to combine with work. On 1 February 2023, the 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.

59. Since 2023, the Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir) has been 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. HK-dir provides a range of services related to recognition and information on foreign education, including, 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, the Directorate is responsible for an interview-based recognition procedure for people with insufficient or unverifiable documentation of their higher education (the 'UVD procedure').

60. HK-dir is the assistance centre in Norway for the EU Professional Qualifications Directive and provides information to professionals about the directive, Norwegian legislation, and regulated professions. There are also 17 different authorities with competence to recognise professional qualifications, depending on the type of qualification in question.

61. NAV offers services and measures to immigrants who are outside the labour market. The so-called 'training measure' is the labour market initiative in which immigrants most frequently participate, which can be explained by the fact that many non-employed immigrants have insufficient or unrecognised education and may need to enhance their skills to enter the workforce. NAV is also an important partner for the municipalities in the Introduction Programme (cf. para. 55). It 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. Pay subsidies, job training, mentoring, and training measures are among several market initiatives that can be relevant in this regard.

62. Norwegian housing legislation contains general prohibitions against discrimination, including ethnic and religious discrimination. To further reduce prejudice in letting dwellings to persons with an 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.

63. As a part of the renewed “*Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination*”, cf. para 52, NAV has been tasked with ensuring the facilitation of multicultural competence and attitudinal awareness in interactions between NAV, its service users and employers. NAV 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. NAV’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), NAV is to carry out activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the advantages of diversity in hiring practices.

64. Everyone should be able to use public services regardless of which language they speak. Therefore, anyone who receives guidance and advice from 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 ensuring user involvement and that users have access to good and well-adapted services.

65. 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*” 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.

Effects of measures

66. The effects of specific anti-discrimination measures can rarely be analysed in isolation from each other, since such measures often interact with each other over time, creating cumulative positive impacts and effects on equality. For an overview of equality development in Norway, reference is made to Norway’s Beijing Declaration and Platform follow-up report section two (2024), and the “*Voluntary National Review Norway*” (2021) report, sections 6.2.5 and 6.2.10 and its *Statistical Annex* pp. 30-33 and 48-51.

67. However, Bufdir conducts several research and evaluation projects each year as part of the implementation of various white papers, action plans and strategies. 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.

68. The Ministry for Culture and Equality has started drawing up 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

69. In December 2024, the Government strengthened and renewed its commitment to gender equality through launching a new equality strategy as well as a white paper, on sexual harassment. The strategy has six main goals that consolidate national efforts to address important challenges in the field of 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. Bufdir has been tasked with updating the indicators.

70. The white paper provides the first ever compilation of knowledge on the extent of sexual harassment across various areas in society, in the workplace, education and schools, 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 to guide future work to combat sexual harassment.

71. To ensure an effective gender equality policy, it is essential to also have a comprehensive overview of the equality challenges faced by boys and men throughout their lives. In 2022, the Government therefore appointed a public committee on men's equality. It was tasked with examining the equality challenges that boys and men encounter, which contribute to social exclusion and hinder a gender-equal society. In its report the Committee proposes 35 measures organised under four action areas: "men as caregivers", "gender differences in the labour market and education", "vulnerability and health" and "a gender equality policy for all". The Government has decided to present a white paper to the Storting on the equality of boys and men as a follow-up to the report, which is scheduled to be presented in 2026.

72. Through the Equality Centres, the Government contributes to a nationwide structure for equality work. In 2024, a new centre was established in Western Norway. This is the fifth centre dedicated to working with equality issues. All regions of Norway are now 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 of the centres 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 also have a responsibility to develop an experiential knowledge base and manage expertise on practical equality work. The centres will receive a total of NOK 28,45 million in funding in 2025.

73. 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. In 2024, the project was expanded into a regional initiative in the three northernmost counties. In the new gender equality strategy, one of the measures is to develop the project into a national, multi-year initiative. 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. "Girls and Technology" engages with approximately 10,000 young people annually. The majority of participants report that they have more knowledge about the opportunities within technological fields after participating.

Employers' duties

Paragraphs 16 and 17 of the concluding observations

74. The duty to promote gender equality and to issue a statement ("the activity and reporting duty") in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act was strengthened with effect 1 January 2020. The Act now explicitly states 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. Public authorities have an obligation to report, both in their role as employers and in their role as a public authority, cf. the Act sections 24 and 26. Moreover, all public and private employers of a certain size must follow a statutory activities methodology, in accordance with the Act section 26. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report (2021) to CEDAW paras. 20-22 for further information regarding the activity and reporting duty and the monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. See also Norway's combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports (2023) to CERD paras. 84 and 100.

75. Bufdir has developed guidance materials, webinars and indicators 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 to report. Moreover, the Government has tasked County Governors with helping drive the municipalities' active equality efforts. The Directorate has therefore engaged in close dialogue with the County Governors and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) regarding the municipalities' equality work. 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.

76. To equip employers in their work with equality and help them conduct surveys in line with the requirements in the Act, Bufdir has developed relevant guides, survey forms, templates, and webinars. Furthermore, the Directorate has conducted information campaigns to make employers aware of their obligations and inform them about the guidance material that is available.

77. 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, 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 has studied 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

Paragraphs 22 and 23 of the concluding observations

78. Reference is made to Norway's CCD para. 198. In 2021, 96 per cent of all families used their full entitlement to parental leave. Almost all parents in Norway therefore utilise 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 utilise 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 their share, but this would lead to a shorter period available to mothers.

79. 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 (2021) to CEDAW paras. 118-119. Women still earn less than men, but the pay gap, i.e., the difference in women's and men's average monthly salary, has decreased over time, from 14.7 per cent in 2015 to 11.8 per cent in 2024.

80. Over several years, the Ministry of Culture and Equality has initiated multiple research projects to shed light on the persistent gender pay differences. 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 terms of income and other economic resources, such as wealth, ownership, and shares.

B. Individual rights guaranteed by the Covenant

Article 6

Right to work

81. Reference is made to Norway's CCD paras. 234, 236 and 241-242 for information on legislation and policies etc. regarding the right to work.

82. In 2024, the Government published a white paper on active labour market policies. In the white paper, the right to work is supported through proposed measures that aim to ensure more opportunities in the labour market. Labour market measures are among the most important instruments for getting more people into work. The Government proposes to strengthen and enhance the overall use of labour market measures, including to reinforce its efforts for young people, e.g., through a pilot project with a work-oriented youth programme. The importance of cooperation between the labour, health, and education sectors to get more people into work is emphasised.

83. The Working Environment Act sections 14-2 and 15-7 on preferential rights and protection against unfair dismissal have been amended (from 1 January 2024). The law now provides that 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.

Vulnerable groups and employment

84. Immigrants, young people, the long-term unemployed and the disabled are key target groups for Norwegian labour market policies. In October 2023, immigrants constituted 50 per cent of the (open, registered) unemployed, and the share of immigrants taking part in labour market measures (for the 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 programme is to give participants basic knowledge of the Norwegian language and society and to prepare them for employment or further education.

85. In addition to the legally regulated measures for newly arrived immigrants, such as the Introduction Programme and Norwegian language training, specific measures have been developed for helping immigrants in general into employment. For instance, the IMDi, HK-dir and NAV are working to increase the use of professional and vocational training for adult immigrants. IMDi also manages the 'Job Opportunity Programme', which is a grant scheme that aims to help stay-at-home immigrant women into the labour market. The inclusion of immigrants into the labour market occurs both through general work-orientated efforts by NAV and through the efforts of municipalities and civil organisations. Reference is made to Norway's CCD paras. 48-51 for more information.

86. 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 periods of passivity outside of work and education. The aim is to get more young people into ordinary work.

Paragraphs 18 and 19 of the concluding observations

87. 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 and reduced unemployment and to combating exclusion by helping people find work and become active. The measures should be customised to the individual's needs and help increase their chances of getting or keeping a job. The measures provide opportunities for adaptation so that people with disabilities can work and study.

88. The 'Functional assistance in the labour market' measure is intended to help participants obtain and retain ordinary work and can be arranged for 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 disability, 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 retain suitable work. Reference is also made to Norway's CCD paras. 51-52.

89. 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. In the preparatory work to this Act, it was stated that the Government would assess whether businesses should be required to ensure universal design of both physical conditions and ICT in the workplace, or only ICT, or only websites as required by the EU Web Accessibility Directive. 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 and that the potential for barriers within ICT were still significant.

90. 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 Government will review the legal framework to clarify the need for further regulation of universal design of ICT solutions in the workplace.

Article 7

Right to just and favourable conditions of work

Salaries and working environment

91. 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, paras. 116-124, as well as Norway's CCD para. 233.

92. The salary level in Norway is comparatively high. According to Statistics Norway, the average monthly salary 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 wages include agreed salaries paid, irregular increases in salary, bonuses and commissions. Supplements for overtime work are not included.

93. With effect from 1 January 2024, the Working Environment Act section 7-1 was amended, with the threshold for the obligation to establish 'working environment committees' being lowered, so that undertakings that regularly employ 30 (previously 50) employees shall have a working environment committee on which the employer, the employees and the occupational health service are represented.

Sexual harassment

94. The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal decided on 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 seek to prevent sexual harassment (cf. the Act section 13, para. 6).

95. From 2020 to 2024, the Tribunal decided in a total of 73 cases of violation of the prohibition against sexual harassment. Most of the cases (52) concerned sexual harassment in working life. Of the 73 cases in this period, a violation was found in 16. The Tribunal awarded redress in four cases and compensation in two.

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

97. 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 regarding concrete cases.

98. 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, paras. 26-27. See also paras. 18, 41-42 and 135-144 for more information on sexual harassment.

Occupational safety and health

Paragraphs 24 and 25 of the concluding observations

99. 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 involve tasks characterised by higher risk. Such industries are typically building and construction, transport and storage, industry and agriculture, and forestry and fishing. 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.

100. The Labour Inspection Authority contributes to preventing 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. In recent years, the Authority has received a budget increase to strengthen its inspection activities. The Authority organises its work in a risk assessment-based manner and prioritises its efforts in the most 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. Through the collaboration an annual report is drawn up, in which an updated status of trends etc. in occupational fatalities is provided. The report aims to identify characteristics and causes of fatal accidents in land-based working life and to propose recommendations for better prevention efforts.

101. 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.

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

103. The National Occupational Health Surveillance's (NOA) mandate includes relevant tasks such as data collection, and systematising and disseminating knowledge about working environment factors, occupational safety, and health outcomes. Surveillance activities involve 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 eliminating risks.

104. The Labour Inspection Authority collects and publishes statistical data over occupational deaths that have occurred within land-based activities 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.

105. During the period 2019-2023, the Authority registered a total of 141 cases of occupational deaths in connection with land-based activities. 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 Authority has observed a slight downward trend. The two industries with the most occupational deaths were construction and transportation and storage.

Article 8

Right to form and join trade unions

106. The 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 (both 2024, see annex).

Article 9

Right to social security

107. Reference is made to Norway's CCD para. 26 and paras. 243-245 for information concerning Norway's National Insurance Scheme. Reference is also made to Norway's Consolidated Report on the application of ILO Conventions Nos 12, 42, 102, 128, 130, 168, 183 & the European Code of Social Security part I (2024, see annex) and the resource "The "Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme 2025", sections 1 and 2. Most benefits from the National Insurance Scheme are determined in relation to a 'basic amount', which 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 May 2024 is NOK 124,028.

Health

108. The Norwegian legal framework for public health services 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.

109. 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 provide emergency health care to a person on the grounds that the person is unable to pay.

Children and parental benefits

110. Reference is made to Norway's fourth periodic report (2008) to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (CRC/C/NOR/4) paras. 214-221 regarding child maintenance payments, and to paras. 333-339 regarding social security and child care services. Reference is furthermore made to the "Social Insurance Scheme 2025" (see para. 107) section 10.3 regarding cash benefit in the case of maternity and adoption.

111. Child benefit is granted as a fixed sum and is paid for all children under the age of 18 years who live in Norway. As of 1 January 2025, the monthly amount is NOK 1,766 per child aged 0-5 (a total of NOK 21,192 p.a.) and NOK 1,510 per child aged 6-17 (a total of NOK 18,120 p.a.). Additional child benefit and supplements may be paid to single parents. Additionally, from 1 July 2024, parental benefit with an 80 percent pay-out have increased from 59 weeks to 61 weeks and one day.

112. Women who do not qualify for parental benefit are entitled to a lump sum maternity grant, which as of 2024 is NOK 92,648. The amount of the lump sum grant is stipulated 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.

Old-age pension

113. Reference is made to the "Social Insurance Scheme 2025" (see para. 107) section 4 regarding old-age pensions and Norway's Consolidated Report on the application of ILO

Conventions Nos 12, 42, 102, 128, 130, 168, 183 & the European Code of Social Security part V regarding old-age benefits (2024, see annex).

114. A new, general old-age pension system was introduced in 2011, allowing flexible drawing of old-age pensions for persons aged 62 to 75. According to the former provisions, the old-age pension consists of a basic pension, a supplementary pension and/or a special supplement. According to the new provisions, the 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 the former rules is NOK 446,716 a year, while the current guaranteed pension according to the new rules is NOK 432,452 for a household with two pensioners who have each resided in Norway for at least 40 years between the ages of 16 and 66. The annual adjustment to the 'basic amount' results in increases in the pension amount received by pensioners, including those who receive the minimum pension.

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 both men and women. The pension amount is identical for persons with identical pension earning profiles, irrespective of gender.

116. It is the Government's view that the Norwegian minimum pension is sufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living for recipients and their families. 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. NOK 295,200 amounts to 50 per cent, and NOK 354,240 amounts to 60 per cent of this. 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.

Social security assistance and programmes

117. According to the Social Services Act, persons who are not able to support themselves by working or by other means are entitled to financial social assistance. The labour and welfare services at the municipal level are 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 lowest financial safety net in the social security system and is a subsidiary benefit for the individual recipient.

118. Since 2001, the Government has issued guidelines with recommended rates of financial social assistance. The 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. In order to improve the economic situation and living conditions for those receiving social assistance benefit, 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, Consumption Research Norway (SIFO) has updated the scientific basis for daily living expenses that are included in the guidelines. SIFO recommends that all rates should be increased, especially those for the oldest children. The SIFO report is being assessed by the Ministry in a wider context, including how the level of the rates may affect the transition to work, and the relationship to other forms of benefit.

119. Children's special needs and interests are to be taken into consideration in the calculation of financial social assistance to families with children. Children must be ensured a safe upbringing and the ability to participate in normal school and leisure activities. NAV has issued a guide to all employees, with the aim of building competence and ensuring that children's interests and rights are included in all assessments which directly or indirectly have an impact on them. Following a 2020 amendment to the Social Services Act section 18, child benefit is excluded from the means-tested assessment of financial social assistance to families with children.

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

121. The provisions concerning services and measures in the Social Services Act apply to everyone staying in Norway. Non-nationals have the same rights as nationals, with some exceptions. 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 in 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 financial social assistance to continue their stay, but are eligible for emergency social assistance for a short period until they can leave the country. 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.

122. For information regarding labour immigrants specifically, reference is made to Norway's CCD paras. 221 og 233-235.

Paragraphs 26 and 27 of the concluding observations

123. In 2024, the Storting agreed on a pension settlement as a follow-up to the pension reform from 2011. The adjustments will lead to higher income security levels for the elderly population. In the settlement it was decided i.a., that disability benefit recipients 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.

124. With the current pension rules, people who receive disability benefits are transferred to an old-age pension at a fixed age, 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 through an increasing 'standard pensionable age' (SPA) – the pension levels of disabled persons in younger cohorts will now be increasing due to a higher transfer age and correspondingly lower annuity divisors.

125. Under current assumptions about the future average retirement age, old-age pensions for disabled persons will follow the old-age pension levels of the working population. In the pension settlement, it was agreed that broad evaluations of the pension system should be carried out every 10 years, which includes the pension level for former disability benefit recipients compared to other old age pensioners.

Article 10

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

126. Reference is made to Norway's CDD para. 198 and to this report para. 78 for information on parental leave and benefits.

Marriage

127. According to the Marriage Act, marriages shall 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. Following an amendment to the Act (in force 1 January 2025), to further combat child marriages, marriages entered into abroad with a person under the age of 18 shall not be recognised in Norway, unless there are strong reasons to do so.

128. The Act also prohibits marriages between parties who are related in a direct ascending or descending line or between siblings. From 1 January 2025, it is additionally prohibited to enter into marriage with other close relatives, for example, an uncle, aunt, or cousin. The aim is to avoid health issues in children. It was also considered that a ban can have an effect with

regards to counteracting forced marriages. Marriages with close relatives entered into abroad shall also not be recognised in Norway, unless there are strong reasons to do so.

Violence against children and domestic violence

129. An escalation plan to combat and prevent violence against children and domestic violence was adopted by the Storting in May 2024. The plan will help fulfil the obligations set out in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which Norway ratified in 2017. The escalation plan was developed among nine ministries and contains 122 measures. It 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 plan contains a separate section on violence and abuse in Sami communities, which was developed in close collaboration with the Sámediggi. The Sámediggi has also prepared a separate action plan.

130. The Regional Resource Centre on Violence, Traumatic Stress, and Suicide Prevention (RVTS) Region North has established, with Government funding, a forum for the development of efforts to combat violence and abuse in Sami communities and the exchange of experience and expertise among participants.

131. The ‘State Children Houses’ (“Statens barnehus”) are a central actor in ensuring that children’s rights are safeguarded and that help given to children subjected to violence and abuse, and 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.

132. 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 were made to the Criminal Procedure Act, the Penal Code, and the Execution of Sentences Act regarding reverse violence alarms. The aim is to improve compliance with restraining orders and visitation bans. The amendments facilitate the increased use of electronic control, i.e., reverse violence alarms, 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 this is appropriate and proportionate. The amendment has led to a significant increase in the use such alarms, from 20 in 2023 to 194 in 2024.

133. In 2024, the Government established a permanent National Intimate Partner Homicide Commission, which shall continuously review all intimate partner homicide cases. The goal 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.

134. In 2025, an ‘investigation system’ has been established at the 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.

Trafficking

135. Norway is a destination country for human trafficking. Nearly all victims are foreign citizens, who are 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. Purchasing sexual services is criminalised in Norway, which has contributed to a reduced level of prostitution. The police have specialised staff to investigate trafficking, and there is ongoing cooperation between the police, the labour inspection authorities and other authorities in tackling exploitative practices in workplaces.

136. In 2024, the Government decided to develop a national strategy against trafficking, in order to strengthen efforts to support victims, prevent trafficking, and improve Norway’s law enforcement response. Broad consultation meetings with civil society stakeholders have been held. The strategy is due to be launched in May 2025.

Negative social control

137. An action plan on freedom from negative social control was launched by the Government in 2021. It contains 33 measures to protect newly arrived refugees, strengthen competence in support services, enhance legal protections, prevent involuntary stays abroad, and strengthen international cooperation. The plan is part of Norway's implementation of the Istanbul Convention. It is also seen in the context of other relevant actions plans.

138. 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 May 2025. It will be seen in the context of the escalation plan to combat and prevent violence against children and domestic violence. It will contain measures on legal protections, prevention, competence in support services, involuntary stays abroad, and negative social control on digital platforms.

Sexual offences

139. Offences against sexual self-determination are broadly regulated in the Penal Code. Reference is made to Norway's tenth periodic report to CEDAW paras. 74-76 in this regard.

140. 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 2022 report, the Council recommended several changes, i.e., a new provision that includes the acts currently covered by the Penal Code section 291, as well as situations where someone engages in sexual intercourse or a similar sexual activity with a person who does not want to engage in this, and who expresses so in words or actions. The report was sent for public consultation in 2023. In a proposition to the Storting in April 2025, the Government proposed to extend section 291 to cover sexual intercourse and similar sexual activities with a person who has not consented thereto by word or conduct.

141. A public committee with a mandate to investigate issues related to the prevention of rape, including support services for victims, and prosecution of rape cases, submitted its report in 2024. It concludes that rape is an unresolved societal problem and that the authorities have not succeeded in preventing or combating rape. The Committee found i.e., that too little is being done to prevent rape, that there is too much variation in health services for victims, and that the investigation of 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 report was sent for public consultation in 2024. It is now being considered by the Government.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children Paragraphs 28 and 29 of the concluding observations

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

143. All unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors need a level of care and accommodation adapted to their special needs. Norway therefore has an age-adjusted reception system. It is the Government's understanding that 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. 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 have been stipulated on the content of the responsibility for care and follow-up, 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 and Akershus.

144. 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 child welfare care

Paragraphs 30 and 31 of the concluding observations

145. Norway has continued to make legislative and systemic amendments in the child welfare services sector, to strengthen the quality of child welfare services, strengthen legal protections for children and families, and to ensure the best interests of the child. The new Child Welfare Act (in force 1 January 2023) 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. Furthermore, it can only be issued if there are serious deficiencies in the everyday care or 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 interests. The principle of least intervention is thus overarching in assessing child welfare measures according to the law.

146. The Act section 1-8 states that children's cultural, linguistic, and religious background must be a consideration within all aspects of the work of the child welfare service. In the process of finding a suitable foster home for a child with a minority background, the child welfare service must attempt to find a home that can maintain the child's connection to their cultural, linguistic, and religious background.

147. The Government presented a white paper on foster care in 2024. One of the main proposals in the white paper is to strengthen the municipalities in their task of providing support and supervision to foster homes. Through the range of measures proposed, the Government has signalled a commitment to strengthening 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 background can be maintained. The Government has also proposed developing 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.

148. The 2022 child welfare reform 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 is to strengthen the overall child welfare system by prioritising the protection and well-being of children and vulnerable families at an early stage.

149. Additionally, the framing of contact arrangements between parents and children in care has undergone revisions, following judgments handed down by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Norwegian Supreme Court relating to 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. 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 following the judgments from the ECHR. It is, however, vital that the level of contact is in the best interests of the child and does not expose the child to undue hardship.

150. Pursuant to the Health and Care Services Act section 3-9 a, 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 receive the necessary healthcare and the appropriate measures from child welfare services. While it is voluntary for the

municipalities to initiate the procedure, 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.

151. While the structured procedure can be initiated for all children who come into contact with child welfare services, an interdisciplinary health screening specifically aimed at children who are to be placed outside the home has also been developed. 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 services. In 2024, the Government published a new cross-sectoral strategy, 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.

152. The Child Welfare Act and its regulations contain requirements for 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. The County Governors have a general responsibility to supervise that the municipalities are fulfilling their statutory duties.

153. The County Governors are responsible for the supervision and oversight of the care provided to children living in child welfare institutions. The purpose of supervision is to ensure that the institution provides each child with proper care and treatment. The County Governors must pay attention to all matters that are important for the child's development, well-being, welfare, and legal rights. 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. The County Governor must also continuously assess the need for supervision of each institution based on risk assessments.

154. 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 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

155. An annual agricultural agreement is negotiated between the two farmers' organisations and the Government. This agreement sets key parameters for 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 securing agriculture throughout the country.

156. 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.

157. Agri-environmental measures both regulatory and economic, have been a priority. Agri-environmental measures are structured under the 'National Agri-environmental Programme', which provides a central framework and national goals and includes key grant schemes. 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.

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

Poverty

Paragraphs 32 and 33 of the concluding observations

159. Lack of regular employment is the main cause of poverty in Norway. Children of immigrant parents, children with parents who have 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. This group faces barriers in the labour market, through lacking formal qualifications or necessary language skills.

160. The main strategy to combat poverty is to increase participation in the labour market. This also applies to child poverty. In 2024, the Government presented a white paper on active labour market policies and strengthened overall labour market measures. The 'Youth Guarantee' was introduced, cf. para. 86 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.

161. In 2023, the Government received a report from an expert group with recommendations on how to improve the living conditions of children growing up in poverty and how to prevent poverty from being passed down to future generations. The report highlights the importance of universal public welfare services and child benefits. The Government has implemented several measures to improve conditions for low-income families, in line with the report's recommendations.

162. Child benefits have been increased significantly in recent years. The additional child benefit for single parents has been increased separately. Since 2022, child benefit has been excluded from the means-tested assessment of financial social assistance, see also para. 119 above. After-school programmes and kindergartens have also become more affordable, which helps ensure participation for children from low-income families. A strategy with measures for children growing up in low-income families has been prolonged and an action plan on equal opportunities to participate in cultural, sports and outdoor activities was launched by the Government in 2024. The national grant scheme for including children and youth in leisure and holiday activities has been strengthened. The Government is preparing a white paper on social mobility and social equality in spring 2025.

163. 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 rates of immigration to Norway in the period up to 2020.

Housing

Paragraphs 34 and 35 of the concluding observations

164. In 2024, the Government presented a white paper on housing that outlines the main objectives of Norwegian housing policy. The white paper replaces the previous national strategy for housing and support services.

165. The Social Housing Act (in force 1 July 2023) defines the municipalities responsibility for the rights and protection of suitable housing for all citizens. The Act's

purpose is to prevent social housing challenges and to help ensure that disadvantaged and marginalised people in the housing market receive assistance to obtain and retain suitable housing.

166. Half of the municipalities state that they have too few suitable municipal homes for their residents. The number of applications for municipal housing increased by five per cent from 2022 to 2023. There has also been an increase in rejections of applications, from 27 per cent in 2022 to 31 per cent in 2023. The municipalities report that settlement of refugees may have possible displacement effects for other target groups. There is a need for more suitable municipal housing for the most disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, and large households with children.

167. The state supports municipalities in the provision of housing for disadvantaged and marginalised persons through the Norwegian State Housing Bank. It provides loans for rental housing to private developers or municipalities that are building or buying housing for rental.

168. 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 up to 40 per cent is earmarked for disadvantaged people in the housing market. In 2023, 302 of 601 homes financed by loans from the State Housing Bank for rental accommodation were allocated through the municipal right of disposal.

169. In 2023, 'Kobo', a new system for applying, assigning and administering municipal social housing was made available for the municipalities. More than 100 municipalities have signed on. The aim is to make the process easier and more efficient and secure for both applicants and the municipalities. The Government will offer digital support for the management of municipal social housing for all municipalities.

170. The majority of persons with developmental disabilities reside in municipal rental housing. Among adults with disabilities, only 25 per cent own their residence. 20 per cent live in their parental home several years after they have turned 18 years. Nearly 80 per cent of families of persons over 30 years old with developmental disabilities who still live at home express a desire for quicker opportunities for them to move to their own home. Many experience a lack of freedom of choice regarding where and with whom to live.

171. The State Housing Bank provides loans for housing quality. The loan contributes to developing housing qualities that improve sustainability and accessibility. Loans are given to projects that entail more comprehensive accessibility and sustainability than what the Planning and Building Act and regulations on technical requirements for construction work require. In 2023, the State Housing Bank contributed to building and upgrading 1,198 homes with high quality requirements for accessibility.

172. 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 are unable to secure loans from private banks, are offered only high-interest mortgages, or who lack equity capital may apply for a start-up loan. 7,830 households received a start-up loan in 2023. With a start-up loan, households can also adapt the home or move to a more suitable and accessible home. In 2023, seven per cent of granted start-up loans went to this type of home improvement.

173. Recent general housing price increases, interest rate increases, a lower rate of housing construction and continued high settlement of refugees has contributed to increasing demand for rental housing. Around one million people rent their home in Norway. The share of renters is higher among low-income households. 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 people are more vulnerable to the economic burden this entails. This further entails a risk of displacing the disadvantaged on the rental market.

174. In its white paper on housing, the Government presents the rental market as one of four main priorities. It seeks to support better conditions on the rental market by promoting measures that ensure more available and affordable rental housing. The main objectives are safe tenancies, a sufficient supply of rental housing, solid knowledge on the rental market, and a sustainable municipal rental sector.

175. The housing allowance system is a government-financed support scheme for partial coverage of housing expenses for low-income households with 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.

176. In October 2024, a committee evaluating the Tenancy Act presented its report. It proposed amendments that can strengthen tenants' rights and ensure fundamental residential security and better compliance between the law and the current situation in the rental market.

177. The State Housing Bank is responsible for conducting a national survey of the number of homeless persons every fourth year. The 2020 survey shows that half of the homeless are long-term homeless. The main cause of homelessness is evictions and loss of housing due to damage and disturbance. During the interval between each survey, the State Housing Bank obtains information from 25 major municipalities, which in 2020 contained 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. As of November 2023, the State Housing Bank's estimate is that there were approximately 4,200 homeless persons. The 2024 survey of homeless persons was postponed due to jurisdictional circumstances.

178. Many municipalities report an increased use of temporary housing. The number of households in temporary housing increased by 11 per cent from 2022 to 2023. Persons with concurrent drug addiction and mental health issues are at particular risk of becoming homeless. One of three persons in this group does not have a permanent or suitable housing situation. Many municipalities report increased challenges in finding suitable housing for this group.

179. Efforts to prevent and combat homelessness are the responsibility of several ministries and other public authorities, and a number of tools and measures have been developed. The municipalities play a major role in this work. In accordance with legislation on social services, local authorities are responsible for helping less advantaged people secure housing.

Article 12

Right to health

180. The right to health is ensured 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.

181. 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 the obligations under the present Covenant.

182. The Sami people's rights as an indigenous population, in relation to health and care services, are regulated by national legislation and international conventions. Norway is obliged to ensure that the Sami perspective is taken into account in health policy initiatives, national plans and strategies. In order for the municipal health and care services to provide the Sami 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 of developing services and skills that meet the needs of the Sami population.

183. The Government will appoint a committee to examine the need for changes to ensure that the state's obligations to the Sami are safeguarded in regard to the right to co-determination, participation and cooperation in the planning, design and management of the specialist health services. One part of the committee's mandate will be to decide on whether the current organisation of the Sami "klinikk", a health centre offering specialist health services aimed particularly at the Sami population, is appropriate and how the Sami National

Competence Centre on Mental Health and Addiction's (SÁNAG/SANKS) 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 relevant staff in the administrative area for Sami languages and at SÁNAG/SANKS and the Sami "klinihkka".

Older persons

Paragraphs 36 and 37 of the concluding observations

184. A proper and balanced diet is essential for maintaining good health and quality of life throughout one's life. Through a strategy on diet and nutrition for older people in nursing homes and home care services, Norway has improved its 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.

185. "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 the obligations under the Health and Care Services Act section 3-3 a. "TryggEst" aims to ensure that cases are uncovered, 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.

186. A national strategy for good diet and nutrition for elderly people in nursing homes and those who receive home care has been developed and implemented. National advice dictates that everyone admitted to a nursing home must be assessed for the risk of malnutrition within a week of admission and on a monthly basis thereafter. For patients at risk of malnutrition, individual nutrition plans must be developed. The authorities offer implementation support measures for systematic nutrition work, skills development, and compliance with the professional councils in the municipalities. Status is monitored through national quality indicators for nutritional assessment in nursing homes and through supervision. The work will continue in order to ensure that the strategy is fully implemented.

187. 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 remains insufficient, the proportion is increasing.

Asylum seekers' access to health-care services

Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the concluding observations

188. 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 delayed, 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.

189. 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.

190. Children, regardless of their legal status, have the same right to health and care services as children who are lawfully residing in Norway, including access to general practitioner services. According to the regulations, any individual considered a resident in a municipality is entitled to register with a general practitioner. 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.

191. 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 will be initiated.

Mental health care

192. 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-sectoral collaboration. At the municipal level, care is provided in outpatient settings by general practitioners and/or mental health professionals often in cross-sectoral collaboration with specialised inpatient care. Mild to moderate mental health conditions are largely cared for in outpatient settings by general practitioners, who are in charge of providing treatment and who serve as a focal point in the coordination of the care.

193. Municipalities are required to employ psychologists within their health and social care services. There is also a growing private market of psychologists. General practitioners also play a key role in managing severe mental illnesses, where they generally serve as gatekeepers to specialised services. They 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.

194. Mental health is one of the Government's main priorities. An escalation plan was launched in 2023, 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 to 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.

Paragraphs 40 and 41 of the concluding observations

195. Prison inmates with mental health issues have the same right to health and care services as the general population. Pursuant to the Health and Care Services Act section 3-9, municipalities hosting correctional facilities are required to provide health and care services to inmates; these are normally provided in the prison. The municipality has statutory responsibility, as well as recruitment and training responsibility, for medical personnel in the correctional facility. A government grant is provided to help cover the municipalities' additional expenses. The grant was modified in 2025 to increase the support for municipalities with prisons dedicated to women and minors. Both physicians and nurses in correctional facilities have the same education as medical personnel in society-at-large. Furthermore, approximately half of all nurses in the prison health services have additional education in mental health and substance abuse treatment.

196. Specialist health care services are provided by the state through the four regional health trusts (referred to as the 'import model'). Inmates 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 detainees, the Government has instructed the health trusts to provide such services directly in prisons. Persons who would have been referred to day treatment in a mental health institution were they not being detained in prison are thus entitled to equal access to such treatment as the general population.

197. In 2023, a public committee was appointed with a mandate to examine issues related to penal sanctions and mental health. This Committee investigated the conditions and care of

inmates with serious mental disorders or developmental disabilities, during imprisonment and detention. The Committee's report was submitted in March 2025 and it will now be considered by the Government.

198. The right of free and informed consent is the principal rule in Norwegian mental health care legislation. The majority of patients receive voluntarily assistance. Coercive measures can be employed, cf. the Patient and User Rights Act, ch. 4 A. A great number of assertive and ambulatory mental health care services have been established and are active in many municipalities, providing patients and next-of-kin with valuable outpatient assistance, thereby reducing the need for hospitalisation.

199. National professional guidance the prevention of the use of coercion in mental health care for adults was effectuated in 2022. The purpose of the guidance 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 ensure that coercion is used in a caring manner, and 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 have held annual meetings on topics related to compulsory mental health care after the guidance was published. This work continues as part of the Government's escalation plan.

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, i.a., 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. It is proposed that 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 round of treatment. New decisions cannot be made within the same round. 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.

202. In 2025, the regional health trusts are commissioned to review the use of coercive measures and involuntary 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

Paragraphs 42 and 43 of the concluding observations

203. A public committee recommended in its 2019 report, that use, acquisition and possession of small 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 the view that substance-dependent individuals should not be met with punishment, but rather with help. These legislative signals were emphasised by the Supreme Court, which ruled in two subsequent cases in 2022 that substance-dependent individuals no longer should be prosecuted or punished for the use, acquisition and possession of smaller amounts of drugs meant for personal use.

204. The current law is thus that all use, acquisition and possession of illegal drugs remains a criminal offence. However, substance-dependent individuals are not to be prosecuted or punished for use, acquisition and possession of small amounts of drugs intended for personal use. These persons shall be met with assistance and help rather than prosecution.

205. The review in the Storting and the subsequent Supreme Court judgments have raised a number of criminal and procedural legal issues concerning the regulation of illegal drug use etc., which another committee has assessed. The Committee's 2024 report has been followed up by the Government with a proposal to the Storting in April 2025. The proposal will be considered by the Storting in June 2025.

206. The proposal from the Government includes several changes to the Medicines Act and the Criminal Procedure Act concerning minor drug offences. With regard to drug use, acquisition and possession of smaller amounts of drugs for personal use, the Government has proposed a new criminal provision in the Medicines Act which i.a., regulates the current special sentencing rules for drug-dependent individuals over the age of 18. Furthermore, it proposed measures to enhance the use of the municipal advisory unit for drug related cases (cf. the Health and Care Services Act section 3-9 c). The advisory unit has special expertise in prevention and drug related issues and may offer individual follow-up programmes if desired.

207. The Government has also proposed a new provision that allows the police to refer a person who is suspected of illegal drug use, acquisition or possession of small amounts of drugs for personal use to the advisory unit, instead of pursuing a criminal case against the person. It also proposed legislative amendments related to the police's use of drug testing and the use of coercive measures when investigating minor drug offences. The proposal is considered to constitute part II of the Government's 'prevention and treatment reform' on the topic of illegal drug use.

208. The Government is concurrently concerned about health issues related to the use of illegal drugs. In October 2024, the Government submitted a white paper on prevention and treatment (the reform part I) which paves the way for increased and targeted efforts on prevention, harm reduction, early intervention, and treatment and follow-up services. It aims to reduce the potentially negative consequences related to the existence and use of alcohol, addictive drugs, illegal drugs, and performance-enhancing substances. The reform also aims to reduce the gap in life expectancy between people with substance use disorders and the general population.

209. The white paper recognises the right to health, cf. Article 12 in the 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 towards people with issues related to the use of psychoactive substances, including following up on the recommendations by the Norwegian Human Rights Institution (NIM).

210. 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 at 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 suffer abuse and are in need of sheltering. Additionally, a comprehensive system for monitoring the situation on psychoactive substances for data on trends and developments, including drug-checking services, will be assessed. 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

211. Reference is made to Norway's CCD paras. 37-46 for information on the right to education and the education system in Norway. With the new Education Act (in force 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. the Act section 5-1. Additionally, the right to upper secondary education for adults is set out in section 18-3.

212. Completion rates in upper secondary education have increased steadily over the past two decades. They continued to rise 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 nine 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.

213. Although there are still major social differences within upper secondary education, there have been fewer differences during the last decade. Among pupils with parents with primary school as their highest level of education, 61 per cent completed their upper secondary education, 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. 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 through the new Education Act.

214. A white paper on grades 5-10 in primary school was presented in 2024. It focuses on making school more practical and relevant for pupils. The main goals are to improve learning, increase motivation, and enhance pupils' well-being. Among the measures included are increased practical teaching with an emphasis on practical skills and the application of knowledge in real-life situations and training that better adapts the teaching to each pupil's individual needs and abilities. There is a focus on creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. The overall aim is to make school more engaging, and for pupils to achieve better learning outcomes and enjoy their school experience more.

Access to and quality of education

Paragraphs 44 and 45 of the concluding observations

215. The Government will continue its efforts to reduce economic and social differences among the population, which requires broad cross-sectoral cooperation. Equal opportunities for all children is a priority. The Government has therefore initiated work on a white paper that will be presented in the spring of 2025. 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.

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

217. 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 will then reimburse the municipality with a grant.

218. The Government 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 nearby municipalities. The school guidance programme also assists pupils who live in nearby municipalities.

219. Many Roma families have recently 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 their dealings with the municipal services and the local community, and to facilitate good relations with schools.

220. Students who have a native language other than Norwegian or Sami, and who do not know Norwegian well enough to follow regular teaching, have the right to special language training. The training may also include native language instruction and bilingual education. Adults participating in upper secondary education have the right to enhanced Norwegian language training, but not necessarily to native language instruction and bilingual education in subjects.

221. In 2024, the Government presented a white paper on professional programmes in higher education. It presents measures for educating more teachers and for promoting equality and diversity in educational programmes. The Government has also made changes to the rules of admission for teacher education programmes, to make the programmes 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 professional organisations/unions.

222. Multicultural competence and multilingualism are topics included in the national regulations for teacher education. For several years, teaching Norwegian as a second language has been a part of the strategy for further education for teachers, and this topic has become increasingly popular in recent years.

Sami language education

Paragraphs 46 and 47, part 1 of the concluding observations

223. In 2023, the Government presented a white paper, on competence in kindergartens, schools and higher education on Sami language, culture and society. This is being followed up in cooperation with the Sámediggi. All primary school age pupils who live in 'language development municipalities' or 'language revitalisation municipalities' have, according to the Sami Act section 3-1, the right to training in and on Sami, cf. Education Act section 3-2. Sami pupils in upper secondary education have the right to education in Sami, cf. the Act section 6-2. 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. Furthermore, all pupils (regardless of whether they have a Sami background or not) who have had primary school training in and on Sami, have the right to training in Sami in upper secondary education.

Article 15

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

Cultural life

224. Rules on consultations regarding Sami interests are codified in the Sami Act (in force 2021) ch. 4. The rules apply to central government authorities, counties, and municipalities, and to private legal entities when exercising authority on behalf of the State. The right to early consultations applies to the Sámediggi and other representatives of Sami interests in matters concerning legislation, regulations, and other decisions or measures that could directly affect Sami interests. The obligation to consult may include all material and immaterial forms of Sami culture. Additionally, new provisions on the use of Sami languages were adopted in 2023 (in force 1 January 2024), cf. the Act ch. 3.

225. In 2021, the Government presented a white paper on museum policy. It aims to secure the development and stability of state-founded museums, 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.

226. A white paper on artist policy, which proposes 50 measures aimed at reinforcing the position of the arts and 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.

227. The Government launched its first 'cultural volunteer' strategy in 2023. It presented cultural volunteerism as a unified political focus area at the national level for the first time. The strategy's purpose 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 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 in and take responsibility for cultural environments, and children and young people should be able to participate in cultural volunteerism.

228. Even though most children and youth join organised leisure activities, some are left out. A number of factors are relevant, including gender, parents' financial situation, background, disabilities, and place of residence. To counteract socio-economic disparities and other barriers to children's participation in leisure activities, the Government is implementing measures in the 2024 action plan on inclusion in cultural, sports, and outdoor activities. 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 insight into social inequality and the effects of interventions.

229. In 2021, a white paper 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 pupils experience professional arts and culture, the so-called 'Cultural Schoolbag' is a nationwide programme and a key tool to achieving these goals. Another tool is the municipal Schools of the Arts, as all municipalities must provide music and art programmes for children and youth.

230. In 2024, a new strategy was launched on enhancing the joy of reading among children and young people. It aims to create a stronger reading culture among children and young people through several different initiatives. Among the most important elements are ensuring that children and young people have good access to a variety of literature, investing in school libraries, strengthen cooperation between libraries and kindergartens, strengthening the distribution of literature, and prioritising printed books in schools.

Research policies

231. The fundamental significance of academic freedom has only become clearer in recent years. As part of the development of the current Long-term plan for research and higher education, the Government appointed a committee which investigated possible threats to academic freedom of expression. The Committee's 2022 report 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 institutions to promote this. Conclusions and recommendations are addressed in the long-term plan.

232. Better incentives and structures for data sharing hold significant potential for increasing research outcomes. In 2021, the Research Council of Norway published a report, 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".

233. The increase in global conflicts and associated security challenges makes the topic of data sharing more complicated. A government-commissioned 2024 report provides recommendations on how a comprehensive national research system should facilitate open research while at the same time securing protected and classified research, based on the current research system for open research and the defence sector's research system.

234. Furthermore, a committee presented its report on data governance and sharing in 2024. The report proposes regulations to facilitate open science and common access to research data. The Government is considering the recommendations and comments received during the public consultation.

Return of Sami cultural objects to Sápmi

Paragraphs 46 and 47, part 2 of the concluding observations

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

236. The Skolt Sami/East Sami, and the South Sami cultural objects from the project have been returned and are now exhibited at "Á'vv Skolt Sami Museum in Neiden", and "Saemien Sijte in Snåsa". These museums have been built by the Government's building commissioner, Statsbygg. It is the Sámediggi that lays down the guidelines for which Sami cultural buildings should be prioritised.

237. 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", 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 storage facilities have made it possible to receive and exhibit "Bååstede" objects. The Government has contributed with investment funds to two of these museums.

238. Ceremonial objects such as Sami drums are of particular value for the Sami people. In 2022, ownership of Anders Poulson's Sami drum was transferred from the National Museum of Denmark 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 "Frøyningsfjelltromma" to be very important in view of the potential subsequent return of drums and other objects from Germany to Sápmi. In 2021, the codicil "Lappekodisillen" was also moved from the National Archives' storage in Oslo to Sápmi and is now deposited at the Sami archives in Kautokeino/Guovdageaidnu. "Lappekodisillen" forms the basis for the Sami's legal rights.