



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

Distr.: General  
5 July 2017

Original: English

---

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Sixty-eighth session**

23 October-17 November 2017

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties  
under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

**List of issues and questions in relation to the ninth periodic  
report of Norway**

**Addendum**

**Replies of Norway\***

[Date received: 29 June 2017]

---

*Note:* The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.

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

17-11188 (E) 120717



Please recycle



## Question 1

1. As referred to in Norway's ninth periodic report, paragraph 4, the Norwegian Constitution was revised in 2014 in order to strengthen the protection of human rights, including the principle of equality and prohibition against discrimination.

2. The Gender Equality Act (2013) shall promote equality and protect against discrimination based on gender. The act aims in particular at improving the position of women. The act is enforced by the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal in addition to the ordinary court system.

3. In June 2017, Stortinget (the Parliament) adopted a comprehensive equality and anti-discrimination act. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act will enter into force in January 2018. The act prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender, pregnancy, maternity/paternity leave in connection to birth or adoption, caring for children or close family members, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or age, or a combination of the above-mentioned grounds. The act applies to all areas of society. The purpose of the act is to promote equality and prevent discrimination. The act is particularly aimed at strengthening the position of women and minorities, and at reducing and preventing barriers for equal participation for persons with disabilities.

4. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act will be enforced by a new and strengthened Discrimination Tribunal, see the answer to question 4.

5. Norwegian legislation, policy and programmes are, and have always been, mainly gender neutral. The Government does not recognize any clear tendency, as referred to in list of issues, towards gender neutralization. The Government maintains its focus on challenges and obstacles to equality that are gender specific in policy and programmes in all areas of society.

6. According to the Instructions for Official Studies of Central Government Measures, the potential implications of a measure for all affected parties must be accounted for in the analysis of the issue. As referred to in the list of issues, the implications for equality and discrimination are not mentioned explicitly in the revised instructions, which were adopted in February 2016. However, as all positive and negative effects of the measure should be accounted for, this implicates that also effects on gender equality should be included in the analysis. When the revised instructions have been in force for two to three years, an evaluation will be conducted in order to find out whether the quality of impact assessments has improved.

## Question 2

7. As mentioned above, the Norwegian Constitution was revised in 2014 in order to strengthen the protection of human rights. The amendment of the constitution has led to increased attention on human rights obligations in general.

8. The convention and Norway's ninth report to the CEDAW committee are available to the public on the Ministry's website. In 2016, the Ministry had the convention translated into North Sami in order to make it more accessible to the Sami population. The North Sami translation was sent to the Sami Parliament for further distribution and has been published on the Ministry's website along with the English and Norwegian version.

9. Stortinget is informed about the Government's implementation of CEDAW via the annual Budget Propositions and through a number of bills.
10. Human rights are emphasized in basic education and training of police officers. In legal studies public international law and human rights theory are a compulsory part of the education.
11. According to [www.lovdata.no](http://www.lovdata.no), CEDAW is mentioned or applied in two Supreme Court judgements, three courts of appeal judgements and two district court judgements. Access to judgements made by the district courts are limited, and it is not possible to provide a full survey of these judgements.
12. Supreme Court: *Rt-2013-588* — A woman, who had been persecuted by her ex-boyfriend, sued the State for breach of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), article 8. The Supreme Court concluded that the State had not fulfilled its obligation under the EHRC to protect her from persecution from the perpetrator. The Supreme Court referred indirectly to CEDAW.
13. Supreme Court: *Rt-2009-1389* — Due to pregnancy, a defender in a criminal case applied to court to postpone the trial for three months. The application was rejected and the claimant upheld the rejection was in breach with both the Gender Equality Act and CEDAW. The Supreme Court stated that the rejection was reasonable and not a violation of national law.
14. Court of appeal: *LB-2013-78282* — The case concerned the right to spouse's pension and the requirement that a divorced spouse has to be at least 45 years old when he or she divorces to be eligible to receive spouse's pension. The claimant claimed that the provision was in breach with CEDAW. The Court of Appeal found that the provision was not a violation of CEDAW.
15. Court of appeal: *LA-2008-70679* — The case concerned adoptive parents' right to parental benefits according to the National Insurance Act, and at what time an adoptive mother's earning period should be considered fulfilled. The Court of Appeal stated that the National Insurance Act should be interpreted in line with the Gender Equality Act and CEDAW, and ruled in favour of the claimant.
16. Court of appeal: *LB-2005-124843* — Due to fear of assault from her former spouse and his family in Iran, an Iranian woman applied for asylum. The application was rejected by the immigration authorities. As an argument for resident permit, the woman argued, among other things, that Iran had not committed itself to CEDAW. The Court of Appeal did not comment on this argument and concluded that the decision of the immigration authorities was valid.
17. District court: *TOSLO-2009-46765* — The case concerned the question about the Marriage Act and invalidity of a forced marriage. CEDAW was mentioned as a part of the historical background of the relevant provision in The Marriage Act.
18. District court: *TOSLO-2015-155331* — The case concerned the immigration authorities' rejection of an application for family reunification. The court found that authorities' law enforcement was in violation of CEDAW. The reason was that the immigration authorities had based its decision on a Somali tradition when determining the question of parental responsibility under the Immigration Act. The district court found this to be contrary to CEDAW and "order-public".
19. Anti-discrimination legislation is enforced both by the ordinary courts and by LDO and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. The Tribunal has mentioned the Convention in several cases.

**Question 3**

20. We refer to Norway's ninth report, paragraphs 166-171. In addition, we will mention KUN Centre for Knowledge and Gender Equality, The Centre for Equality and the escalation plan to fight violence and abuse.

21. The money transferred to the machinery in the national budget for 2017 amounts to:

- (a) NOK 54 million (LDO);
- (b) NOK 6.4 million (The Equality and Anti-Discrimination tribunal);
- (c) NOK 18.6 (The Norwegian Directorate For Children, Youth and Family Affairs — to equality and anti-discrimination);
- (d) NOK 8.2 million (the two equality-centres);
- (e) NOK 500 million (The escalation plan to fight violence and abuse).

22. The Ministry of Children and Equality has a coordinating role in following up sector responsibilities and ensuring a coherent equality policy. A senior-level steering group for gender equality is the ministries' permanent forum for matters relating to the Government's equality and anti-discrimination policy. The Ministry may support other ministries in their gender-equality efforts. Cross-sectoral action plans and white papers stand as examples of efforts to coordinate and develop the equality policy. The Ministry helps acquire knowledge, coordinates the work of the ministries and oversees joint reporting on international commitments.

23. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (the directorate for equality and anti-discrimination efforts) is tasked with carrying out action plans and measures, as well as knowledge development, documentation and analysis. The documentation and analysis work includes operating a forum for gender equality data and for national statistics on crisis centre services. The Directorate administers grants for organizations focused on family and equality policy, grants for incest centres and rape centres, grants or operating support for Norway's three centres for equality, and grants for a men's resource centre called Reform.

24. Evaluations of action plans, policies, programmes etc. are usually conducted by external academic communities using scientific methods, and after open tender competition. Often evaluations are followed up with reports to the Storting, research projects, new/further action plans, strategies, legislative changes or new regulations.

25. The new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act imposes upon all public authorities a duty to make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote equality and prevent discrimination. The preparatory works of the act states that this duty entails an obligation to ensure that equality and anti-discrimination are paid due regard at all levels, and in all doings of the authorities. It is stated in the preparatory works that the inclusion of a gender perspective in all policy and programmes is a precondition for fulfilment of the duty.

**Question 4**

26. In June 2017, Stortinget adopted a new act on LDO and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. The new act sets out that LDO shall only act as a proactive agent for equal opportunities and no longer handle complaints. The handling of complaints will be transferred to a new Tribunal, which will be given the authority to award redress in cases regarding work life discrimination and

compensation in simple cases. Today, neither LDO nor the tribunal have this authority. Appeals on the Tribunal's decisions shall be referred to the court system.

27. The new Tribunal will not be authorized to handle cases of sexual harassment. Stortinget has decided that an inquiry into low-threshold enforcement mechanisms in cases of sexual harassment shall be conducted.

### **CORE activities, 2013-2016**

28. CORE — Centre for Research on Gender Equality — was established at the Institute for Social Research in the spring of 2013 with funding from the Ministry of Children and Equality. CORE's mission is to conduct research and stimulate research activity on gender equality issues, with an emphasis on working life.

#### *Gender-segregated work life*

29. Norway still has a gender-segregated labour market. CORE finds that Norway's gender segregation is a consequence of how gender equality has evolved. The entry of married women and mothers into the labour market has coincided with industrial recession, transition to a post-industrial service economy and growth of the welfare state, resulting in sustained and self-reinforcing patterns in the labour market. Nonetheless, gender segregation in Norway's labour market has decreased somewhat over time. More people work in professions where the gender distribution is equal, and women are increasingly moving into high-status professions. Men are to some extent joining female-dominated occupations; this is especially the case for men with immigrant backgrounds entering low-skill occupations.

#### *Equality and value creation*

30. CORE has analysed the effect of women's labour-market participation on value creation in Norway. Increased female employment has had a major impact. If there had been no employment growth among women since 1972, cumulative mainland GDP over the subsequent 40 years would have been NOK 3,300 billion lower than the level actually attained. The CORE analysis indicates, moreover, that if women had worked as much as men throughout the period (1972-2013), cumulative mainland GDP in the period would have been NOK 2,300 billion higher.

#### *Men's dominance in senior management*

31. To keep track of gender balance in the largest Norwegian companies, CORE has established the CORE Norwegian Gender Balance Scorecard. This scorecard shows major gender imbalances in the 200 largest companies: 80 per cent of senior executives are men, and 93 per cent of top executives (CEOs) are men. The scorecard also sheds light on the types of positions held by female and male senior executives. Women only hold 15 per cent of line positions, i.e. positions with profit-and-loss responsibility and positions traditionally seen as important in qualifying for the top job — CEO. CORE's analyses show that regulating corporate board gender balance by legislation has had a clear impact on gender balance in the boards covered by the law, but to date we have seen no evidence of a spill-over effect on senior operational management teams in the companies.

#### *Gender and pay*

32. In order to follow developments in gender pay-gap systematically, CORE has created an indicator for gender and pay that measures the hourly wage gap between men and women. The indicator shows that women's hourly pay is 88 per cent of men's. The differences in pay are closely related to gender-segregated structures in the labour market. According to the indicator, 45 per cent of the pay gap between

women and men is attributable to the gender-segregated labour market. The pay gap is widest at the top of the salary ladder. While hourly pay for women in low-income professions is 6 per cent lower than that of men in equivalent positions, women at the top of the salary ladder earn 20 per cent less than top-salaried men. CORE has also investigated the effect of having children on hourly pay differences. The analysis shows that women with children earn less than women without children, while for men the opposite is the case.

#### *Work and family*

33. CORE has analysed gender equality in the interplay between work and family. Women and men alike strongly support the father's quota in Norway's parental leave benefits programme, and it is used in all parts of Norwegian working life, including small, male-dominated workplaces in the private sector. The shared benefits period, however, is taken mainly by the mother. Mothers and fathers also take leave on different terms. While mothers take a long leave period regardless of job considerations, fathers more often accommodate work by dividing up the available leave. Fathers are also more likely to work during a leave period. Studies of parents who share leave more equally than others indicate that their subsequent family life also exhibits more equality. Fathers with primary responsibility for a child over time showed an increase in care skills.

34. Studies of the relationship between sector mobility and family establishment show that some self-sorting of women into the public sector occurs during the period of childbearing and caring for small children. For women in high-status professions this may reflect a greater expectation of family-friendly treatment in the public sector than the private sector.

35. CORE has examined the significance of having children for gender differences in sickness absence. For women, absence from work due to sickness increases dramatically when becoming pregnant and remains higher than for men after pregnancy. Looking ahead, it will be important for CORE to study the mechanisms behind this pattern.

36. CORE's research contributes to a knowledge-based equality policy. In 2017, CORE receives an annual grant of NOK 4.1 million

#### **Gender Equality 2015 action plan**

37. We refer to Norway's ninth report to CEDAW and to paragraph 21 which comments on the final summary of the Gender Equality action plan performed by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. The following paragraphs in the ninth report give an overview of the goals achieved; 18, 41, 43, 44 and 94.

38. As subsequent measures we refer to the white paper Gender equality in practice: Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Meld. St. 7 (2015-2016)), attached to Norway's ninth report to CEDAW. We also refer to the escalation plan to fight violence and abuse.

#### **Question 5**

39. In Norway, all men and women have equal rights to participation and representation in local politics. There are no gender representation rules regarding list proposals for elections for municipal councils, county councils and parliament in Norway. Still, most parties have introduced voluntary gender quotas in their nomination process.

40. The Local Government Act includes provisions requiring a minimum of 40 per cent representation of each gender in the municipal executive board and all appointed bodies in the municipal council. The provisions are intended to secure at least 40 per cent female representation in these boards and bodies. After the introduction of the provisions on gender quotas, the number of female members in the municipal executive boards have continuously been higher than in the municipal councils. From 2007, the number of female members in the municipal executive boards have been more than 40 per cent. The Local Government Act also requires a minimum of 40 per cent of each gender at the boards of municipal companies where the municipalities own at least 2/3 of the stock.

41. The compliance of these provisions are being monitored by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization through the collection of statistics on the development of the gender balance of municipally owned corporations, municipal councils and mayors, plus other central positions. In 2014, ahead of the local government elections and the political parties' nominations to the election, the Ministry initiated the Local Election Day project. The aim was to increase the number of female members of the municipal councils and mayors. The target group was municipalities with less than 30 per cent women in the municipal councils. Forty-seven municipalities signed up for the project. The project included the sharing of knowledge on what causes low female representation, and on measures to increase the female proportion of municipal councils. After the local government election in 2015, the number of female mayors increased by 6 percentage points to 28 per cent. The female members of the municipal executive board increased by 7 percentage points from 2011 to 2015, to 43 per cent. The female members in the municipal councils increased by 1 percentage point from 2011 to 2015, to 39 per cent.

42. The Gender Equality Act allows for positive differential treatment if the differential treatment is suited to promote the purpose of the Act, the negative impact of the differential treatment on the person or persons whose position will worsen is reasonably proportionate in view of the intended result, and the differential treatment will cease when its purpose has been achieved. This provision is maintained in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. Provisions on positive action measures to promote gender equality are also included in certain other acts, regulations and collective agreements.

43. Both in education and work life temporary special measures are used to promote equality for women. For example, the Government has taken steps to promote non-traditional educational choices and careers through a variety of measures, including recruiting more girls to study the natural sciences by means of the project *Jenter og teknologi* (Girls and Technology). The project's goal is to raise the percentage of girls doing science subjects at all levels. Female applicants are also granted extra points for admission to certain university studies where women are underrepresented. Another example of a temporary special measure to promote gender equality is BALANSE, as referred to in Norway's ninth report, paragraph 86.

44. As mentioned in Norway's ninth report, the Job Opportunity programme was introduced as a permanent measure from the summer of 2013 with a view to increasing employment among immigrants aged 18-55 who have little chance of participating in the labour market, and who are not covered by other schemes. Stay-at-home mothers who are not dependent on social security benefits are a priority target group. The Job Opportunity Programme has contributed to strengthen immigrant women's opportunity to participate in the labour market. Seventy-one per cent of the participants from the main target group (women staying home without supplementary public benefits) who completed the programme in 2015 were employed or participated in education.

**Question 6**

45. The government's media policy is to support and maintain a strong and independent pluralistic media landscape with a well-functioning self-regulatory system based on robust ethical standards. The Ministry of Culture has not taken any specific actions to collaborate with the media or to encourage the media to set specific guidelines and/or self-regulatory standards to counteract objectification of adolescent girls and women.

46. There is, however, an increased awareness of women's vulnerability to sexualized hate speech, misogyny and other forms of harassment, intimidation and abuse particularly on the internet, as documented in research (ISF Rapport 2016:14). In November 2016 the Government launched a strategy aimed to combat hate speech. The strategy outlines measures and priorities in different sectors and arenas, including the media.

47. The theme will also be followed up through the government's escalation plan against violence and abuse and the work on revision of subjects in the primary and secondary education.

48. Norway has had some success in addressing the invisibility of violence, resulting in a sharp rise in the number of reported cases of domestic violence and rape over the last few years. The increasing number of reported cases must be viewed in connection with the increased efforts of the police in combating domestic violence and rape in recent years. According to National Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS), 39 per cent of all cases of rape reported to the police are connected to so called party-situations. In the majority of cases, the perpetrators are boys and young men. The victims are mostly girls or young women, often intoxicated. NCIS runs a campaign on the internet called Good guy (Kjernekar). The target group is young men aged 18-35 years. The goal is to prevent rapes. In spring 2017, the campaign has a special focus on secondary graduation celebrities (russetid).

49. [www.Ung.no](http://www.Ung.no) gives out a lot of information on awareness about one's own body and sexuality. Sensitivity and respect for the boundaries of others will be central, as well as information on where to seek help. #ikke greit is a campaign focusing on violence and abuse among young people. The main themes of the campaign in 2017 are abuse and violence committed by boyfriends, rapes committed in connection with parties and image dissemination.

50. In October 2015, the police launched a new campaign to prevent domestic violence, funded by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. The information campaign "How Little Should You Tolerate?" aims to increase knowledge of domestic violence. The purpose of the campaign is to reduce barriers between the general public and the public authorities and to encourage more persons exposed to violence to contact services for help. The campaign consists of a website ([hvorlite.no](http://hvorlite.no)) with a checklist for danger signals, posters, a film, and advertising available in several languages.

51. In February 2016, the Government established a new web portal on domestic violence and rape for persons exposed to such violence and for the health and social services ([dinutvei.no](http://dinutvei.no)). The web portal's purpose is to provide easy access to information about rights and assistance. Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) is given the task to develop and run the portal, in cooperation with the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association and other voluntary organizations.

52. The Counselling Offices for Crime Victims, consisting of 14 offices throughout the country, is a supplement to the public services. The management is

financed by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. These offices give advice and render practical help, they inform and assist the victim in contacting other public services. They also inform on the pending of a criminal case, from the bringing of charge to the court's judgment, and the rights of victims, and they assist with preparing applications for criminal injuries compensation and ex-gratia payment. From 2017 the offices will be part of policing activity and will be strengthened.

53. To improve the situation for rape victims the Government will launch a plan of action to prevent and combat rape in 2018. Preventive measures and measures to help ensure that victims are treated in a better and more coordinated manner by official agencies will be stressed.

54. The Government has no documentation on the connections between pornography and sexual violence.

### **Question 7**

55. Registration of violence against women is done by several actors. The police statistics is issued every year and includes all forms of violence reported to the police. Every year Statistics Norway provides statistics based on the Police statistics including all forms of violence reported to the police. The Living Condition Statistics also contains data on violence. Every year a report with statistics from Norway's 48 crisis centres (shelters) is issued. The report gives valuable data on the victims and their children, the violence endured and the services offered by the crisis centres. Data on honour related violence/forced marriages and FGM are registered and made available the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). A survey on the extent of violence (including domestic violence) and sexual violence was conducted in 2013 and a report on the findings issued in February 2014 by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS). A similar survey will be conducted every 5 years at the request of the Norwegian Government. Additional surveys based on the data provided by the 2013 survey will be conducted on particular groups such as people with immigrant background, LGBT persons and people with disabilities. The survey data will also form the basis for further research on domestic and sexual violence. We are not able to provide statistics to 7 a, b, c and d.

### **Question 8**

#### **Domestic violence**

56. In 2016, 3450 cases of domestic violence was reported to the police. An increase of 35 per cent from 2012 to 2016. It is likely that the increasing number of reported cases is a result of an increased effort by the police in combating domestic violence in recent years, rather than an increase in the level of violence against women. The violence figures from Statistics Norway's survey of living conditions and crisis centre statistics have been relatively stable during recent years.

#### **Causes and consequences of domestic violence**

57. In 2014, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security launched a five-year research programme on domestic violence. A total of NOK 50 million has been allocated for the programme. Norwegian Social Research — NOVA at Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences and Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS), will carry out the research.

58. Causes, extent and consequences of domestic violence are among the subjects for the research programmes. So far, three reports has been published.

59. The first one is a survey on young people's exposure to physical violence from parents, violence between parents (children as witnesses to violence), and sexual violence (UngVold 2015, conducted by NOVA). The overarching purpose of the study is to depict trends related to these three forms of violence. Knowledge about trends has been lacking in a Norwegian context. This study adds knowledge to this field of study as it compares the results from the present survey, carried out in 2015, with the results from a survey NOVA carried out in 2007 (Ungvold 2007). In both surveys, the respondents were 18-19 years old and the samples were drawn in the same manner from upper secondary schools.

60. The second study concerns violence against elderly. The project raises four main research questions. These questions ask to which degree elderly persons (65 years old and above) subjected to abuse are included in the municipality's action plans, in what way they are presented, what type of help and assistance is recommended and in which way these plans assist professionals in providing service for elderly victims of abuse. The last question looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the already established plans.

61. The third study is called "Children in crisis" and focuses on the cooperation between the police and the Child Protection Emergency Services (CPES), when children are exposed to violence and serious abuse. The two agencies cooperate in order to support and help children during and after such events. The report consists of two subprojects. In subproject 1, the subject matter is the cooperation between the agencies in acute crises. The extent of the cooperation is examined in interviews with employees of the CPES and the operational staff of the police.

62. Subproject 2, focused on the allocation of the roles and responsibilities of the agencies when the matter is under deliberation and judicial investigation, while at the same time, the children in question should be provided with child welfare assistance.

### **Intimate partner homicide**

63. In the last decade, intimate partner homicide accounted for 20-30 per cent of the total number of killings in Norway. 7 of 27 victims of homicide in 2016 were killed by their current or former intimate partner.

64. A three-year research project has been initiated to review all intimate partner homicide cases from 1991 to 2012 in order to identify risk factors and develop more effective prevention strategies. The report was launched in December 2015. It shows that prior intimate partner violence was identified in 7 out of 10 intimate partner homicides (IPHs). In 5 out of 10 IPHs, more than five previous episodes of intimate partner violence were identified. In most cases valid risk factors had been observed by police, health-care and support services. During the period 1990 to 2014, there were 867 homicides in Norway. Of these, 206 (24 per cent) were categorized as IPH. Marginalized groups were most vulnerable to IPH, both as perpetrators and as victims.

### **Sami report**

65. Knowledge about violence in different geographical regions or different minority groups in Norway is generally limited, and this is also the case with respect to Sami communities.

66. In March 2017, a report about work on domestic violence and sexual abuse in Sami communities was launched. The report is the result of a one-year research

project that the Sami parliament took the initiative to in 2014 together with the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) was responsible for carrying out the project.

67. The backdrop to the project is previous research showing that many victims experience various types of barrier that prevent them from seeking help or reporting violence. The research also suggests that abused individuals from ethnic minorities may experience special challenges in their dealings with support services. Studies of the interaction of Sami users with the health and social services suggest cultural challenges and language barriers. The study investigates how these challenges were expressed by those affected by domestic violence.

68. The research looks into different experiences with providing services to Sami women affected by violence. This includes services aimed at prevention, as well as assistance to victims. The research reflects on the importance of victims being able to communicate in their indigenous language when speaking to public officials. It shows that language is a tool, not only for communication, but also for building trust. It considers how service providers can show sensitivity to indigenous culture and experience. A tradition of Sami women “being strong”, may stand in the way of reporting abuse. Regard for the collective — the family, or the community — might be considered as more important than regard for the individual. This is the first research of its kind in Norway, focusing only on violence against Sami women.

### **Hate speech**

69. In November 2016, the Government launched a strategy against hate speech. The strategy applies from 2016 until 2020. The strategy aims to prevent hate speech on the grounds of ethnicity and religion, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

70. The Institute for Social Research (ISF) prepared three summaries on knowledge about hate speech on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. The results of the work were available in autumn 2016 and they form an important basis for the Government’s follow-up of the strategy. Overall, the reports show that there are relatively small gender differences in terms of the extent to which men and women are affected by hate speech, but that there are differences in the types of online harassment to which women and men are exposed. Hate speech against women are more sexualized and related to their gender and their appearances.

71. In 2015 The Nordic ministers of equality approved a special initiative against hate speech in the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Nordic ministers have chosen to prioritize three measures, all of which are included in the Norwegian government’s strategy against hate speech. These measures will have a special emphasis on women and girls:

72. Nordic Information on Gender (NIKK) has completed a survey of the Nordic countries’ legal regulations on gender based online hate speech, threats and offences. The main result will be for NIKK to point out possible measures in both the legal and political sphere.

73. Norway will be responsible for producing information material about hate speech suitable for children and youth (10-18 years). The material will deal with how young people can combat such speech and what strategies they can use when encountering it. The information material will be adapted for children and youth in all five Nordic countries, and will be available in the five main languages.

74. 21 June 2017, the Norwegian government has organized an international conference about hate speech. Nordic and international experts, scientists, civil

society, media and government representatives will share knowledge and experiences. The Nordic survey of legal regulations and the information material for children and youth will be launched at the conference.

75. Due to the fact that the strategy has been in function for only a few months, it is too early to give a qualified account of its effects at this time. The strategy will be reviewed annually. Descriptions of both facts and measures are to be updated as new knowledge is made available.

## Question 9

76. A full-time family violence coordinator has been appointed in all police districts. The coordinator is to help ensure that the police meet the victim of violence and her family and friends with understanding, knowledge and insight — in both professional and human terms. As part of the ongoing reform process in the Norwegian police, all police districts will establish separate teams to work on violence and sexual abuse in intimate relationships.

77. In May 2009, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice proposed a legal amendment that authorizes the use of electronic monitoring of a ban on contact or visit. The measure is in line with the perspective that insists that the abuser must take responsibility for his acts and that it is the abuser — and not the victim — who must bear those consequences, in that his freedom of movement is restricted. The project was completed in February 2013, and the first sentence was passed in October 2014. As by May 2017, 8 sentences has been passed. The Government will consider to further develop electronic monitoring to cover a restraining order imposed by the criminal procedural law.

78. Training in the use of the risk assessment tool SARA:SV (*Spousal assault risk assessment: short version*) has been conducted in all police districts. From 1 January 2017 changes have been made in the reporting from the police districts concerning the use of SARA. Each police district is to report on the number of partner violence cases, the number of SARA risk assessments conducted, and the number of high risk cases. Through these reports the Police directorate will be able to follow closely the development in the use of the risk assessment tool.

79. As part of the ongoing reform process in the Norwegian police an action plan to strengthen investigation and prosecution in the police and the prosecuting authorities was launched in May 2016. Through implementation of the measures, the quality of investigations and prosecution in all cases will be strengthened, including cases of sexual abuse.

80. The Norwegian Police University College is the central institution for education and competence building in the Norwegian police. Previously, students in the last year of bachelor's education could choose a specialization subject (one in 10 electives) in sexual assault. About 15 per cent of the students chose this subject, around 85 per cent chose other subjects. From the autumn of 2016, the investigation of violence and sexual abuse is no longer an elective subject, but one of five crime areas that have priority in the research plan, for all students.

81. In its proposition to the Norwegian parliament, the government has proposed amendments to the Municipal Health and Care Services Act, Public Health Act (Specialized Health Services Act) and the Dental Care Services Act; clarifying responsibility for preventing, detecting and abolishing violence and sexual assault. The Storting aims to finalize the process in June 2017.

## Question 10

82. Both the Gender Equality Act and the Working Environment Act give employers an obligation to prevent and introduce notification procedures in cases of sexual harassment. The regulations in the Gender Equality Act on sexual harassment are continued in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.

83. The employer's duty to prevent and preclude harassment is enforced by the LDO and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. The ombud informs and provides legal guidance to employers regarding their obligation to prevent and protect against sexual harassment. The last years LDO has had a special focus on sexual harassment. In 2016, LDO held a series of seven lectures for 3000 soldiers from the Norwegian Army on this topic. The cooperation with the Norwegian Army will continue in 2017. LDO has also had regular lectures for both employers and employees in the police and the fire department. The LDO and the Labour Inspection Authority have made an agreement on collaboration in giving guidance to employers in the hotel and restaurant industry about how to prevent sexual harassment.

84. As mentioned in the answer to question 4, Stortinget has decided that an inquiry into low-threshold enforcement of sexual harassment cases shall be conducted.

## Question 11

85. In 2017, the Government presented *The Right To Decide about One's Own Life — An Action Plan to Combat Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation 2017-2020*. The plan contains 28 measures covering five priority areas of action:

- (a) Strengthening legal protection for vulnerable persons;
- (b) Strengthening assistance to people who break contact with their family and network;
- (c) Changing attitudes and practices in the relevant communities;
- (d) Enhancing knowledge in the support services;
- (e) Strengthening research and increasing knowledge sharing. The Action Plan provides updated information regarding the measures concerning both FGM and FM taken to identify cases, protect victims, prevent these practices as well as efforts to ensure effective punishment for perpetrators.

## Question 12

86. The implementation of the measures in the action plan on human trafficking is monitored by annual reporting from the relevant ministries to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

87. The implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is monitored by the expert group GRETA. In the report on the second evaluation round, published in June 2017, GRETA considers that Norway should commission an independent evaluation of the implementation of the action plan upon its expiry, as a basis for the development of the next action plan. This will be considered.

88. Each ministry must use funds from its budget to implement the measures in the action plan. The plan does not provide for fresh funding of measures against trafficking.

89. Norway has not yet developed a national referral mechanism (NRM) for victim identification. In early 2017 it was decided to establish a project in order to create a NRM and solve challenges in connection to changes in residence status of victims. The project was launched in June 2017.

### **Question 13**

90. The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the central agency coordinating the administration of immigration in Norway. As part of its duties, it is mandated to process applications of victims of THB for a reflection period, residence permits and asylum. The National Police Immigration Service (PU) is tasked with registering and establishing the identity of asylum seekers who arrive in Norway as well as organizing the forced return of irregular migrants. PU is part of the immigration administration and cooperates closely with other agencies, in particular UDI and the Immigration Appeals Board. Officials from PU are instructed to identify possible victims of THB at all stages. Existing procedures describe how to look for indicators of THB during the registration stage and to inform other agencies about a possible victim.

91. Identification of presumed victims of THB (trafficking in human beings) during the procedure for asylum or subsidiary protection may occur through information given by the person him/herself or when a caseworker or an official from another agency (e.g. reception centre, the police, health worker) detects indicators of trafficking. For the immigration authorities, the duty to identify possible victims of THB among asylum seekers includes the obligation to provide them with information on their rights, assist in contacting relevant bodies or support schemes, and consider whether information should be given to a reception centre, child welfare services, police or other agencies.

92. PU is responsible for executing any forced returns of irregular migrants or failed asylum seekers. Ahead of all returns, PU conducts an information gathering process, including with a view to identifying any victims of THB. If new information is found, PU transmits it to the police and/or UDI. New information about the possibility that a person is a victim of trafficking does not automatically mean that the return process is cancelled, but the person will not be returned before UDI, which makes the final decision regarding returns, has considered the information.

93. Since, 2013, Norway has participated in two Joint Investigation Teams concerning THB cases, one opened in July 2016 between Norway and Romania concerning a Romanian girl exploited in prostitution in Norway and one between Norway and Lithuania opened in January 2017, regarding children exploited for forced criminality (shoplifting) in Norway.

94. The Norwegian authorities regularly take part in the planning and implementation of international training events in the field of anti-trafficking, such as for example, training seminars conducted by the Council of the Baltic Sea States expert groups on THB and on children at risk.

95. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to support international action against organized crime, including THB, in particular in cooperation with UNODC and on a bilateral basis, through projects funded under the Norway Grants. For example, within the framework of the Norway Grants Programme Area 30

“Schengen Cooperation and Combatting Cross-border and Organized Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups”, a project was carried out on strengthening police cooperation between Romania and Norway to fight criminal itinerant groups and trafficking in human beings. Through this project, cooperation between the Norwegian and the Romanian police has been facilitated through study visits and the secondment of Romanian police officers to the specialized group against human trafficking in the Oslo police district. Norway has also supported projects on combating THB in Romania and Poland through the Norway Grants.

96. Work on producing a white paper on prostitution issues is ongoing. The Storting has therefore not yet conducted a debate on challenges connected with prostitution.

#### **Question 14**

97. Regarding the question on the persistent gender segregation in upper secondary education, reference is made to the earlier reply in Norway’s ninth periodic report (paragraph 233 and 234). Stortinget has requested the government to determine the design and introduction of extra points for boys and girls seeking vocational subjects in upper secondary school where there are, for example, 80 per cent or more of the opposite gender. The Ministry of Education will follow this up.

98. Regarding the question on under-representation of women among university professors, reference is made to the earlier reply in Norway’s ninth periodic report, paragraphs 32 and 84-87.

99. Stortinget has recently focused on equalizing the differences between the sexes for admission to studies where there is a great overweight of women, and has requested the government to make benefits to men seeking such education. This applies, for example, to psychology, nursing and other health-related studies. The intention is to get more men into these professions.

100. The Gender Equality Act has until now, limited the possibilities for preferential treatment of men. The new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act facilitates an opening of a certain degree of preferential treatment for men with the aim of equalizing the differences in typical women’s professions. This can for example be to give additional points for men applying for admission to health-related studies in the same way as women have been given additional points for admission to technical studies.

#### **Question 15**

101. The Gender Equality Act states that women and men in the same undertaking shall have equal pay for the same work or work of equal value. Wages shall be determined in the same way for women and men, regardless of gender. The act also specifies that a worker who is or has been on parental leave is entitled to make pay claims and, in pay negotiations, be assessed in the same way as other workers. The act also has a provision which states that an employee who suspects wage discrimination may require the employer to provide written information about wage levels and about the criteria used to determine wages for comparable employees. This duty promotes greater wage transparency in the workplace, which is important to the effectiveness of the discrimination protection. These provisions are all maintained in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.

102. LDO is mandated to give guidance in questions relating to equal pay and the employer's duty to promote equality at the work place. LDO gives legal guidance and lectures to both employers and employees and the social partners.

103. In Norway, the social partners are responsible for the implementation of the wage negotiations. With the exception to be employer for the employees in the central government, the government only has a role as legislator and facilitator. The wage agreements are settled through negotiations between the organizations on the employer's and employee's side, both centrally and locally.

104. The Norwegian Technical Calculation Committee for Wage Settlements (TBU) prepares documentation on wage developments for women and men every year (see e.g. NOU 2017: 10). Efforts to reduce wage differences are followed up through wage settlements between employee and employer organizations.

105. Wage differences between men and women was recently discussed in the Labour and Pension Policy Council, a high level organ for the social partners and the government. A working group on gender equality and equal pay has also been established, where the government and the social partners' major organizations participate.

106. CORE has done research on the gender pay gap and developed an indicator for gender and pay, see the answer to question 4.

107. We have no figures that show exact gender differences for equal pay for work of equal value. We only have figures for average wages in different areas. In 2016, the average wage for women working full-time was 87.6 per cent of that of men's. This is a reduction from 86.9 per cent in 2015. Including part-time employees (and converted to full-time equivalents) women's wages as a proportion of men's was 86.1 per cent in 2016 (against 85.3 per cent in 2015). Women's and men's different occupational participation, type of education, work experience, working hours and competence are still important factors behind wage gaps. Research from Institute for Social Research indicates that when adjusted for length of education, professional experience, working hours, sector, industry and occupation, the wage gap between women and men is reduced to just about 7.5 per cent.

108. Regarding steps taken to tackle the persistent occupational segregation between men and women in the labour market and to promote women's opportunities for career development and access to a wider range of jobs, we refer to our answers to question 4 and 5.

## **Question 16**

109. According to the Gender Equality Act, all employers shall make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote gender equality and prevent against discrimination in their undertakings. The act specifies that the activity duty shall encompass matters such as recruitment, pay and working conditions, promotion, development opportunities and protection against harassment. This duty is maintained in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. In addition, the new provision specifies that the duty also shall encompass possibilities for combining work and family life. Further, employers who generally employ more than 50 employees are given a more concrete duty, described as a four step working method.

110. LDO is mandated to give guidance to the employers about the activity duty.

111. According to the Gender Equality Act, the prohibition against discrimination in work life is strict. This is not apparent from the wording of the act, but is clearly stated in the preparatory works and in practice. In the new Equality and

Anti-Discrimination Act establishes a stricter prohibition of unequal treatment in employment matters than in other areas of society in the wording of the act.

112. The Gender Equality Act clarifies that discrimination based on pregnancy and parental leave is to be deemed as discrimination on the basis of gender. The act does not specify that the prohibition against discrimination based on pregnancy and parental leave is strict.

113. The new act specifies that that unequal treatment related to pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and leave in connection to the above-mentioned and parental leave specifically reserved for respectively mother and father is only permissible if the unequal treatment is necessary to protect the mother, the foetus or child, or for other obvious reasons. In addition, the unequal treatment should be proportionate. When it comes to hiring or termination of employment unequal treatment on grounds of pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding or leave is never permitted. The act clearly states that this also applies to the extension of temporary employment. The new act also specifies that employers and schools and educational institutions, within reason, shall provide individual accommodation to pregnant workers and students. Like the Gender Equality Act, the new act also has a provision on worker's rights in connection with parental leave, which states that a worker who is or have been on parental leave shall be entitled to return to the same, or corresponding, position, benefit from improving of working conditions and make pay claims.

114. Fathers have an individual right to *earn* parental benefits today, see paragraph 93 in Norway's ninth report to CEDAW. However, in some situations the father's right to *receive* parental benefits is dependent on the mother's situation. For instance, in a situation where only the father has earned the right to parental leave, it is a condition for the father to receive parental benefit that the mother engages in certain activities outside the home or is too sick to care for the child. The Government is yet to conclude upon the fathers individual right to receive parental benefits.

115. National statistics from Statistics Norway's Labour Force Survey, a quarterly survey of developments in employment and unemployment and of different population groups' connection with the labour market, show that women with disabilities generally have a weaker connection with the labour market than do men with disabilities. Around 60 per cent of women with disabilities who participate in working life have part-time positions, while around 25 per cent of men with disabilities have part-time positions. Furthermore, research conducted by NTNU Samfunnsforskning (NTNU Social Research) indicates that mothers of children with disabilities more often work part-time than other mothers and far more than fathers in the same situation.

116. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has initiated research on the development concerning temporary employment and other forms of atypical work. Several surveys have been initiated to describe the impact of atypical work and to which extent temporary employment leads to a more permanent position in the labour market. These studies will also describe differences concerning gender and age. The studies will be concluded in 2018.

117. When it comes to adults' risk of labour market exclusion we have different measures to capture this. One of them is use of labour market measures, vocational training, work practice or wage subsidies (or a combination of these) being the most important. An individual work capability assessment determines whether or not an individual is offered the opportunity to participate in a labour market scheme and what kind of labour market scheme.

118. Certain groups are prioritized to get labour market measures. These groups are persons with disabilities, youth, long-term recipients of social assistance and immigrants from non-EEA countries. There are also two main schemes that are directly targeted at newly-arrived immigrants: the introductory programme for refugees and a Norwegian language instruction programme.

119. The Introduction Act provides the framework by which immigrants with refugee background can receive the necessary training for work or education. Every refugee shall participate in an individually adapted introduction programme, with Norwegian training and qualification measures. The government will contribute to a more work-oriented programme with early skills profiling so that refugees can enter the labour market as soon as possible. The government will strengthen cooperation with private and public employers to ensure that more immigrants find jobs. Immigrants previously acquired skills and qualifications shall be put to use in the Norwegian job market. The government will simplify the current schemes and fast-track approval of skills and qualifications immigrants bring with them. Reference is also made to the answer to question 5 about The Job Opportunity Programme.

## **Question 17**

### **Sami women in the public health system**

120. It is of great concern to The Ministry of health and care services to provide equal access to health and care services for the whole population, including the Sami people.

121. The Northern Norway Regional Health Authority will in 2018 co-locate specialist health-care services tailored for the Sami people in a Sami health centre in Karasjok municipality. The Sami National Centre for Mental Health will also be located here.

122. A population survey has also been conducted in the three northernmost counties during 2012-2014. The turnout among the Sami population was high. The survey is now being analysed, and will give valuable information of the health of the sami people.

### **Youth health strategy — Ungdomshelsestrategien**

123. The Norwegian government launched a youth health strategy in June 2016. The overall objective of the strategy is that adolescents and young adults should have the best condition to live good lives and experience coping physically, mentally and socially. The Sami National Centre for Mental Health has contributed to the strategy. The aim of the strategy is a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary services. The strategy covers the age group between 13-25 years. The strategy will among others include how to ensure availability, capacity and a well-coordinated service to youth. This also includes online health services.

### **Sexual health strategy — “Strategi for seksuell helse”**

124. The overall strategy on sexual health emphasizes that efforts and measures to secure good sexual health and to protect sexual rights need to be adapted to meet the needs of each individual regardless of ethnicity, culture, gender or sexuality. Efforts to prevent sexually transmitted diseases or prevent unwanted pregnancy needs to be addressed through measures adapted to meet the needs of each individual or subgroup. The strategy further emphasizes the need for all information to be adapted regardless of culture or language preferences, to ensure equal access to health and care services.

## Question 18

125. A key goal in the environmental administration's wage policy is to contribute to gender equality. The Ministry of Climate and Environment sees the recruitment process as an important tool to ensure equality in terms of number of men and women in various positions.

126. When a public body appoints or selects committees, delegations etc., the Gender Equality Act requires that both genders shall be represented. For example, if the committee, delegation etc. has nine members, the act requires that each gender shall be represented by at least four members. If the committee, delegation etc. has more members, each gender shall be represented by at least 40 per cent of the members. This provision is maintained in the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.

## Question 19

127. The total number of asylum applicants in 2011 was 9 053, of whom 33 per cent were women, 2012: 9 785 (33 per cent women), 2013: 11 983 (30 per cent women), 2014: 11 480 (25 per cent women), 2015: 31 150 (23 per cent women), 2016: 3 460 (38 per cent women). In general women has a higher acceptance rate than men. In 2016 59 per cent of the processed applications from women were accepted, while 52 per cent of the processed applications from men were accepted.

128. According to manual registrations in the Directorate of Immigration for the period 2012-2016 of cases where gender related persecution has been submitted as a ground for asylum, a total of 733 applicants were granted protection in Norway and 44 applicants were granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds. In the same period there were reports on 377 rejections. We underline that the manual registrations may not be accurate, and that we assume the number of cases in this category is higher.

129. As mentioned in the national report, paragraph 141, the guidelines for processing asylum applications involving gender-related persecution were clarified and updated by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security on 29 June 2012 (Circular G-08/2012). The guidelines provides a comprehensive and systematic review of factors in the refugee assessment where gender-related issues may be of importance. The guidelines include both procedural conditions, the asylum assessment, as well as the assessment of residency on humanitarian grounds. The guidelines clarify that many types of abuse that typically affect women and girls, may be recognized as persecution. In addition, the ministry has issued guidelines for the handling of immigration cases related to genital mutilation (GI-03/2012). UDI and UNE have also issued their own guidelines for selected gender sensitive issues.

130. Asylum seekers have the right to free legal assistance if their application for asylum is rejected. According to the Norwegian Immigration Regulation the Directorate of Immigration must clarify whether the applicant, based on the asylum application or the applicant's life situation, has special needs during the interview session. Women must be asked if they want the interviewer and the interpreter to be a woman. The Directorate of Immigration has issued guidelines on asylum interviews, in which facilitation for applicants with special needs is addressed, including assessing the need to obtain necessary information on relevant topics, such as trafficking in human beings, gender-related persecution, torture, genital mutilation, forced marriage and family violence. Unaccompanied female asylum seekers are offered accommodation in facilities separated from the rest of the reception centre.

131. In light of the high asylum arrivals in the fall of 2015, the Government submitted proposals for various tightening measures in asylum and immigration policy. As stated in paragraph 132 of the national report a proposal to increase the period-of-residence requirement for a permanent residence permit from three to five years was circulated for consultation in the spring of 2015. The proposal was not passed by Stortinget.

132. In June 2016, Stortinget adopted two amendments regarding family immigration in the Norwegian Immigration law. Applications for family reunification may be rejected in cases where the sponsor has been granted protection in Norway, but not yet a permanent residence permit, and the family may exercise their family life in a safe country where their overall ties are stronger than in Norway. With the purpose of combating forced marriage, in cases of family establishment both spouses/parties must be at least 24 years of age. Exemptions are possible if the relationship is obviously voluntary. In connection with these amendments a majority in the Parliament requested the introduction of a shorter deadline for submitting an application for family reunification for refugees to be exempted from the subsistence requirement and the lowering of the subsistence requirement.

133. The total number of family immigration first time permits has been around 12,000 yearly from 2011 to 2015, with an increase to about 15 000 in 2016. About two thirds of the permits are issued to women.

## **Question 20**

134. Promoting the rights for persons with disabilities is a priority task for the Government, see [CRPD/C/NOR/1](#).

135. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is responsible for collecting, systematizing and developing knowledge about the living conditions and life circumstances of persons with disabilities. Once systematized, this knowledge will be broken down by gender as far as possible. This means that any gender disparities — including those among persons with disabilities — can be monitored over time and analysed. Sample surveys show that around 5 percentage points more women than men have disabilities, according to standard definitions.

136. In 2016, The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs initiated a literature study on how gender is integrated in research on disability issues in areas such as health, work, family and education. The findings of the report is that few studies thematize how gender and disability interact.

137. Safeguarding vulnerable adults is given priority by the Government. TryggEst, a Norwegian version of the British SOVA-model (Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults), is being developed in order to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, violence and maltreatment. Vulnerable adults are defined as people who receive or should receive public or private support, and who are unable or have problems in protecting themselves. This may be people who are physically, psychologically or intellectually challenged. TryggEst will initially be piloted in a number of local authorities. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has been given the task of developing and piloting TryggEst. We also refer to Norway's ninth report, paragraph 62.

138. Based on the report Equal conditions for men and women under the responsibility of the Correctional Service, a strategy for women on remand or serving a sentence has been developed. The strategy has five intermediate objectives:

- (a) Imprisoned women shall be segregated from male prisoners;
- (b) There shall be a stronger focus on women who are serving a sentence;
- (c) The content of a prison sentence shall be better adapted to women;
- (d) Better knowledge and competence on female prisoners.

Some measures have already been initiated, such as initiatives to ensure better possibilities for treatment for female substance users.

139. Regarding the Parliamentary Ombudsman's thematic report «Women in Prison», it is a goal for the Government to improve the conditions for imprisoned women. The Government has instigated various processes to this end and 38 prison places especially adapted for female prisoners have already been established.

140. After the launch of the Parliamentary Ombudsman's report on women of 15 December 2016, the prison places for women in Drammen prison have been abolished and Drammen prison is currently for male prisoners only. This has been done to remedy the situation; with men and women being imprisoned together, which was criticized by the Parliamentary Ombudsman. Instead, a separate wing in Kongsvinger prison has been transformed into a women's department.

141. When planning and establishing new prisons, the need for specially adapted places for women will be prioritized.

## **Question 21**

142. There are at present no plans for amending the Norwegian National Insurance Act in order to further compensate women who have stayed at home in order to care for the family. There are already provisions in place, which guarantee persons (male or female) who have taken unpaid care of children under the age of six, or who have taken unpaid care of persons who are sick, disabled or elderly, an annual pension earning equal to that which would have been obtained if they been in paid employment with a salary of 4.5 times the Basic amount of the National Insurance Scheme (as per 1 May 2017: NOK 421 353).

143. The Norwegian National Insurance Scheme covers all legal residents in Norway. As all residents, irrespective of gender, age or occupational activity, are members of the scheme, marital status is of less importance. As regards survivors' pension, cohabitants have the same rights as married couples, provided that they have or have had children together or have previously been married. Furthermore, due to the high labour force participation rate for women in Norway, women are to a larger degree financially independent than in many other countries, and therefore less dependent on survivors' pension.

---