



**International Human Rights  
Instruments**

Distr.: General  
14 August 2024

Original: English

---

**Common core document forming part of the  
reports of States parties**

**Norway\***

[Date received: 12 June 2024]

---

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



## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. General information about the reporting State .....	4
A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State .....	4
B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State .....	21
II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights.....	28
A. Acceptance of international human rights norms.....	28
B. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level.....	37
C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level .....	39
D. Reporting process at the national level .....	46
III. Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies .....	47
A. Legal framework.....	47
B. Institutional framework and effective remedies.....	49
C. Gender equality and specific vulnerable groups .....	50
D. General measures adopted to reduce economic, social and geographic disparities .....	55
Annex	
Useful websites and legislation .....	58

## Abbreviations

EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOK	Norwegian krone

## I. General information about the reporting State

### A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State

#### (a) Demographic characteristics

1. On 1 January 2024, the population of Norway was 5,550,203. The population of Oslo, Norway's capital and largest city, was 717,710.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population size</i>	<i>Population growth rate (%)</i>	<i>Inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup></i>
2017	5 258 317	0.71	17
2018	5 295 619	0.62	17
2019	5 328 212	0.74	18
2020	5 367 580	0.44	18
2021	5 391 369	0.63	18
2022	5 425 270	1.17	18
2023	5 488 984	1.12	18
2024	5 550 203	0.99	18

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population in rural areas</i>	<i>Population in urban areas</i>
2017	960 461	4 283 184
2018	954 612	4 327 951
2019	949 123	4 368 614
2020	940 251	4 416 981
2021	938 083	4 443 243
2022	933 164	4 485 236
2023	928 566	4 554 562

2. Concerning the *dependency ratio*, approximately 18 per cent of the population was under the age of 15, while approximately 17 per cent was above the age of 65. 49.7 per cent of the population were women and 50.3 per cent were men.

	<i>2020</i>		<i>2021</i>		<i>2022</i>		<i>2023</i>		<i>2024</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 706 562</b>	<b>2 661 018</b>	<b>2 719 259</b>	<b>2 672 110</b>	<b>2 737 332</b>	<b>2 687 938</b>	<b>2 765 470</b>	<b>2 723 514</b>	<b>2 795 718</b>	<b>2 754 485</b>
<15	17.6	17.0	17.4	16.8	17.2	16.6	17.0	16.4	16.7	16.1
65< (per cent)	15.1	17.8	15.5	18.2	15.8	18.4	16.1	18.6	16.3	18.8

3. The table below shows *birth rate* and *mortality rate*.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Birth rate (live births per 1,000 inhabitants)</i>	<i>Mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 inhabitants)</i>
2017	10.73	7.75
2018	10.41	7.71
2019	10.19	7.61
2020	9.85	7.55
2021	10.37	7.77

<i>Year</i>	<i>Birth rate (live births per 1,000 inhabitants)</i>	<i>Mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 inhabitants)</i>
2022	9.43	8.39
2023	9.42	7.94

4. *Life expectancy* was 84.63 years for women and 81.39 years for men.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
2017	80.91	84.28
2018	81.0	84.49
2019	81.19	84.68
2020	81.48	84.89
2021	81.59	84.73
2022	80.92	84.35
2023	81.39	84.63

5. *The fertility rate* (age-specific fertility rates 15–49 years) was 1.4.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Live births per 1,000 women</i>
2017	1.62
2018	1.56
2019	1.53
2020	1.48
2021	1.55
2022	1.41
2023	1.40

6. *The average household size* (the number of persons in a private household) in 2023 was 2.11. The share of children living with either their mother or father was 15.9 per cent (174,134 children aged 0–17). 40 per cent of all households consisted of one person.

7. The Sami are the *indigenous people* of Norway. Statistics Norway does not compile statistics on ethnic background. Therefore, there is no overall registration of the Sami population, and it is difficult to generate statistics on the Sami as a group. However, the number of Sami registered on the Sami Parliament's (the *Sámediggi*) electoral roll is 23,488 (June 2023). Jews, Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Roma, Romani people/Tater and Forest Finns are recognised as *national minorities*.

8. At the beginning of 2024, 877,200 *immigrants* and 213,800 *persons born in Norway to immigrant parents* were registered as residents in Norway, representing nearly 20 per cent of the Norwegian population. In 2024, the largest groups of immigrants were from Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Sweden, Syria and Somalia. In this paragraph, *immigrants* are defined as persons born in a foreign country to two foreign-born parents and four foreign-born grandparents, and does not include asylum seekers, i.e., persons who have applied for protection (asylum) in Norway and whose application has not yet been finalised.

9. In 2022, the number of *registered new immigrants* who entered Norway was almost 90,500, which is 40 per cent higher than the previous year. Some 92 per cent of the immigrants were foreign citizens, 74 per cent of whom were from European countries. The largest number of new immigrants came from Ukraine with 32,300 registered immigrants. Thereafter, the highest immigration of foreign citizens came from Poland (6,600), Lithuania (2,600), India (2,600) and Syria (2,400). In 2022, 23,100 foreign citizens were registered as having emigrated from Norway, almost 3,000 fewer than in 2021. Overall, the net

immigration of foreign citizens reached a record level of 60,200, almost 40,000 more than in 2021, primarily due to the large influx of persons fleeing from Ukraine.

10. In 2023, approximately 62 per cent of the Norwegian population were members of the Church of Norway. 13 per cent of the population were members of *other religious and life stance communities* for whom government subsidy was received.

**Members of religious and life stance communities outside the Church of Norway, by religion/life stance per 1 January 2023<sup>1</sup>**

	2023		Percentage change	
	Members	Per cent	2022–2023	2019–2023
<b>Total</b>	<b>724 803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>6.8</b>
Baha'ism	1 067	0.1	0.5	-4.6
Buddhism	22 212	3.1	1.0	5.6
Hinduism	13 141	1.8	4.0	15.2
Islam	182 607	25.2	3.7	4.0
Judaism	755	0.1	1.9	-6.7
Christianity	376 555	52.0	0.8	2.9
Sikhism	4 316	0.6	0.0	8.3
Life stance	120 726	16.7	13.0	25.4
Other religious and life stance communities	3 424	0.5	11.7	40.4

Source: Statistics Norway.

<sup>1</sup> Only includes members for whom government subsidy was received.

11. In 2020, 17.6 per cent of the Norwegian population (15–66 years) responded in the Labour Force Survey that they have a *disability* (15.5 per cent of male respondents and 19.9 per cent of female respondents).

**(b) Economy**

12. Norway is richly endowed with *natural resources*, including offshore petroleum and natural gas, various ores, fish, timber and hydropower. Norway is the eighth-largest net oil exporter (2022), the fourth-largest net exporter of natural gas (2023) and the seventh-largest producer of hydropower in the world (2022). Thanks in part to these natural resources, Norway has become one of the world's richest countries, measured in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

13. Other important reasons for Norway's wealth are its proximity to the markets of Western Europe, easy access to energy, political stability and high educational standards.

14. Norway is a *mixed economy* with well-functioning markets and generally low trade barriers. A significant share of the economy consists of service industries, including wholesale and retail industries, banking, engineering, and public sector services. In 2023, the service sector accounted for almost 80 per cent of total employment.

15. In 2023, *the manufacturing sector* accounted for around 9 per cent of the value added in the mainland economy. Norway's major manufacturing industries are machinery and equipment, food and beverages, refined petroleum, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, and oil platform construction, as well as repair and installation of machinery and equipment. A weaker currency (Norwegian krone) has contributed to a significant improvement in the competitiveness of Norwegian manufacturing, resulting in high export growth in recent years.

16. Since the start of North Sea oil production in 1971, Norway has developed a vast petroleum sector. For more than 40 years, this sector has made significant contributions to economic growth. Oil production reached its peak in the early 2000s and has since declined significantly. However, a substantial increase in gas production has contributed to dampening

the decline in total petroleum production. In 2023, more than 40 per cent of public revenues came from the petroleum sector.

17. In 2023, Norway's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to 5,129 billion Norwegian kroner (NOK), or approximately 485 billion United States dollars (USD).<sup>1</sup> In constant prices, GDP was 0.5 per cent higher in 2023 than in 2022.<sup>2</sup> In 2023, total foreign assets amounted to NOK 25,975 billion and liabilities amounted to NOK 10,693 billion, resulting in a net external surplus of NOK 15,282 billion.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Gross domestic product (GDP)					
NOK million, current prices	3 596 937	3 461 575	4 323 931	5 708 190	5 128 639
Annual growth rate (per cent)	1.1	-1.3	3.9	3.0	0.5
Gross national income (GNI) NOK million	3 706 860	3 604 709	4 398 889	5 881 194	5 365 180
NOK per capita GDP	672 589	643 478	799 497	1 046 006	925 431
NOK per capita GNI	693 144	670 086	813 314	1 077 709	968 113

Source: Statistics Norway.

18. In the twenty years leading up to the 2007–2008 global financial crisis, annual *economic growth* averaged 2.4 per cent in the total economy and 3.3 per cent in the mainland economy. Even though the impact of the financial crisis was less severe in Norway than in most other countries, economic growth slowed following the crisis. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mainland economy had been growing near trend for a ten-year period. The Norwegian economy made a strong recovery following the pandemic. However, high inflation and increasing interest rates led to a deceleration in growth throughout 2023. However, the unemployment rate has remained at low levels. Going forward, there are signs that growth will pick up. In the 2024 Revised National Budget, GDP for mainland Norway is projected to increase by 0.9 per cent in 2024 and 1.9 per cent in 2025.

19. Total accrued *taxes* as a percentage of GDP are estimated at 40.8 per cent for 2024. When adjusted for petroleum activities, taxes amount to 42.9 per cent of mainland GDP. The main goal of the tax system is to most efficiently fund public goods and services.

### Household income

20. The table below shows the Gini coefficient for *household income* after tax<sup>3</sup> for the Norwegian population as a whole. The Gini coefficient is a number between 0 and 1 that measures income inequality. If the coefficient is 0, all individuals have the same income, meaning there is no inequality. If it is 1, all income goes to one individual, and inequality is at its maximum.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	0.252	0.251	0.250	0.252	0.279	0.253

21. The tables below show the distribution of household income after tax<sup>4</sup> between persons (EU-scale)/decile shares and cumulative decile shares as a percentage. Persons in student households are excluded.

<sup>1</sup> Average exchange rate in 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Constant 2015 prices.

<sup>3</sup> The measure is based on what is referred to as the *EU equivalence scale*. An equivalence scale is a method for dividing household income by the individuals living in the household (including children) while taking into account the economy of scale in multi-individual households. This is done by scaling up individual incomes in households with several individuals. There are several scales in use worldwide, but the most common are the scales used by the EU and the OECD.

<sup>4</sup> Negative amounts have been set to zero.

<i>Decile group</i>										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2017	3.8	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.5	11.7	13.5	21.6
2018	3.8	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.5	11.7	13.5	21.5
2019	3.8	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	9.6	10.5	11.7	13.5	21.3
2020	3.8	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.5	11.7	13.5	21.6
2021	3.7	5.7	6.7	7.5	8.3	9.1	10.0	11.2	13.1	24.5
2022	3.7	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	9.5	10.5	11.7	13.5	21.6

<i>Cumulative decile shares</i>										
2017	3.8	9.7	16.7	24.6	33.3	42.8	53.3	65.0	78.5	100
2018	3.8	9.7	16.7	24.6	33.3	42.9	53.3	65.0	78.5	100
2019	3.8	9.7	16.7	24.6	33.4	42.9	53.5	65.2	78.7	100
2020	3.8	9.7	16.7	24.6	33.2	42.8	53.2	64.9	78.4	100
2021	3.7	9.4	16.1	23.7	32.0	41.1	51.2	62.4	75.5	100
2022	3.7	9.7	16.7	24.6	33.2	42.8	53.2	64.9	78.4	100

22. The table below shows measures of *income dispersion/household equivalent income*<sup>5</sup> (EU-scale) between persons.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total populations</i>			<i>Total populations excluding persons in student households</i>		
	<i>Gini coefficient</i>	<i>P90/P10*</i>	<i>S80/S20**</i>	<i>Gini coefficient</i>	<i>P90/P10*</i>	<i>S80/S20**</i>
2017	0.261	3.0	3.9	0.252	2.8	3.6
2018	0.260	3.0	3.9	0.251	2.8	3.6
2019	0.259	3.0	3.9	0.250	2.8	3.6
2020	0.262	3.0	3.9	0.252	2.8	3.6
2021	0.289	3.0	4.3	0.279	2.8	4.0
2022	0.261	2.9	3.9	0.253	2.8	3.6

\* Percentile ratio of the 9th and the 1st decile cut-offs.

\*\* The ratio of the share of income held by the top 20 per cent of the distribution and the bottom 20 per cent of the distribution.

23. The table below shows *household equivalent income* (EU-scale) for different percentiles of the income distribution in NOK.<sup>6</sup>

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
P05	207 400	208 800	212 800	215 700	222 900	216 800
P10	249 200	250 400	255 200	257 300	261 800	259 200
P20	309 100	310 300	315 600	316 900	321 000	318 800
P30	355 400	356 800	363 000	364 700	367 800	365 800
P40	395 100	396 800	403 700	405 400	408 400	406 100
P50	433 500	435 500	443 300	445 100	448 200	445 600
P60	474 700	477 300	485 600	487 700	491 600	488 100

<sup>5</sup> Negative amounts have been set to zero.

<sup>6</sup> Persons in student households are excluded.



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
P70	523 500	526 600	535 900	538 600	543 600	538 800
P80	589 700	593 600	604 000	607 500	615 900	607 700
P90	704 900	709 200	721 200	726 500	745 400	726 800
P95	837 000	841 000	853 200	861 800	905 700	864 000
P99	1 351 400	1 354 700	1 351 300	1 395 700	1 729 500	1 399 300
<b>Number of persons</b>	<b>5 130 925</b>	<b>5 166 774</b>	<b>5 207 512</b>	<b>5 226 906</b>	<b>5 266 285</b>	<b>5 340 621</b>

### Consumer price index

24. *Consumer price inflation*, measured as changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased substantially in the wake of the pandemic, mirroring trends observed in many other countries. Global supply chain bottlenecks, in conjunction with Russia's war in Ukraine and its politicization of gas supply, contributed to soaring prices of raw materials and energy. This led to the highest consumer price inflation in Norway since the 1980s. Although the Norwegian krone strengthened after an initial weakening in March of 2020, it remained weak compared to pre-pandemic levels and experienced another substantial decline in the spring of 2023. Headline inflation peaked in October 2022 at 7.5 per cent, while core inflation, measured as changes in CPI adjusted for changes in taxes and excluding energy (CPI-ATE) peaked in June 2023 at 7 per cent. Since then, growth in both CPI and CPI-ATE have decreased but remain higher than the inflation target at 2 per cent. Looking ahead, CPI is expected to increase by 3.9 per cent in 2024 and 2.8 per cent in 2025. The corresponding growth in CPI-ATE is expected to be 4.3 per cent in 2024 and 3.0 per cent in 2025.

Year	Annual rate of change in CPI	Annual rate of change in CPI-ATE
2016	3.6	3.1
2017	1.8	1.4
2018	2.7	1.6
2019	2.2	2.2
2020	1.3	3.0
2021	3.5	1.7
2022	5.8	3.9
2023	5.5	6.2

Source: Statistics Norway.

### (c) Social expenditures

25. The table below shows *social expenditures* in NOK million and as a percentage of total government expenditure.

	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
Housing and community Amenities	27 524	1.6	28 998	1.6	30 736	1.6	35 140	1.5	35 140	1.6
Health	283 782	16.6	302 698	16.8	320 964	16.4	373 230	17.6	373 230	17.3
Education	190 884	11.2	198 824	11.0	200 891	10.2	220 622	10.4	220 622	10.3
Social protection	675 051	39.6	702 077	38.9	758 349	38.6	815 621	39.1	815 621	37.9
Total social expenditures	1 177 241		1 232 597		1 310 940		1 444 613		1 444 613	
GDP	3 576 581		3 596 937		3 461 575		5 708 190		5 708 190	
Social expenditures/GDP	0.3		0.3		0.4		0.3		0.3	

Source: Statistics Norway. Expenditure by function is based on the UN's Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG).

### The National Insurance Scheme

26. *The Norwegian National Insurance Scheme* is universal, covering all the traditional branches of social security as set out in ILO Convention No. 102. As a general rule, membership in the scheme is compulsory for all those who either live or work in Norway. In 2023, total expenditures under the National Insurance Scheme amounted to NOK 611,998 billion. This represents approximately 34 per cent of the Norwegian National Budget. The National Insurance Scheme is funded by contributions from the State, employers, employees, self-employed persons and other members of the scheme.

### The Government Pension Fund

27. *The Government Pension Fund* was established in 2006 and encompasses the former Government Petroleum Fund and the National Insurance Scheme Fund. The purpose of the Fund is to facilitate the government savings needed to meet the expected rise in public pension expenditures in the coming years and to support long-term management of petroleum revenues.

28. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the management of the Government Pension Fund. The Ministry sets the general investment strategy of the Fund including the strategy for responsible investing. Operational management is carried out by *Norges Bank* (the Central Bank of Norway) and *Folketrygdfondet* (the specialised asset management company tasked with overseeing the Government Pension Fund) for the Government Pension Fund Global and Government Pension Fund Norway, respectively.

29. The total market value of the Government Pension Fund was NOK 15,757 billion at the end of 2023.

## (d) Health

30. The average *infant mortality rate* (deaths of children under one year of age expressed per 1,000 live births) was 2.1 from 2016 to 2020. The average rate for the last two years has been 1.9. The table below shows the *infant mortality rate* for the period 1966–2022.

<i>Years</i>	<i>Deaths of children under one year of age expressed per 1,000 live births</i>
1966–1970	13.9
1971–1975	11.6
1976–1980	9.0
1981–1985	8.1
1986–1990	7.9
1991–1995	5.3
1996–2000	4.1
2001–2005	3.3
2006–2010	3.0
2011–2015	2.4
2016–2020	2.1
2021–2022	1.9

31. The table below shows the *maternal mortality rate* for the period 2005–2022.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Maternal mortality per 100,000 births</i>
2005	8.8
2006	10.2
2007	13.6
2008	6.6

<i>Year</i>	<i>Maternal mortality per 100,000 births</i>
2009	8.0
2010	4.8
2011	6.6
2012	4.9
2013	3.4
2014	3.4
2015	1.7
2016	5.0
2017	1.8
2018	1.8
2019	7.3
2020	7.5
2021	3.5
2022	3.9

32. The tables below show *the proportion of induced abortions* as a percentage of live births for the period 2005–2015.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Proportion of induced abortions as a percentage of live births</i>
2005	24.4
2006	24.4
2007	25.7
2008	26.4
2009	25.2
2010	25.2
2011	25.2
2012	24.9
2013	24.7
2014	23.5
2015	23.5
2016	22.0
2017	22.3
2018	22.2
2019	21.3
2020	20.7
2021	19.2
2022	23.1
2023	24.5

33. The tables below show the *number of new cases of HIV, AIDS, syphilis and gonorrhoea* per year.

**All ages**

Disease	Sex	Year						
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
HIV	Men	155	122	112	91	64	136	205
	Women	58	69	60	46	38	109	127
AIDS	Men	13	9	14	10	13	11	13
	Women	5	3	5	1	10	9	6
Syphilis	Men	207	222	192	277	160	187	199
	Women	17	9	14	11	4	8	9
Gonorrhoea	Men	1 181	1 352	1 328	806	425	1 359	1 883
	Women	218	307	376	239	130	499	1 102

34. The table below shows the number of *new cases of communicable diseases*.

Communicable diseases	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
AIDS	18	12	19	11	23	20	19
Botulism	2	1	1	2		1	2
Brucellosis	3	3	4	2	3	1	1
Campylobacteriosis	3 883	3 667	4 155	2 422	2 055	2 983	3 034
Chlamydia infection, genital	25 130	26 570	28 446	25 444	23 447	29 271	28 137
Cryptosporidiosis	379	327	378	483	355	514	539
Diphtheria	1	1	2			8	4
E. coli enteritis	1 307	1 377	1 561	670	700	1 472	2 239
Echinococcosis	7	8	7	7	11	9	13
Encephalitis	323	507	299	244	240	382	456
Fleck typhus							3
Giardiasis	485	465	578	299	265	331	363
Gonorrhoea	1 399	1 659	1 704	1 045	555	1 858	2 985
Yellow fever							
Haemorrhagic fever							
Hepatitis A	50	32	38	14	33	31	29
Hepatitis B, acute	20	12	23	4	4	4	9
Hepatitis B, chronic	455	352	372	218	250	356	434
Hepatitis C	786	781	661	469	382	476	629
HIV infection	213	191	172	137	102	245	332
Influenza A (H1N1)							
Pertussis	2 424	2 470	2 534	812	38	44	1 201
Cholera					2	3	
Smallpox							
Mumps	18	11	20	9	4	8	3
Legionellosis	52	70	66	39	43	70	72
Leprosy					1	1	
Listeriosis	17	24	27	37	20	31	40
Lyme disease	438	421	488	510	537	496	570
Malaria	61	55	196	47	68	60	66
Measles	1	12	18	4		1	2

<i>Communicable diseases</i>	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Anthrax							
MRSA infection	824	915	955	753	702	873	1 112
MRSA carrier	1 670	1 652	1 520	1 168	1 050	1 202	1 469
Nephropathia epidemica	26	21	11	12	38	20	15
Paratyphoid fever	8	8	20	6	5	15	8
Plague							
Poliomyelitis							
Prions disease	6	10	9	8	6	12	3
PRP infection/carrier	10	6	6	5	4	8	6
Rabies			1				
ESBLcarba-carrying Gram-Negative Bacilli	50	82	111	73	72	247	370
Rubella			1	1			
Salmonellosis	992	962	1 094	440	390	712	757
SARS							
Shigellosis	115	102	133	37	33	80	129
Syphilis	224	231	206	288	164	195	208
Group A streptococcal diseases	253	236	226	164	91	156	502
Group B streptococcal diseases	230	260	316	283	316	332	287
H. influenzae infections	120	91	98	40	58	133	126
Meningococcal diseases	18	26	16	5	5	10	16
Pneumococcal diseases	560	594	609	294	319	539	613
Tetanus		3					
Tuberculosis	261	208	166	157	155	173	153
Tularaemia	92	58	183	99	95	58	149
Typhoid fever	12	23	13	7	6	7	14
VRE infection/carrier	376	257	205	74	34	76	93
Yersiniosis	67	105	85	83	85	117	86

35. The table below shows the *ten leading causes of death* in Norway.

<i>Underlying cause of death</i>	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
COVID-19 (U07)	0	0	0	413	828	2 820
Females	0	0	0	196	348	1 329
Males	0	0	0	217	480	1 491
Unspecified dementia (F03)	2 511	2 695	2 645	2 214	2 028	2 340
Females	1 738	1 884	1 826	1 539	1 423	1 635
Males	773	811	819	675	605	705
Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (J44)	2 094	2 088	2 048	1 907	2 085	2 234
Females	1 114	1 083	1 102	1 003	1 139	1 220
Males	980	1 005	946	904	946	1 014
Malignant neoplasm of bronchus and lung (C34)	2 141	2 203	2 151	2 186	2 204	2 203
Females	976	1 038	1 042	1 017	1 046	1 010
Males	1 165	1 165	1 109	1 169	1 158	1 193
Chronic ischaemic heart disease (I25)	1 331	1 357	1 324	1 490	1 780	1 878
Females	516	537	493	581	715	727

Underlying cause of death	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Males	815	820	831	909	1 065	1 151
Acute myocardial infarction (I21)	2 131	1 976	1 812	1 576	1 607	1 429
Females	984	880	818	719	664	545
Males	1 147	1 096	994	857	943	884
Alzheimer disease (G30)	1 108	1 041	1 124	1 292	1 405	1 390
Females	739	690	725	830	930	917
Males	369	351	399	462	475	473
Malignant neoplasm of colon (C18)	1 200	1 182	1 135	1 168	1 247	1 166
Females	616	601	600	631	653	593
Males	584	581	535	537	594	573
Heart failure (I50)	1 200	1 161	1 126	1 003	1 056	1 100
Females	719	725	670	568	581	604
Males	481	436	456	435	475	496
Malignant neoplasm of prostate (C61)	936	928	961	958	895	973
Males	936	928	961	958	895	973

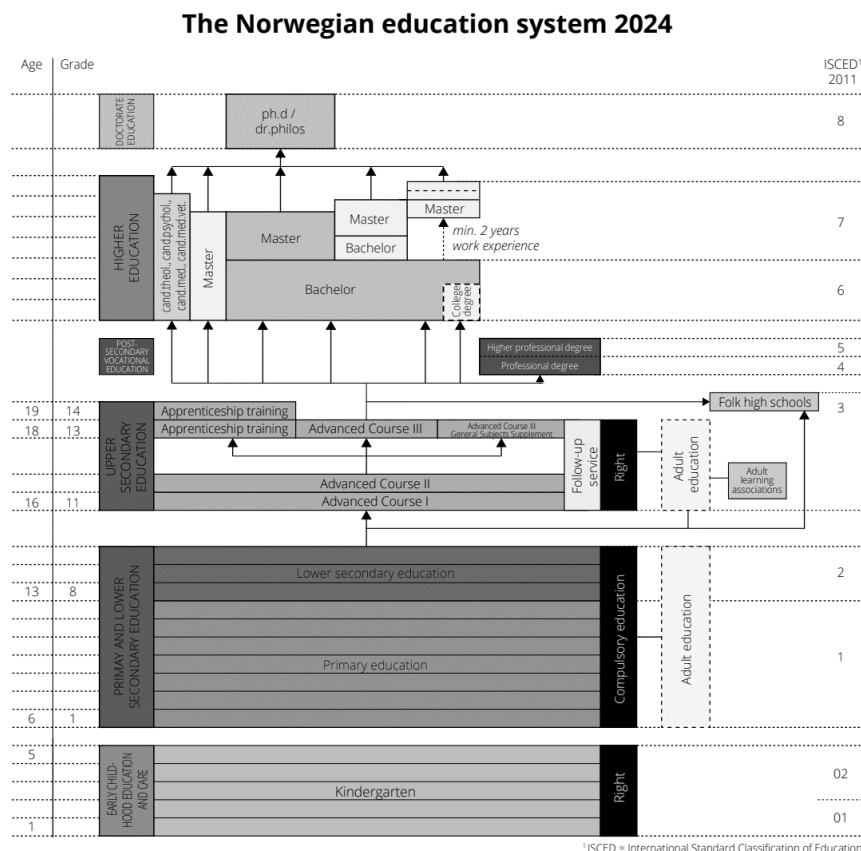
\* Based on the ICD-10 three-character code.

36. The table below shows *new cases of tuberculosis per 100,000* for the period 2017-2023.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	5.0	3.9	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.2	2.8

(e) Education and training

37. The figure below illustrates the *Norwegian education system*.



<sup>1</sup> ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education.

38. *Primary and lower secondary education* (basic school level) is compulsory. In 2022, 75.4 per cent of men and 77.3 per cent of women aged 16 and older had attained upper secondary education or higher. 24.6 per cent of men and 22.8 per cent of women had only attained basic school level, compared with 45.2 per cent and 52.2 per cent, respectively, in 1980. The proportion of the population attaining tertiary education has increased substantially over the last 40 years.

#### Highest completed education in the population aged 16 years and older<sup>7</sup>

		1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2022
Males	Basic school level	45.2	38.3	31.4	30	28.6	27.1	25.5	24.6
	Upper secondary education*	41.6	44.8	46.5	46	45.3	44.1	39.9	39.6
	Intermediate (higher professional education)							3.8	3.9
	Tertiary education short**	8.9	11.7	15.3	16.5	17.6	18.7	19.9	20.3
	Tertiary education long***	4.3	5.2	6.7	7.5	8.5	10	10.9	11.6
Females	Basic school level	52.2	44.6	35.9	32.4	29.6	26.7	24.0	22.8
	Upper secondary education*	38.3	41.1	42.1	41.3	39.9	37.7	34.0	33.0
	Intermediate (higher professional education)							2.2	2.4
	Tertiary education short**	8.8	12.9	19.1	22.3	24.9	27.3	29.5	30.3
	Tertiary education long***	0.7	1.4	2.9	4	5.7	8.3	10.3	11.6

Source: Statistics Norway.

\* Upper secondary education: until and including 2015, figures include intermediate-level courses (e.g., higher professional education) based on completed upper secondary level but not accredited as tertiary education.

\*\* Tertiary education, short: comprises higher education up to and including four years in duration.

\*\*\* Tertiary education, long: comprises higher education exceeding four years in duration.

#### Kindergarten

39. An individual statutory *right to kindergarten* in 2009, following the Kindergarten Reform (2004–2009). Since then, children have had the right to full-time enrolment in kindergarten from one year of age (41+ hours/week). The Kindergarten Reform also led to the introduction of a maximum cost (parental payment) and financially equal treatment of municipal and privately-owned kindergartens.

40. The Government has the overall responsibility for policy development of the sector, and kindergarten operation is included in the general block grants to the municipalities. County Governors implement kindergarten policy through their activities, including administrative tasks, supervision, and guidelines for municipalities. The municipalities are responsible for providing and operating municipal kindergartens, as well as approving and supervising both public and privately-owned kindergartens in the municipality.

41. In 2023, 88.6 per cent of children aged 1–2 years and 97.2 per cent of children aged 3–5 years attended kindergarten. Children with a minority background had somewhat lower levels of enrolment than other children, especially in the youngest age groups.

#### Percentage of children attending kindergarten by different age groups

Year	1–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
2006	80.3	61.8	92.8
2012	90.1	80.2	96.6

<sup>7</sup> Persons with unknown or no education are not included.

Year	1–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
2015	90.4	80.6	96.6
2020	92.7	85.4	97.3
2023	93.8	88.6	97.2

Source: Statistics Norway.

### Primary and secondary education and training

42. *Primary and lower secondary education* is compulsory and encompasses education for children aged 6 to 15, from the 1st to the 10th grade level. The Government has the overall responsibility for policy development, which is administered by the municipalities. The municipalities are required to offer before and after-school care for pupils in grades 1–4, and for children with special needs in grades 1–7. *Upper secondary education and training* normally comprises three years of general education or four years of vocational training following the 10-year compulsory education. The standard for apprenticeships is two years of vocational training in upper secondary education followed by two years of apprenticeship. The county authorities administer upper secondary education and training.

43. 93.1 per cent of the age group 16–18 attend *upper secondary education and training*, with no significant gender differences (2022). 52 per cent of first-year pupils attend a vocational education programme (2023). 68.8 per cent complete their education within three to four years, and after five years, the completion rate increases to 81 per cent (2016–2022). *Completion rates* are lowest for male pupils and pupils starting vocational training. The rates have increased over the last 20 years but remain somewhat lower for male pupils and for those attending vocational training.

### Pupils, apprentices, and trainees in upper secondary education as a percentage of registered cohorts aged 16–18

	2010	2015	2020	2022
<b>Total population</b>	<b>91.0</b>	<b>92.2</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>93.1</b>
Immigrants	64.4	78.1	82.3	83.2
Norwegian-born to immigrant parents	90.1	92.5	93.6	94.0

Source: Statistics Norway.

### Higher education

44. *Higher education* is to a large extent provided by state institutions organised directly under the Ministry of Education and Research. In 2023, 83 per cent of Norwegian students attended state-owned (public) higher education institutions. Public higher education is tuition-free both for Norwegian students and students from countries in the EU/EEA. Most of the private higher education institutions receive government grants to cover part or all of the costs of educational provision. Students attending higher education institutions charging tuition fees are entitled to support to cover such fees from the State Educational Loan Fund, according to set regulations. Each higher education institution has a board, which is responsible for the direction and organisation of operations. Accredited institutions have extensive academic autonomy. Universities are accredited to freely establish study programmes in all disciplines and at all levels from the bachelor's degree to PhD level, whereas other accredited higher education institutions are only free to establish programmes at all levels in the disciplines in which they are accredited to offer PhD programmes. In other disciplines, they need to apply for master's degree and doctoral programme accreditation from the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT). Private providers without institutional accreditation need to apply to NOKUT for accreditation for all new programmes, including at the bachelor's degree level.



### Students in higher education in Norway and abroad

	2006	2015	2023
Students in higher education			
<b>Total</b>	<b>222 975</b>	<b>283 115</b>	<b>311 765</b>
Males	88 705	113 833	122 827
Females	134 270	169 282	188 938
Percentage of persons 19–24 years in higher education			
<b>Total</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>36.7</b>
Males	24.6	27.9	28.8
Females	36.8	42.3	45.1
Percentage of persons 25–29 years in higher education			
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>17.0</b>
Males	14.1	13.7	14.6
Females	17.4	17.6	19.6

Source: Statistics Norway.

### New entrants to higher education and awarded qualification after 8 years. Numbers and per cent, interval<sup>8</sup>

Academic year and awarded qualification	Total	Males	Females
1998–2006			
<b>Total</b>	<b>36 410</b>	<b>14 797</b>	<b>21 613</b>
Doctorates, PhD	0.2	0.3	0.1
Tertiary graduates from programmes longer than 4 years	15.3	19.2	12.6
Tertiary graduates from programmes lasting 2–4 years	45.6	34.9	52.9
No awarded qualification	39.0	45.6	34.4
Academic year and awarded qualification			
2006–2014			
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 120</b>	<b>16 217</b>	<b>23 903</b>
Doctorates, PhD	0.4	0.6	0.3
Tertiary graduates from programmes longer than 4 years	22.5	24.3	21.3
Tertiary graduates from programmes lasting 2–4 years	40.3	32.5	45.5
No awarded qualification	36.8	42.6	33.0
Academic year and awarded qualification			
2014–2022			
<b>Total</b>	<b>49 961</b>	<b>21 305</b>	<b>28 656</b>
Doctorates, PhD	0.2	0.3	0.2
Tertiary graduates from programmes longer than 4 years	25.2	25.9	24.7
Tertiary graduates from programmes lasting 2–4 years	42.7	36.1	47.6
No awarded qualification	31.8	37.7	27.5

Source: Statistics Norway.

<sup>8</sup> Students who enrolled in tertiary education for the first time from 1.10.yyyy to 30.09.yyyy. (Example: 2006 is referring to 1.10.2005-30.09.2006).

### Teacher-to-pupil ratio in publicly funded schools

45. A *teacher-to-pupil national standard* is regulated in the Education Act, stipulating maximum ratios. For grades 1–4, the ratio is 15 pupils per teacher and for grades 5–7 and years 8–10, the ratio is 20 pupils per teacher. However, exceptions may apply.

### Literacy rates

46. Although the *literacy rate* in Norway is close to 100 per cent, literacy tests have shown that a small number of the adult population lacks basic reading and writing skills.

### (f) Employment

47. In 2023, the *employment rate* for the age group 15–74 years was 70.1 per cent. The employment rate was higher for men than for women. Nearly 51 per cent of all employees are affiliated with trade unions (2022).

48. In 2023, the *unemployment rate* in Norway was 3.6 per cent marking a decrease from the 4.9 per cent recorded in 2016. The unemployment rate was higher for men than for women. The unemployment rate among youth (15–24 years) was 12.6 per cent in 2021, and 11.1 per cent in 2023.

### Employment rate (as a percentage of the population) and unemployment rate (as a percentage of the labour force) by age group. 2021–2023

	<i>Employed persons</i>			<i>Unemployed persons</i>		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
<b>Both sexes</b>						
15–74 years	68.9	70.3	70.1	4.4	3.2	3.6
20–64 years	79.9	80.9	80.4	3.7	2.6	2.8
20–66 years	78.5	79.4	79	3.7	2.6	2.8
15–24 years	53.4	57.9	58.4	12.6	10	11.1
25–54 years	83.5	84.5	84	3.6	2.4	2.7
55–74 years	50.5	50.8	51	1.7	1.2	1.2
<b>Men</b>						
15–74 years	71.4	73.1	72.9	4.6	3.4	3.7
20–64 years	82.3	83.7	82.9	4	2.8	3
20–66 years	81	82.4	81.7	4	2.8	2.9
15–24 years	51.5	56.4	57.7	13.4	11.2	11.4
25–54 years	85.8	87	86.3	3.8	2.5	2.9
55–74 years	55.3	56.2	56.2	1.9	..	..
<b>Women</b>						
15–74 years	66.4	67.4	67.3	4.2	3.1	3.5
20–64 years	77.5	78	77.8	3.4	2.5	2.7
20–66 years	75.9	76.2	76.2	3.3	2.5	2.7
15–24 years	55.3	59.4	59.2	11.8	8.8	10.7
25–54 years	81.1	81.9	81.6	3.3	2.3	2.5
55–74 years	45.6	45.3	45.8	..	..	..

Source: Labour Force Survey. Statistics Norway.

**Numbers of persons employed by major industry and age group. Residents.  
Percentage of women and men in each industry. Q4 2023**

		<i>15–74 years</i>	<i>15–24 years</i>	<i>25–39 years</i>	<i>40–54 years</i>	<i>55–74 years</i>
0 The whole country	<b>Total</b>	<b>2 845 306</b>	<b>367 427</b>	<b>931 127</b>	<b>903 845</b>	<b>642 907</b>
	Men	53%	50%	52%	52%	56%
	Women	47%	50%	48%	48%	44%
01–03 Agriculture, forestry and fishing	<b>Total</b>	<b>65 401</b>	<b>9 482</b>	<b>15 113</b>	<b>16 349</b>	<b>24 457</b>
	Men	77%	71%	75%	76%	81%
	Women	23 %	29 %	25 %	24 %	19 %
05–09 Mining and quarrying	<b>Total</b>	<b>63 746</b>	<b>3 271</b>	<b>18 600</b>	<b>25 725</b>	<b>16 150</b>
	Men	78%	82%	76%	78%	80%
	Women	22%	18%	24%	22%	20%
10–33 Manufacturing	<b>Total</b>	<b>215 333</b>	<b>20 699</b>	<b>64 994</b>	<b>74 699</b>	<b>54 941</b>
	Men	75%	74%	74%	75%	78%
	Women	25%	26%	26%	25%	22%
35–39 Electricity, water supply, sewerage, waste management	<b>Total</b>	<b>36 259</b>	<b>2 224</b>	<b>10 867</b>	<b>13 073</b>	<b>10 095</b>
	Men	77%	81%	73%	76%	81%
	Women	23%	19%	27%	24%	19%
41–43 Construction	<b>Total</b>	<b>242 245</b>	<b>34 213</b>	<b>83 517</b>	<b>75 119</b>	<b>49 396</b>
	Men	91%	92%	91%	91%	91%
	Women	9%	8%	9%	9%	9%
45–47 Wholesale and retail trade: repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	<b>Total</b>	<b>354 419</b>	<b>88 544</b>	<b>107 645</b>	<b>95 547</b>	<b>62 683</b>
	Men	55%	46%	56%	58%	60%
	Women	45%	54%	44%	42%	40%
49–53 Transportation and storage	<b>Total</b>	<b>134 106</b>	<b>11 638</b>	<b>39 120</b>	<b>42 622</b>	<b>40 726</b>
	Men	81%	76%	79%	81%	84%
	Women	19%	24%	21%	19%	16%
55–56 Accommodation and food service activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>102 602</b>	<b>35 221</b>	<b>35 240</b>	<b>22 284</b>	<b>9 857</b>
	Men	44%	39%	49%	45%	46%
	Women	56%	61%	51%	55%	54%
58–63 Information and communication	<b>Total</b>	<b>117 171</b>	<b>6 759</b>	<b>52 229</b>	<b>40 144</b>	<b>18 039</b>
	Men	70%	66%	67%	73%	73%
	Women	30%	34%	33%	27%	27%
64–66 Financial and insurance activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>51 731</b>	<b>2 341</b>	<b>20 211</b>	<b>17 008</b>	<b>12 171</b>
	Men	54%	57%	54%	56%	50%
	Women	46%	43%	46%	44%	50%
68–75 Real estate, professional, scientific and technical activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>193 999</b>	<b>10 372</b>	<b>73 225</b>	<b>61 781</b>	<b>48 621</b>
	Men	58%	53%	53%	58%	66%
	Women	42%	47%	47%	42%	34%
77–82 Administrative and support service activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>131 099</b>	<b>18 365</b>	<b>43 942</b>	<b>42 224</b>	<b>26 568</b>
	Men	56%	60%	55%	52%	58%
	Women	44%	40%	45%	48%	42%

		15–74 years	15–24 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55–74 years
84 Public administration, defence, social security	<b>Total</b>	<b>176 244</b>	<b>18 336</b>	<b>50 145</b>	<b>62 075</b>	<b>45 688</b>
	Men	49%	62%	49%	46%	46%
	Women	51%	38%	51%	54%	54%
85 Education	<b>Total</b>	<b>235 198</b>	<b>17 524</b>	<b>77 750</b>	<b>86 035</b>	<b>53 889</b>
	Men	34%	42%	35%	30%	34%
	Women	66%	58%	65%	70%	66%
86–88 Human health and social work activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>587 355</b>	<b>66 292</b>	<b>199 926</b>	<b>189 885</b>	<b>131 252</b>
	Men	21%	21%	22%	19%	20%
	Women	79%	79%	78%	81%	80%
90–99 Other service activities	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>119 521</b>	<b>21 431</b>	<b>35 946</b>	<b>34 248</b>
	Men	Men	43%	41%	40%	42%
	Women	Women	57%	59%	60%	58%
Unknown	<b>Total</b>	<b>18 877</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>2 657</b>	<b>5 027</b>	<b>10 478</b>
	Men	56%	52%	53%	58%	56%
	Women	44%	48%	47%	42%	44%

Source: Register data, Statistics Norway.

49. In 2023, 68.2 per cent of *immigrants* aged 20–66 years were employed. Immigrants from the Nordic countries had the highest employment rate with 80.5 per cent in 2023, as shown in the table below. Immigrants from Europe outside the EU/EFTA/UK, Asia and Africa had the lowest employment rates. In general, women had a lower employment rate than men.

**Percentage of employed immigrants as a share of the population, by background. 20–66 years. 2021–2023. Q4.**

	Both sexes			Men			Women		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
The Nordic countries	80.0	80.3	80.5	80.8	81.3	81.2	79.1	79.1	79.6
EU/EFTA until 2004 <sup>9</sup>	74.9	76.5	76.5	77.5	78.9	78.9	71.4	73.0	73.1
New EU countries after 2004	74.8	77.2	77.2	75.2	77.9	77.3	74.1	76.0	77.0
Europe except EU/EFTA/UK	71.2	58.0	51.5	73.7	64.4	55.6	69.3	53.8	48.7
North America and Oceania	69.6	68.9	69.4	73.5	72.4	72.8	65.3	65.1	65.8
Asia	62.5	64.2	64.5	66.8	68.4	68.5	58.8	60.6	60.9
Africa	58.5	61.2	61.6	64.9	67.0	67.1	50.9	54.6	55.5
Latin America/the Caribbean	70.8	72.0	72.1	75.0	75.9	75.4	67.9	69.4	69.9

Source: Register data, Statistics Norway.

50. The registered *unemployment rate for immigrants* is higher than for the non-immigrant population, as shown in the table below. In the fourth quarter of 2020, the registered unemployment rate<sup>10</sup> for all immigrants was 9.2 per cent (on average). For the

<sup>9</sup> Except the Nordic countries.

<sup>10</sup> Registered unemployed persons covers unemployed persons registered with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV). The registered unemployment rate is usually lower than the unemployment rate from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This is partly because respondents who state that they are unemployed in the LFS have not necessarily registered as unemployed with NAV.

non-immigrant population, the registered unemployment rate was 3.9 per cent. The unemployment rate increased for both non-immigrants and immigrants from 2019 to 2020.

**Registered unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force. Non-immigrants and immigrant population. 15–74 years. Per Q4 2017–2020.**

	<i>Both sexes</i>				<i>Men</i>				<i>Women</i>			
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2017	2018	2019	2020	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Non-immigrant population	1.7	1.6	1.5	2.7	2.0	1.9	1.7	3.1	1.3	1.4	1.3	2.3
All immigrants	5.6	5.4	5.0	9.2	5.4	5.0	4.8	9.0	5.9	5.9	5.4	9.3

*Source:* Registered data, Statistics Norway.

51. In the 2020 Labour Force Survey, 40.6 per cent of respondents who stated that they had a *disability* were employed (40.3 per cent of male respondents and 40.8 per cent of female respondents), as shown in the table below. 3.3 per cent of persons with disabilities were unemployed. The unemployment rate was higher for men than for women.

**Percentage of employed and unemployed persons with disabilities in the age group 15–66 years. Q2 2017–2020.**

		2017	2018	2019	2020
Percentage of employed persons with disabilities	Both sexes	43.0	43.9	43.8	40.6
	Men	47.1	46.0	43.2	40.3
	Women	39.7	42.2	44.2	40.8
Percentage of unemployed persons with disabilities	Both sexes	3.9	2.9	2.7	3.3
	Males	5.5	3.4	3.5	4.1
	Females	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.6

*Source:* Persons with disabilities, Labour Force Survey, Statistics Norway.

**(g) Proportion of international assistance provided in relation to GNI**

52. Since 2013, Norway has maintained a high level of *official development assistance* at around 1 per cent of the gross national income (GNI), reflecting a cross-party consensus to maintain a high spending level. In 2024, the aid budget amounts to NOK 52.7 billion, corresponding to 0.96 per cent of GNI.

**B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State**

**(a) Form of government**

53. Norway is a *constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government*. The Constitution of Norway is based on a separation of powers, with independent legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. However, since the introduction of the principle of parliamentary government in 1884, it can no longer be maintained that the executive branch is independent of the legislature, as it cannot govern without the confidence of the legislative assembly. Together with constitutional customary law, the Constitution forms the legal framework for Norway's political system.

**(b) Democracy, political parties and the electoral system**

54. *The legislative assembly* of Norway is the Storting. The Storting has 169 members, and parliamentary elections take place every four years. There are no by-elections, nor does the Constitution provide for the dissolution of the Storting between elections. Because Norway has a parliamentary form of government, a political party or a coalition of parties

may only form a government if it/they have the support of the greatest representation of the Storting. The Storting has a Presidium, which is chaired by the President of the Storting and whose responsibilities include determining the Storting's order of business and ensuring that constitutional rules are upheld in all matters. As far as possible, the President avoids taking a stand on purely political issues on which there are divergent opinions. Laws are enacted by the Storting, usually based on a bill submitted by the Government. The Storting can also decide that a referendum should be held on a particular issue.

55. *Elections to the Storting* are held every four years. The voting age is currently 18 years. Norway practices universal suffrage. Everyone who is entitled to vote in parliamentary elections is eligible to stand for election. The Norwegian electoral system is based on the principles of direct election and proportional representation in 19 multi-member constituencies. As of May 2024, ten political parties are represented in the Storting: the Labour Party with 48 representatives, the Conservative Party with 36 representatives, the Progress Party with 21 representatives, the Centre Party with 28 representatives, the Socialist Left Party with 13 representatives, the Christian Democratic Party with 3 representatives, the Liberal Party with 8 representatives, the Green Party with 3 representatives, the Red Party with 8 representatives, and the Patient Focus list with 1 representative. In addition, there are a number of smaller registered political parties that are not represented in the Storting. Groups that are not political parties may also submit list proposals of candidates for election. At the September 2021 general election, the voter turnout was 77.2 per cent, and 40 per cent of the 5,174 candidates were women. On the lists from the parties already represented in the Storting, 49 per cent of candidates were women. In the current Storting, 45 per cent of the members are women.

#### Distribution of seats in the Storting by political party/organisation

<i>Party</i>	<i>Election period</i>	<i>No. of seats</i>
The Centre Party ( <i>Senterpartiet</i> )	2009–2013	11
	2013–2017	10
	2017–2021	19
	2021–2025	28
The Christian Democratic Party ( <i>Kristelig folkeparti</i> )	2009–2013	10
	2013–2017	10
	2017–2021	8
	2021–2025	3
The Conservative Party ( <i>Høyre</i> )	2009–2013	30
	2013–2017	48
	2017–2021	45
	2021–2025	36
The Green Party ( <i>Miljøpartiet de Grønne</i> )	2009–2013	0
	2013–2017	1
	2017–2021	1
	2021–2025	3
The Labour Party ( <i>Arbeiderpartiet</i> )	2009–2013	64
	2013–2017	55
	2017–2021	49
	2021–2025	48
The Liberal Party ( <i>Venstre</i> )	2009–2013	2
	2013–2017	9
	2017–2021	8
	2021–2025	8

<i>Party</i>	<i>Election period</i>	<i>No. of seats</i>
The Progress Party ( <i>Fremskrittspartiet</i> )	2009–2013	41
	2013–2017	29
	2017–2021	27
	2021–2025	21
The Red Party ( <i>Rødt</i> )	2009–2013	0
	2013–2017	0
	2017–2021	1
	2021–2025	8
The Socialist Left Party ( <i>Sosialistisk Venstreparti</i> )	2009–2013	11
	2013–2017	7
	2017–2021	11
	2021–2025	13
The Patient Focus List ( <i>Pasientfokus</i> )	2021–2025	1

#### Number of recognised national political parties

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>No.</i>
2009	22
2013	20
2017	21
2021	22

#### Number of eligible voters

<i>Year of election</i>	<i>No.</i>
2009	3 530 785
2013	3 643 600
2017	3 765 245
2021	3 891 987

#### Percentages of female members of the Storting

<i>Parliamentary period</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2009–2013	39.6
2013–2017	39.6
2017–2021	42.1
2021–2025	45.0

56. Six national *referendums* have been held in Norway, and these have traditionally enjoyed a higher turnout than elections to the Storting, reaching a record 89 per cent when Norway voted on European Union (EU) membership in 1994. In two referendums in 1905, Norwegians voted in favour of the dissolution of the union with Sweden and in favour of offering the throne to Prince Carl of Denmark (who accepted and became King Haakon VII). In a referendum in 1919, Norwegians voted for the introduction of a ban on spirits. However, following a new referendum in 1926, this prohibition was repealed. In both of the referendums on membership in the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1972 and the EU in 1994, a majority of Norwegians voted against membership.

(c) **The Norwegian Government**

57. *The Government* is formed by the party or a coalition of parties with a majority of the seats in the Storting or that constitute a minority capable of governing. Thus, the Government is indirectly selected by the electorate. The Government consists of the Prime Minister and a number of government ministers (19 ministers as of May 2024). The Office of the Prime Minister assists the Prime Minister in leading and coordinating the work of the Government. The government ministries are responsible for executing policies decided by their respective ministers in the various sectors of government administration. Formal decisions by the Government are made in the form of a Royal Decree.

58. *The executive power* is constitutionally and formally vested in the King. However, Royal Decrees are adopted by the King in Council, which consists of the King and a minimum of half of all the government ministers. The King fills an important symbolic function as head of state and Norway's official representative.

(d) **Counties and municipalities**

59. Norway is divided into 15 *county authorities* (counties) and 357 *municipalities* (2024), and a number of political decisions are made at these two levels. County and municipal councils are given autonomous powers in certain policy areas which are specified in legislation. Much of the public administration is also carried out at these levels.

60. Prior to 2014, Norway had 428 municipalities and 19 counties. The number of municipalities and counties was reduced as a result of a *Municipal and county reform* between 2014 and 2020. In 2021, municipalities and counties that were merged contrary to local decisions made by municipal and county councils were given the opportunity to apply for a division of the municipality and county, to restore their previous boundaries. One municipality (Ålesund) and three counties (Viken, Vestfold og Telemark and Troms og Finnmark) applied for such a division which took effect from 1 January 2024.

61. *Elections to the municipal and county councils* are held every four years. As with elections to the Storting, the voting age is 18 years. Foreign nationals have the right to vote in municipal and county council elections if they were residing in Norway for the three last years prior to Election Day. Citizens from other Nordic countries have the right to vote if they were registered as residing in Norway no later than 30 June in the election year. The voter turnout for the 2023 municipal and county council election was 62.4 per cent. Unlike elections to the Storting, where the vast majority of candidates represent registered parties, lists of local independent candidates are common in county and municipal elections.

(e) **Legal structure**

62. *The administration of justice* is carried out by the courts of justice, which are fully independent of the other constitutional powers. There are three levels of courts: the District Court of first instance, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court at the highest level. Civil and criminal cases may be heard at all levels. Civil cases are brought before the courts by the parties in the case, whereas criminal cases are brought by the Prosecuting Authority. The legality of administrative decisions may be subject to control by a court. As a main rule, civil disputes are initially considered by a Conciliation Board, which is to be found in every municipality and is comprised of laypersons. The ordinary courts are supplemented by special courts, including the Labour Court and the Land Consolidation Courts.

63. In 2002, administrative control of the courts was moved from the Ministry of Justice and Police, where it had resided since the creation of the Norwegian state in 1814, to the *National Courts Administration*. This body was established to safeguard the independence of the courts in relation to the other branches of government. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security has no power to instruct the National Courts Administration but has the main responsibility for drafting legislation relating to the courts.

64. The public administration agencies are also supervised by the *Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration*. The Parliamentary Ombud investigates complaints from citizens who believe they have suffered an injustice or error on the part of the public administration. The Ombud considers complaints concerning administrative decisions at the



central government, county and municipal levels, and may also take the initiative to investigate a matter.

65. *The legal system* is based on both legislation and customary law as sources of law. To meet the requirements under customary law the custom must have been consistently practised over a long period of time, and both the legal practitioners and society must have considered the custom to be legally binding. Customary law plays a considerable role in the law of damages, law of torts, contract law, public administration law and constitutional law.

**(f) Indigenous peoples**

66. The Sami are the indigenous peoples of Norway. The Sami traditionally live in the northern and eastern parts of Norway and in parts of Sweden, Finland and Russia.

67. Norwegian policy towards the Sami is based on the recognition that the State of Norway was established on the territory of two peoples, the Norwegians and the Sami, and that both these peoples have the same right to develop their culture and language.

68. *The rights of the Sami* are protected under Article 108 of the Constitution of Norway, which states that “it is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop their language, culture and way of life”. The rights of the Sami are also protected in more specific provisions in the Act concerning the Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) and other Sami legal matters (the Sami Act), in other legislation, and through Norway’s obligations under several international conventions, particularly Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.

69. The Sami have their own parliament, *the Sámediggi*, which was established in 1989 under the Sami Act. It is a representative and elected political body for the Sami in Norway, particularly as a party in the dialogue with the central government. The purview of the Sámediggi extends to any matter which the Sámediggi believes particularly affects the Sami people. Approximately 23,500 Sami were registered on the electoral roll for the 2023 elections to the Sámediggi.

70. *Policies towards the Sami* give priority to recognising and strengthening minority and indigenous rights and the development of an infrastructure of institutions in Sami society. Legislation, procedures and programmes have been established to strengthen the Sami languages, culture, industries and society. Of particular importance are the Sami Act and the Finnmark Act. In agreement with the Sámediggi, the Government has also established a scheme whereby a forward-looking white paper on Sami policy will be presented in each spring parliamentary session. The report will discuss developments in relation to the Sami languages, culture and society, and the services provided for Sami citizens. The white paper is developed in cooperation with the Sámediggi.

71. *The Sami languages* are official languages in Norway, together with the two forms of written Norwegian, *bokmål* and *nynorsk*. North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami are also recognised as regional or minority languages in Norway and are protected under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

72. As an indigenous people, the Sami are entitled to be consulted on matters that may affect them directly. New *statutory provisions on consultations* entered into force in July 2021. The statutory provisions are largely a continuation of the 2005 Procedures for Consultations between State Authorities and the Sami Parliament. The consultation duty applies to central government authorities, county authorities and municipalities, as well as private legal entities when exercising authority on behalf of the State. The purpose of consultations is to ensure that Sami interests are taken into account at an early stage of relevant processes and that Sami people have an opportunity to influence the outcome. The right to be consulted 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.

73. In 2005, the Storting adopted *the Finnmark Act*. Through the Finnmark Act, ownership rights to areas in Finnmark County to which the State either held formal title or was considered owner without formal title (about 95 per cent of Finnmark County) were

transferred to an independent entity, *Finnmarkseiendommen* (the Finnmark Estate). A Board of Directors comprising six members, three of whom are appointed by the Sámediggi and three by the Finnmark County Council, manages the Finnmark Estate. The Finnmark Act also regulates the local population's and other people's use of certain natural resources on the Finnmark Estate's land.

74. The Finnmark Act confirms that the Sami have, collectively and individually, acquired rights to the land in Finnmark through prolonged use of land and water areas. The Act explicitly states that it does not interfere with any rights acquired by Sami and other people through prescription or immemorial usage. *The Finnmark Commission* was established to clarify the existence of such rights. The Commission's task is to investigate rights of use and ownership of the land that was transferred to the Finnmark Estate via the Finnmark Act. As of February 2024, the Commission has completed its investigations in six geographical areas, and is currently working on an additional four areas. Disputes arising after the Commission has finished its investigations in an area may be brought before the *Uncultivated Land Tribunal for Finnmark*. The judgements of the Tribunal may be appealed to the Supreme Court of Norway.

**(g) National minorities**

75. Jews, Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Roma, Romani people/Tater and Forest Finns are recognised as *national minorities* in Norway. National minorities are defined as groups with long-standing ties to the realm.

76. Norway ratified the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* in 1993 and the *European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* in 1999. Kven, Romanes and Romani are recognised as regional or minority languages. Furthermore, the Language Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2022, gives Kven, Romani and Romanes the status of national minority languages in Norway.

77. The goal of the public authorities is to develop a coherent policy for national minorities in dialogue with the national minority organisations. These organisations take part in the regular Contact Forum between national minorities and central authorities, thereby helping to promote awareness of the status of national minorities in society and the activities of national minorities in civil society. In addition to the Contact Forum, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development holds annual bilateral meetings with each of the national minority organisations, and other government ministries and directorates meet with representatives from the national minorities, where relevant.

78. A *grant for national minorities* is provided each year in the central government budget and administered by Arts and Culture Norway, which is the main governmental institution for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy. The grant scheme aims to support activities that promote active participation in society, ensure equal opportunities for all and combat discrimination. The grant scheme is intended to help ensure that the principles enshrined in the Framework Convention are implemented in practice.

79. Applications may be submitted for basic support to cover the operating costs of organisations representing national minorities or for funding projects aimed at disseminating information about the situations of national minorities, promoting self-help activities, and fostering cooperation between minority groups.

80. To promote active participation in society and prevent discrimination, there is a special focus on education, both for adults and children. In addition, efforts are made to promote reconciliation and confidence-building between the Norwegian authorities and the national minorities.

81. In 2018, the Storting appointed *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, an independent commission tasked with investigating the Norwegianisation policy and historical injustices committed against the Sami, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns. The Commission's mandate was to conduct a historical assessment describing the Norwegian authorities' policies and activities and to examine the repercussions of the Norwegianisation policy today, collectively and individually. The Commission was also asked to propose

initiatives to contribute to reconciliation. The Commission's report was submitted to the Storting in June 2023.

**(h) Recognition of non-governmental organisations**

82. *The Norwegian Register of Non-Profit Organisations* was established in December 2008, and includes more than 40,000 registered non-profit organisations. The Register is managed by the Brønnøysund Register Centre and registration is voluntary. The main objective of the Register is to facilitate and improve interaction between the Government and the voluntary sector.

**(i) Crime and administration of justice**

83. *The Norwegian Police Service* has around 14,700 employees. Collectively, they form a unified police force. All prospective police officers are required to complete a three-year, full-time bachelor's degree at the Norwegian Police University College, which provides a broad theoretical and practical foundation for work in the Police Service. The Norwegian Police is trained to handle all types of police tasks.

84. The Norwegian Bureau for the Investigation of Police Affairs is the body responsible for investigating cases where employees of the Norwegian Police Service or the Prosecuting Authority are suspected of having committed criminal offences in the course of their duties. The Bureau may impose a fine or penalty notice, waiver of prosecution or an indictment, if it concludes that an offence has been committed. The Bureau has been granted increased funding for the period 2020–2024 to increase its capacity and level of competence.

85. In 2023, there were approximately 200 *police personnel* per 100,000 inhabitants. In 2023, there were 380 regular *judges* and approximately 130 deputy judges in the courts of first instance, 172 judges in the courts of second instance and 20 judges in the Supreme Court.

86. In 2022 (most recent available statistics), 258,392 persons received a total of 288,660 sanctions, an increase of 6.2 per cent and 6.4 per cent, respectively, from the previous year. 9 per cent of all persons who received sanctions in 2022 were sanctioned more than once during that year. 15,600 sanctions were imposed by the courts. This represented a decrease of 2.9 per cent from the previous year. 1,600 sentences were registered as community sentences, 4,300 as suspended sentences, and 7,200 as custodial sentences. Community sentences decreased by 15 per cent and custodial sentences by 12 per cent compared to the previous year, while suspended sentences increased by 14 per cent.

87. In 2023, an average of 2,989 persons were *imprisoned* in Norway, a decrease of 20 per cent from 2015. On average, 2,143 persons were convicted prisoners, 152 were held in preventive detention, 691 were remanded in custody and 4 were imprisoned for non-payment of fines. The number of convicted prisoners decreased from 2015 to 2023 by 17 per cent and the number of prisoners on remand decreased by 31 per cent. The number of female prisoners has remained fairly stable in recent years, with 174 in both 2023 and 2022 and 167 in 2021. 58 children (between the ages of 15 and 18) were imprisoned in 2023, 29 in 2022, 28 in 2021 and 25 in 2020. In 2005, the earliest year with comparable figures, 59 persons under 18 years were imprisoned.

88. Preventing recidivism is an overarching goal of the Norwegian criminal justice system. The Correctional Service practices a *principle of normality*, meaning that the punishment is the restriction of liberty. Sentenced offenders otherwise enjoy all the same rights as others living in Norway. Through an import model, crucial services for reintegration are provided to the prison by local and municipal service providers. In accordance with the principle of normality, progression through a sentence should be aimed at re-entering the community. Consequently, sentenced offenders will proceed towards release gradually from high-security prisons to lower-security prisons, through halfway houses and finally execution of the sentence outside of prison, unless otherwise required for security reasons.

89. The Department of Correctional Studies at the University College of Norwegian Correctional Service is responsible for the two-year university college programme required for all prison officers and a supplementary bachelor's degree programme, as well as the

education of staff for prison workshops. The education is research and experience-based and requires close collaboration with designated teaching prisons.

90. In 2022, 304,621 crimes were reported to the police, an increase of 9.2 per cent from 2021 and 1.3 per cent from 2020. Accounting for population growth, reported crime has significantly decreased over the past 20 years. Norway has abolished the death penalty for all crimes, both in times of peace and during wartime.

91. In 2023, close to 7,500 *sexual offences* were reported to the police. This is 3 per cent higher than the yearly average for 2019–2022.

92. Approximately 118,100 cases of *theft and other offences* for profit were reported to the police in 2023. The number of cases of pickpocketing, car thefts and thefts from private property has been declining for several years.

93. Eight deaths were registered in prisons in 2023. Seven of these were suicides and one was death by natural causes. Four *prisoner deaths* were registered outside prison, all by natural causes.

## II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights

### A. Acceptance of international human rights norms

#### (a) Main international human rights conventions and protocols

94. The status of ratification is set out in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966	R 13/09/1972	Subject to reservations to Article 8, paragraph 1 (d) “to the effect that the current Norwegian practice of referring labour conflicts to the State Wages Board (a permanent tripartite arbitral commission in matters of wages) by Act of Parliament for the particular conflict, shall not be considered incompatible with the right to strike, this right being fully recognised in Norway.”	
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	R 13/09/1972	Subject to reservations to Article 10, paragraph 2 (b) and paragraph 3 “with regard to the obligation to keep accused juvenile persons and juvenile offenders segregated from adults” and to Article 14, paragraphs 5 and 7 and to Article 20, paragraph 1.  19 September 1995  [The Government of Norway declares that] the entry into force of an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Act, which introduces the right to have a conviction reviewed by a higher court in all cases, the	31 August 1972  “Norway recognises the competence of the Human Rights Committee referred to in Article 28 of the Covenant to receive and consider communications to the effect that a State Party claims that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant.”

Convention/protocol	Signature (S) Ratifications (R)	Reservations Declarations	Acceptance of optional procedures
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, (ICERD), 1965	R 06/08/1970	<p>reservation made by the Kingdom of Norway with respect to Article 14, paragraph 5 of the Covenant shall continue to apply only in the following exceptional circumstances:</p> <p>1. “Riksrett” (Court of Impeachment)</p> <p>According to Article 86 of the Norwegian Constitution, a special court shall be convened in criminal cases against members of the Government, the Storting (parliament) or the Supreme Court, with no right of appeal.</p> <p>2. Conviction by an appellate court</p> <p>In cases where the defendant has been acquitted in the first instance, but convicted by an appellate court, the conviction may not be appealed on grounds of error in the assessment of evidence in relation to the issue of guilt. If the appellate court convicting the defendant is the Supreme Court, the conviction may not be appealed under any circumstances whatsoever.</p>	<p>23 January 1976</p> <p>Norway recognises the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to receive and consider communications from individuals or groups of individuals within the jurisdiction of Norway in accordance with Article 14, with the reservation that the Committee shall not consider any communication from an individual or group of individuals unless the Committee has ascertained that the same matter is not being examined or has not been examined under another procedure of international investigation or settlement.</p>

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979	R 21/05/1981		
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984	R 09/07/1986		Norway recognizes the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications to the effect that a State Party claims that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations under this Convention.  Norway recognises the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of individuals subject to its jurisdiction who claim to be victims of a violation by a State Party of the provisions of the Convention.
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989	R 08/01/1991		
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990	In 2002, Norway decided not to become party to this Convention, as the wording was considered to be so vague and imprecise on a number of points that it would be difficult to clarify the consequences and obligations that ratification would entail. Norway was also concerned that the Convention could undermine existing obligations under the ICCPR and the ICESCR. The duplication of existing rights, to some extent with variations, could be unfortunate, since this could lead to ambiguity. Norway has ratified the ILO core conventions on workers' rights. These also apply to foreign nationals' resident in Norway. Norway participates actively in		

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
	<p>the UN, the Global Forum on Migration and Development and various other international forums where migrants' rights are on the agenda. Norway gives high priority to efforts to improve labour standards, which are also crucial in the context of migrants' rights.</p>		
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006	R 03/06/2013	<p>Declarations:</p> <p>Article 12</p> <p>“Norway recognises that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life. Norway also recognizes its obligations to take appropriate measures to provide access by persons with disabilities to the support they may require in exercising their legal capacity. Furthermore, Norway declares its understanding that the Convention allows for the withdrawal of legal capacity or support in exercising legal capacity, and/or compulsory guardianship, in cases where such measures are necessary, as a last resort and subject to safeguards.”</p> <p>Articles 14 and 25</p> <p>“Norway recognises that all persons with disabilities enjoy the right to liberty and security of person, and a right to respect for physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others. Furthermore, Norway declares its understanding that the Convention allows for compulsory care or treatment of persons, including measures to treat mental illnesses, when circumstances render treatment of this kind necessary as a last resort, and the treatment is subject to legal safeguards.”</p>	

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED), 2006	R 07/06/2019	Norway ratified the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2019. Norway made an interpretative declaration regarding Article 20(1) in conjunction with Article 18 (limitations on the right to information), as well as an interpretative declaration and a reservation with respect to Article 17(2) (conditions for and guarantees related to deprivation of liberty).	
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP-CRC-AC), 2000	R 23/09/2003		
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography (OP-CRC-SC), 2000	R 02/10/2001		
Optional Protocol to ICCPR, concerning individual petition (ICCPR-OP1), 1966	R 13/09/1972	Subject to the following reservation to Article 5, paragraph 2: "... The Committee shall not have competence to consider a communication from an individual if the same matter has already been examined under other procedures of international investigation or settlement."	
Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (ICCPR-OP2), 1989	R 05/09/1991		
Optional Protocol to CEDAW, concerning individual complaints and inquiry procedures (OP-CEDAW), 1999	R 05/03/2002		
Optional Protocol to CAT, concerning regular visits by national and international institutions to places of detention (OP-CAT), 2002	R 27/06/2013		



<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
Optional Protocol to CRPD, concerning individual complaints (OP-CRPD), 2006	In September 2016, the Government presented a white paper to Parliament on the individual complaints' mechanisms to CRPD, ICESCR and CRC. The conclusion was that the Government would not at present submit proposals to the effect that Norway should become party to the relevant Optional Protocols. This was due to considerable uncertainty about the consequences. The Government's view is that many of the provisions on economic and social rights in ICESCR and CRC are not well suited for international review based on individual complaints, because they set out vague and far-reaching goals which give the States Parties a considerable margin of appreciation. Decisions on how to realise these rights should be taken by institutions elected by popular vote. As for OP-CRPD, the Government's main reason for not proposing to become a party at present was that the CRPD Committee in some areas interprets the Convention in a far-reaching manner that does not correspond with the understanding of most of the States Parties. In January 2017, a large majority in Parliament concurred with the Government's conclusion.		
Optional Protocol to ICESCR, concerning individual complaints (OP-ICESCR), 2008			

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Signature (S) Ratifications (R)</i>	<i>Reservations Declarations</i>	<i>Acceptance of optional procedures</i>
Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure, 2011	In 2022, the Norwegian Parliament considered a proposal to ratify the third Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989. The proposal did not gain support in Parliament. Since the matter has recently been debated in Parliament, and did not gain support, the Government is currently not considering ratifying this Protocol.		

**(b) Other United Nations human rights and related conventions**

95. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R) Accession (A)</i>
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948	R 22/07/1949
Slavery Convention, 1926 as amended in 1955	R 11/04/1957
Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949	A 23/01/1952
Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951, and its 1967 Protocol	R 23/03/1953
Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954	R 19/11/1956
Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961	A 11/08/1971
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998	R 16/02/2000
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000, and its Protocols against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air, and to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children	R 23/09/2003
The Arms Trade Treaty, 2013	R 12/02/2014

**(c) Conventions of the International Labour Organization (a selection)**

96. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	R 07/07/1937
Forced or Compulsory Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	R 01/07/1932
Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	R 09/11/2015
Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)	R 05/01/1949

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Migration for Employment Recommendation, 1949 (No. 86)	R 17/02/1955
Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)	R 04/07/1949
Migration for Employment Convention, 1949 (No. 97)	R 17/02/1955
Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	R 17/02/1955
Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No. 100)	R 24/09/1959
Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)	R 30/09/1954
Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)	R 14/04/1958
Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)	
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	R 24/09/1959
Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)	R 28/08/1963
Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)	R 06/06/1966
Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)	R 14/04/1971
Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)	
Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)	R 22/06/1973
Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	R 08/07/1980
Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	R 24/01/1979
Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)	R 19/03/1980
Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)	R 22/06/1982
Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)	R 22/06/1982
Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries Convention, 1989 (No. 169)	R 19/06/1990
Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	R 21/12/2000
Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)	R 09/11/2015
Maritime Labour Convention, 2006	R 10/2/2009

**(d) Conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

97. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960	R 08/01/1963
Convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property, 1970	R 15/12/2006
Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, 2003	R 22/12/2006
Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expression, 2005	R 22/12/2006

**(e) Conventions of the Hague Conference on Private International Law**

98. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Convention concerning the recognition and enforcement of decisions relating to maintenance obligations towards children, 1958	R 02/09/1965
Convention on the Recognition of Divorces and Legal Separations, 1970	R 15/08/1978
Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions relating to Maintenance Obligations, 1973	R 12/04/1978
Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, 1980	R 09/01/1989
Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption, 1993	R 25/09/1997
Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children, 1996	R 30/04/2016
Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance	R 06/04/2011

**(f) Geneva Conventions and other treaties on international humanitarian law**

99. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, 1949	R 03/08/1951
Geneva Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 1949	R 03/08/1951
Geneva Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 1949	R 03/08/1951
Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 1949	R 03/08/1951
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 1977	R 14/12/1981
Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 1977	R 14/12/1981
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, 1997	R 09/07/1998
Convention on Cluster Munitions 2008	R 03/12/2008

**(g) Conventions of the Council of Europe (a selection)**

100. Norway is a state party to the conventions listed in the table below.

<i>Convention/protocol</i>	<i>Ratification (R)</i>
Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1950 (Norway has also ratified additional Protocols Nos. 1, 4, 6, 7 and 13 to the Convention)	R 15/1/1952
European Social Charter (revised), 1996	R 07/05/2001
European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1987	R 21/4/1989
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, 1992	R 10/11/1993
Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995	R 17/3/1999
Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems, 2003	R 29/04/2008
Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005	R 17/01/2008
Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents, 2009	R 11/09/2009
Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011	R 05/07/2017
Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse	R 13/06/2018

## **B. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level**

### **(a) Legislation**

101. *Human rights* are protected in the Constitution of Norway, the Human Rights Act and specific legislation in a number of different areas.

102. Norway is a *dualist country*. In order to be directly applicable in Norwegian law, international human rights conventions must therefore – in principle – be incorporated or transformed into Norwegian law. *Incorporation* means that the convention as such is incorporated into Norwegian law through specific provisions, for instance in the Human Rights Act. *Transformation* means aligning national legislation with the convention. Transformation may be either active or passive. Active transformation entails that the Storting implements new legislation or amends existing legislation to comply with the convention in question, while passive transformation means that the Storting considers that existing Norwegian legislation is already in accordance with the convention.

103. It is also a principle of general Norwegian law that domestic legislation should be interpreted in line with Norway's binding obligations under public international law. This principle is particularly significant with respect to international human rights obligations. The principle has been cited on a number of occasions by the Supreme Court of Norway.

104. In some areas of law, *sector monism* applies, meaning that a particular Act explicitly states that provisions in the Act apply with such limitations as are recognised in public international law, including human rights. The Dispute Act and the Penal Code are examples of such legislation.

### **The Constitution of Norway**

105. *The Constitution of Norway*, which was adopted in 1814, is founded on the principles of the sovereignty of the people, the separation of powers and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Constitution of 1814 did not, however, contain a complete bill of rights. Rather, it specified the agreed-upon human rights and fundamental freedoms at the

time. Articles relating to human rights have been added in recent years and in December 2011, a Human Rights Committee appointed by the Storting presented a report with proposals for strengthening *human rights in the Constitution*. The report included several proposed constitutional amendments relating to civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as safeguarding the rights of the child in the Constitution.

106. All of the proposals from the report were put forward in the Storting by different groups of elected representatives consisting of members of all parties represented in the Storting. In 2014, a number of the proposals were adopted, and a new bill of rights was added in Chapter E of the Constitution. The first article of the chapter establishes a general duty for all public authorities to respect and safeguard the human rights established in the Constitution and human rights treaties binding on Norway, cf. Article 92.

107. According to the Supreme Court, *the reference to international human rights treaties binding on Norway in Article 92 cannot be interpreted as incorporating these treaties at the constitutional level*. Instead, the article imposes a duty on the courts and other public authorities to enforce human rights at the level they are implemented in national law.<sup>11</sup> The 17 articles that follow contain a number of important human rights, including most of the rights established in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and certain key rights established in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The human rights articles in the Constitution are inspired by their counterparts in international law and, in essence, address the same aspects. According to a 2015 Supreme Court judgement, the articles in Chapter E must be interpreted in light of their international counterparts. However, future practice of the international enforcement bodies should not set the same judicial precedent in the interpretation of the Constitution as in the interpretation of the corresponding convention provisions.

108. *Freedom of religion* has been enshrined in the Constitution since 1964. In 2012, the provisions which established the constitutional state church system were amended. The Constitution now states that the Christian and humanist heritage will remain our values and that the Church of Norway will remain the Established Church of Norway and will as such remain state funded. The Church Act was amended in 2016 to establish the Church of Norway as an independent legal entity as of 1 January 2017.

### **The Human Rights Act**

109. Under the Human Rights Act of 21 May 1999, the following conventions have been incorporated into Norwegian law:

- The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, with subsequent amending protocols and the following additional protocols: Nos. 1, 4, 6, 7 and 13;
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the first and second Optional Protocols thereto;
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the Optional Protocols on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography;
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the Optional Protocol thereto.

110. Section 3 of the Human Rights Act states that if national legislation conflicts with provisions in the human rights conventions incorporated by the Act, the latter shall prevail.

### **Other legislation**

111. Other conventions relating to human rights have also been incorporated or transformed into Norwegian law. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination has been incorporated into Norwegian law through Section

---

<sup>11</sup> Reference: HR-2016-2554-P.

5 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act of 16 June 2017, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has been transformed into Norwegian law through the Penal Code.

**(b) Competencies of judicial, administrative and other public authorities in relation to human rights**

112. All public authorities are *obliged to respect and ensure human rights* as they are expressed in the Constitution and in human rights treaties that are binding upon Norway, cf. Article 92 of the Constitution of Norway. Some public authorities have a more general responsibility. For example, the Minister of Justice and Public Security is responsible for the Human Rights Act, and the Parliamentary Ombud has a duty to contribute to the public authorities respecting and safeguarding human rights.

**(c) Remedies**

113. There are many ways in which a human rights issue may be brought before a Norwegian court or administrative authority, including as a claim for compensation, as a ground for declaring an administrative or a court decision null and void, or as a matter of procedural fairness (e.g., the right to a fair trial) in civil or criminal proceedings. Furthermore, an individual who believes their human rights have been violated may, subject to the ordinary limitations set forth in the Dispute Act, bring a claim to have the courts render a judgement on the case.

114. Several public authorities and *complaints mechanisms* address specific human rights issues, such as gender equality and children's rights. More generally, an individual has the right to submit a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombud concerning an alleged injustice – including human rights violations – committed by any public authority. The Ombud may find that the public authority has committed an error or acted negligently. The Ombud may also find that the decision is clearly unreasonable or contrary to sound administrative practice. The Ombud may recommend the awarding of compensation if there are sufficient grounds for doing so. The opinion of the Ombud is not legally binding but is normally adhered to.

**The European Court of Human Rights and other regional complaints mechanisms**

115. As party to the European Convention on Human Rights, Norway has accepted the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. Norway is also a party to the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter Providing for a System of Collective Complaints.

**C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level**

**(a) Introduction**

116. The paramount objective of a constitutional government is to protect individuals against abuse of power and arbitrary treatment by public authorities and to ensure equal treatment, welfare and democracy. Both the Government and the public administration at the national, regional and local levels are bound by Norway's *human rights obligations* in exercising their authority. The same applies to the Storting and the judiciary. The implementation of human rights instruments in Norwegian law and their status within the legal system are described above.

117. The judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches, and has a right and a duty to review the constitutionality of acts passed by the Storting, cf. Article 89 of the Constitution, as well as the power to review whether legislation is compatible with Norway's human rights obligations. The courts may also review any decision which entails the exercise of public authority. Administrative decisions may also be appealed to a higher administrative level, and complaints concerning administrative decisions may be submitted to the Parliamentary Ombud.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See paras. 126–130, below.

118. Responsibility for *national implementation of human rights obligations* is divided between the government ministries, which are all responsible for following up on the recommendations of the various treaty bodies in their respective sectors. Human rights are integrated and mainstreamed into all sectors of government and public administration. All government ministries and administrative bodies have an obligation to take human rights into account when drafting legislation, drawing up guidelines for administrative practice and adopting decisions.

119. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security has a particular responsibility to ensure that Norwegian law and administrative practice are consistent with Norway's human rights obligations. The Ministry revises draft legislative proposals in order to assess compatibility with the Constitution and international human rights obligations, and advises other government ministries and agencies on the interpretation of human rights standards concerning sector-specific legislation and administrative practice.

**(b) National and regional parliaments and assemblies**

**The Storting (Norwegian Parliament)**

120. Under the Norwegian parliamentary system, the Government is accountable to the Storting, which exercises continuous control over the Government's activities, including the promotion and protection of human rights.

121. In the Storting, as in all the government structures, human rights are mainstreamed and taken into account by each standing committee and by the plenary when passing legislation and adopting decisions. The Storting does not have a separate human rights committee.

**County and municipal authorities**

122. Norway has a two-tier system of *local government*. The county and municipal authorities have the same administrative status. In accordance with the principle of local autonomy, each local authority has the discretion to organise its work as it sees fit. However, similar to the central government level, all local authorities are required to consider the promotion and protection of human rights within their areas of responsibility.

123. In order to ensure the rights of citizens and the legality of adopted decisions, county and municipal authorities are subject to state supervision and control. According to Chapter 27 of the *Local Government Act*, government ministries (or the county governor with authority delegated by the ministry) review the legality of county and municipal decisions, either at the request of at least three of the members of the county or municipal council or *ex officio* if special reasons so indicate. The county governor also hears appeals from the public regarding certain county and municipal decisions based on sector-specific legislation.

124. The county governor serves as a *guardian of civic rights*. The governor may review county or municipal decisions regarding the rights of any individual in the sectors of health and social welfare, education, building and planning, and may overturn the decision in favour of the individual.

125. Since 2009, the County Governor of Troms has systematically worked to introduce a local practice of applying the Convention on the Rights of the Child in municipalities through the *Giant Leap Programme*. The programme is an analysis and follow-up tool that municipalities can use to ensure that the Convention is actively applied across their services.

126. In some areas, sector-specific legislation confers central control of counties and municipalities to bodies with specific competence in the area in question. Examples of this are the Board of Health Supervision, which supervises the local authorities in the area of health services, and the County Social Welfare Board, which reviews certain administrative decisions under the Child Welfare Act.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> [ny-barnevernslov-1.-januar-2023-en.pdf \(regjeringen.no\)](#).



**(c) National human rights institutions****The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution**

127. *The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR)*, which is organised under the Faculty of Law at the University of Oslo, was Norway's National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) from 2001 until 2015. In 2012, the Sub-Committee of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC) recommended that the accreditation of the Norwegian national institution be downgraded from A to B status. In 2013, the University's Board of Directors decided that NCHR would cease to function as Norway's NHRI.

128. In 2014, the Storting adopted a resolution on the establishment of a new NHRI. The *Norwegian National Human Rights Institution* was established on 1 July 2015. The institution is administratively subordinate to the Storting but acts as an independent body. The Act relating to the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution was passed in 2015 and regulates the Institution's structure and the exercise of its functions. A Regulation for the National Institution has also been adopted by the Storting. In December 2016, an application for accreditation was submitted to the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions and in June 2017, the 'A' status accreditation of the institution was confirmed.

129. In the preparatory works of the Act relating to the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution, it is stated that *strengthening Sami rights* is an important part of the Institution's broad mandate. Section 5 of the Act requires at least one member of the Institution's board to have specialised knowledge of Sami issues. According to Section 6 of the Regulation for the Norwegian NHRI, the same requirement applies to the advisory committee. Additionally, when hiring new staff, consideration shall be given to competence regarding the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities (Section 8).

130. The *Gáldu Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was integrated into the National Institution on 1 January 2017. Both the Sámediggi and the board of Gáldu were involved in and supported the process.

**The Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration**

131. *The ombud institutions* also play a key role in monitoring the Norwegian authorities' fulfilment of their human rights obligations. The Parliamentary Ombud for Public Administration was established in 1962, and the terms of reference for this office are to consider complaints from citizens concerning injustices committed by the public administration at any of the three levels of government: central government, county or municipal. The Ombud may also decide to raise an issue independently.

132. The functions of the Parliamentary Ombud are set out in the Constitution, in Article 75(1), and in the Act of 18 June 2021 No. 121 relating to the Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration – *the Parliamentary Ombud Act*. The Ombud is appointed by and administratively subordinate to the Storting, but acts as an independent body in the exercise of its functions.

133. According to Section 1 of the Act, the Ombud "is responsible for scrutinising the public administration and all persons in its service in order to prevent individuals from being subjected to injustice, and in order to help ensure that the public administration respects and safeguards human rights". In 2013, the Ombud was also appointed as Norway's National Preventive Mechanism, in compliance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

134. The Ombud's opinions are not legally binding on the public authorities, but are widely respected and adhered to. The opinions of the Ombud are published on its website and in the Yearbook of the Parliamentary Ombud for the Public Administration.

**The Ombud for Children**

135. In 1981, Norway established the world's first Ombud[man] for Children. The Ombud's main tasks are to promote the rights of children in the public and private sectors

and to monitor the development of children's living conditions. The Ombud also monitors the compliance of Norwegian legislation and practice with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and submits its own supplementary reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

136. *The Ombud for Children* is independent of the Storting, the Government and other public authorities, and may freely raise issues and criticise government policy. The Ombud has the power to investigate, criticise and publicise issues that will improve the welfare of children and youth, and may demand access to case files and official documents in order to fulfil this function. However, the Ombud cannot overturn an administrative action or decision. There is no formal complaints mechanism such as those for complaints to the Parliamentary Ombud or the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud. However, the Ombud for Children may independently raise issues and address opinions and recommendations to any public authority.

#### **Other Ombud institutions**

137. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud* and *The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal* are described in Chapter 3, below (paras. 189–193).

138. *The Parliamentary Ombud for the Norwegian Armed Forces* was established in 1952, and was the world's first parliamentary military commissioner. The Ombud works to safeguard the rights of all personnel in the Norwegian Armed Forces and considers a number of cases involving human rights, including the right to privacy, freedom of expression and freedom of religion. The Ombud submits inspection reports with appropriate recommendations to the Minister of Defence, Chief of Defence and military authorities involved, and an annual report to the Storting.

139. *The Patient and User Ombud* in Norway is an institution mandated to protect and advocate for the rights, needs, and interests of patients and users in the healthcare system. Regulated by the *Patient and User Rights Act*, the Ombud plays a crucial role in overseeing the provision of health services and ensuring that they meet legal and ethical standards. Reflecting the geographical distribution of healthcare services, an office is located in each of the 15 counties, ensuring citizens access to assistance and guidance on health-related issues. These offices form a vital link between the healthcare system and the public, offering support and proposing improvements while working within the framework of the law.

140. *Other ombud institutions* have been established in some counties and municipalities, and for social services. These ombud institutions may also play an important role in monitoring the authorities' observance of human rights and raising awareness among government employees and the general public.

#### **(d) Dissemination of human rights instruments**

141. The core international human rights treaties ratified by Norway have all been translated into Norwegian. The conventions that are incorporated into Norwegian law by the Human Rights Act or other acts of law are published on the legal information database *Lovdata*<sup>14</sup> in Norwegian and English. The conventions are also published on the Government website, and on the websites of the ombud institutions. Hard copies may be obtained from all these agencies and institutions on request.

142. Some of the core human rights instruments have also been published in brochures and widely distributed. For example, a short version of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, translated into Norwegian and North Sami, has been distributed to all primary schools in Norway. In addition, Norwegian translations of the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training were provided in 2011 and 2012, respectively. The *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* and the *Convention on*

---

<sup>14</sup> [www.lovdata.no](http://www.lovdata.no).

the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have all been translated into Sami. The documents are available on the Government's website.<sup>15</sup>

143. Summaries in Norwegian of judgements by the European Court of Human Rights which are categorised as judgements of high importance by the Court, and decisions in cases where Norway is a party are published on Lovdata. Furthermore, Lovdata publishes the decisions and opinions of the UN human rights treaty bodies in full text in English in individual cases where Norway is a party and in a number of cases concerning other states. In some of these cases, summaries are provided in Norwegian.

**(e) Raising human rights awareness among public officials and other professionals**

144. *National curriculum regulations* have been drawn up for teacher training and professional training in the health and social services sector, and human rights have been included as a compulsory component of these training programmes. Knowledge about human rights is also included in the curricula for other professions, such as lawyers, police, military personnel and prison officers. By law, universities and university colleges are autonomous institutions. This is to ensure academic freedom. In principle, the Government is therefore not in a position to impose specific requirements on these institutions regarding the content of teaching or research, but it may and does lay down a national curriculum for certain types of training and certain subjects.

145. Continuing education programmes for public officials are organised by the Government and other public authorities, and by professional and other civil society organisations.

**(f) Promotion of human rights awareness through educational programmes and Government-sponsored public information**

146. Including human rights education at all levels of the education system is a high priority in Norway. In 2008, the Storting decided to amend the statutory objective for kindergartens and primary and secondary schools. Amendments to the relevant legislation entered into force in 2009 and 2010.

**Kindergartens**

147. According to the statutory objective of *the Kindergarten Act*, kindergartens shall, in cooperation with the parents, ensure that children's needs for care and play are met, and promote their holistic development. Kindergartens must base their activities on the fundamental values of the Christian and humanist heritage, which are also those inherent in human rights, including respect for human dignity, intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity.

148. The curriculum for the content and tasks of kindergartens, laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2017, contains similar objectives. Kindergartens are to base their activities on a common set of values such as human dignity, equality, honesty and fairness, and these values are to be taught in accordance with the human rights conventions to which Norway is a party. International conventions and Norwegian law both emphasise the right of parents to bring up their children according to their religious and ideological beliefs and the right of children to learn about the society in which they are raised.

**Primary and secondary education**

149. From the first *objectives* for state schools were introduced in 1848 and until 2008, the statutory objectives were amended primarily by adding new objectives and without altering the core principle of Christian and moral upbringing. The objectives in the current Education Act, based on the 2009 amendments, represent a clear break with this tradition, as they are based on fundamental human rights, and take account of the fact that, while Norwegian society has its own cultural traditions, it is also characterised by cultural diversity. The

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/likestilling-og-inkludering/likestilling-og-inkludering/konvensjoner/id2510574/>.

statutory objective reads as follows: “Education and training shall be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights.” The same provision also explicitly states that all forms of discrimination are to be combated.

150. *Values and principles* for primary and secondary education and training are moreover laid down in the national core curriculum (cf. the Education Act). The statutory objective for the core curriculum defines values that unite Norwegian society and that represent the foundation of our democracy to which respect for human rights, dignity and diversity are key. The education shall promote belief in democratic values and democracy as a form of government. It shall give the pupils an understanding of the basic rules of democracy and the importance of protecting them. The core values are based on Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, which are also expressed in different religions and worldviews and are rooted in human rights. These values are the foundation of the activities in school. They must be used actively and be of significance for each pupil in the school environment through the imparting of knowledge and the formation of views and competence. The values must influence the way the school and teachers interact with the pupil and the home, in line with the best interests of the pupil, which must always be a primary consideration.

151. Human rights are also integrated into the *compulsory subject curricula* for primary and secondary education. In social studies subjects, pupils are expected to have acquired various competencies regarding human rights by the end of grades 4, 7, 10 and 11/12. The same applies in relation to the subject *Christianity, religion, philosophies of life and ethics*. An elective subject on human rights and politics (140 teaching hours per year) is offered to pupils in grade 12–13 of the general studies programme, and human rights are also incorporated into the elective subjects of sociology, social sciences and law.

### **The European Wergeland Centre**

152. In cooperation with the Council of Europe, Norway has established a *resource centre* on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship. The European Wergeland Centre, named after Norwegian poet Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845), has been operational since 2009. The Centre aims to be a resource for all Member States of the Council of Europe. It builds on and promotes the values and goals shared by the Council of Europe and Norway.

153. Education is recognised as a key factor in creating vibrant democracies in Europe. The main task of the Centre is to promote democratic culture and social belonging through education. The Centre shall contribute through relevant projects and activities in cooperation with the Council of Europe. An important element in the work of the Centre is to maintain an accessible and informative website, which can serve as an online hub and thereby create a network for relevant practitioners. The target groups are teachers, teacher-training professionals, researchers, practitioners, policymakers and other relevant actors.

### **The Sami and the Jewish Pathfinders**

154. *The Sami Pathfinders* is a programme managed by the Sami University College and funded by the Central Government. Through this arrangement, six young Sami pupils receive a grant each year to visit upper secondary schools and organisations around the country to meet young people of their own age. The aim is to provide young people with information on Sami issues and what it is like to be a Sami person in Norway today. Experience shows that the pathfinder concept is a good way of addressing prejudices and misconceptions about the Sami and Sami cultures.

155. The Jewish community in Oslo is responsible for the *Jewish Pathfinders* initiative and organises their education. Each year, up to two young Jews are recruited as pathfinders. Through school visits, the pathfinders engage pupils in dialogue, contribute to making Norwegian Jews visible and help counter stereotypes, prejudices and anti-Semitism in Norwegian society.

**(g) Promotion of human rights awareness through the media**

156. *Freedom of expression and of the press* is guaranteed both through international human rights instruments and in the Constitution of Norway. The press and other mass media regularly highlight important human rights issues in Norway and play a vital role in facilitating public debate on these issues. Civil society organisations also make use of the media to put human rights issues on the public agenda.

**(h) Role of civil society, including non-governmental organisations**

157. Civil society, including human rights defenders and the social partners (the trade unions and industry organisations), play a key role in the *realisation of human rights* in Norway and has laid much of the foundation for democracy and welfare in Norwegian society. Civil society actors promote diversity, disseminate knowledge, stimulate debate on policies and priorities, contribute with proposals to public consultations, engage in voluntary work and promote social cohesion. Civil society also plays a key role in strengthening the integration of refugees and other immigrant groups in local communities. Dialogue and cooperation between the Government and civil society are important elements of the policymaking and policy implementation processes. Among the measures is an annual Integration Conference where the Government obtains input on topics of significance for integration, from immigrants and second-generation migrants. In many cases, issues have been placed on the agenda as a result of initiatives taken by civil society stakeholders.

158. Norway has always had a strong *civil society*. Nearly eight out of ten people are members of one or more organisations, spanning fields such as nature conservation, sports, religion, human rights, development cooperation, culture, trade unions, and trade and industry organisations. Close to half the population consider themselves active members of such organisations. In Norway, a high rate of participation in such organisations is perceived as an indicator of a well-functioning society characterised by diversity, community and civic engagement. The Government wishes to involve a broad cross-section of society in the efforts to promote human rights and support and facilitate voluntary engagement and the development of a vibrant civil society. The State's provision of public funding for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) without imposing restrictions on their activities is an important means of achieving this objective.

159. The role of the trade unions and industry organisations – the social partners – must be emphasised in this context. These organisations have played and continue to play a significant role in Norwegian working life and are instrumental in implementing and promoting labour rights, including the right to organise and collective bargaining.

160. The Government organises regular meetings with human rights organisations and the main social partners, and all draft legislation is subject to a *broad consultation process* that includes these organisations, where relevant. They often provide valuable input and can influence government policy.

161. A number of Norwegian civil society organisations that focus on human rights have created a network, the *NGO Forum for Human Rights*, through which they share information and coordinate their efforts. A similar network has been established specifically for children's rights, the *Forum for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and includes over 50 member institutions and NGOs.

**(i) Budget allocations and trends**

162. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter (E), human rights are mainstreamed in all areas of national public administration. Funding for human rights is therefore not specifically allocated in the national budget but appears under a wide range of items, such as education, health and care, social welfare and courts administration.

**(j) Development cooperation and assistance**

163. *Norwegian development policy* is anchored in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the climate targets, and human rights. The main objective of Norway's development cooperation policy is to contribute to societal change through the reduction of

inequality and the promotion of economic growth and welfare in developing countries. Norway has established a holistic approach to development cooperation which aims to ensure a closer connection between humanitarian emergency aid and long-term development. Human rights is a cross-cutting theme in all development assistance, along with anti-corruption, women's rights and gender quality, gender, climate and environmental considerations.

164. Development assistance which supports the promotion of human rights is funded over many different budget chapters. Targeted development assistance to strengthen human rights includes efforts to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions, freedom of expression and the free media, cultural rights, worker's rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, freedom of religion or belief, and support for the protection of human rights defenders. Norway also has a particular focus on women's rights and gender equality, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and combating discrimination against sexual and gender minorities (LGBT+).

165. Norway seeks to apply a human rights-based approach to its national and international efforts to implement Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The principle of *leaving no one behind* is seen as a matter of promoting human rights and fighting ending poverty. Norwegian development cooperation is people-centred, climate-smart and gender-sensitive, with an emphasis on respect for human rights and giving priority to those most vulnerable. White paper No. 10 (2014–2015) *Opportunities for All: Human rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation* outlines the approach and priorities of Norway's international efforts to promote human rights.

## **D. Reporting process at the national level**

### **(a) The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)**

166. Norway will be examined before the Committee against Torture in Geneva in 2025 concerning its ninth periodic report under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The report was submitted in May 2022.

### **(b) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**

167. In March 2018, Norway was examined before the Human Rights Committee in Geneva concerning its seventh periodic report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, delivered in 2017. The Committee's last follow-up questions after the examination were responded to by the Government in April 2020.

### **(c) The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**

168. Norway submitted its fifth and sixth periodic reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in October 2016 and underwent examination by the Committee concerning these reports in May 2018. The Committee forwarded its concluding observations to Norway in June 2018. On 12 October 2020, Norway agreed to apply the simplified reporting procedure for the next periodic report. Norway then received a list of issues prior to reporting (LOIPR) in May 2023. Norway is due to submit its written replies to the LOIPR in mid-June 2024. This will constitute Norway's seventh periodic report to the Committee. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is preparing a statistical report which will be appended to Norway's seventh periodic report.

169. The Forum for the Convention on the Rights of the Child consists of around 50 different individuals, organisations and institutions concerned with children's rights. In January 2024, the Government awarded a grant to the Forum for it to both submit a report to the Committee on behalf of civil society and facilitate in order for children to independently contribute with their views and experiences to the Committee. Children's views on how the State party is following up the Convention are independent of the LOIPR. The Forum's report is due to be submitted to the Committee in September 2024.

**(d) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

170. In July 2021, Norway submitted its tenth periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Ministry of Culture and Equality coordinated the Government's report. Consultations were held with a number of women's and gender equality organisations, human rights organisations, the social partners and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud. The responses were incorporated into the Government's final report, which was distributed to all stakeholders.

**(e) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)**

171. The reporting process to the CERD is similar to that of the CRC and CEDAW, with several government ministries contributing to the Government's periodic report, the coordination of which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Equality. Norway's twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic report was submitted in September 2023. A broad range of organisations and the Sámediggi were invited to submit written comments to the draft report, and all the relevant documents have been published on the Ministry's website.

**(f) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**

172. Norway was examined before the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concerning its sixth periodic report under the ICESCR in February 2020, submitted in December 2019. Norway will submit its seventh periodic report by 31 May 2025. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security is coordinating the process and will ensure civil society involvement, consultations and a transparent governmental process.

**(g) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**

173. The reporting process to the CRPD is similar to that of CRC, CEDAW and CERD, with several government ministries contributing to the Government's periodic report. Norway's initial report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was submitted in June 2015. The report is intended to provide a general overview of Norway's policy for persons with disabilities, as well as an account of measures taken, and challenges posed by the respective articles in the Convention. The Ministry of Culture and Equality coordinates Norway's policy for persons with disabilities. Input was obtained from relevant sector-specific ministries, as well as civil society organisations and the Sámediggi through dialogue meetings and a written consultation process.

**(h) The International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances (ICPPED)**

174. In 2018, the Government presented a proposition to the Storting for its consent to ratify the *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances*. The Storting gave its consent in April 2019, and by subsequent ratification, the Convention entered into force in September 2019.

### **III. Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies**

#### **A. Legal framework**

**(a) The Constitution**

175. The *new bill of rights* in the Constitution, adopted in 2014, includes the following provision in Article 98: "All people are equal under the law. No human being must be subject to unfair or disproportionate differential treatment."

**(b) Incorporation**

176. A number of the *core international human rights instruments* and the European Convention on Human Rights have also been incorporated into Norwegian law, including provisions on non-discrimination and equality.

**(c) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act**

177. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act* was adopted in June 2017 and entered into force in January 2018. It replaced four previous equality and anti-discrimination acts and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, pregnancy, maternity/paternity leave in connection with birth or adoption, caring for children or close family members, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, or a combination of the above-mentioned grounds. The Act applies to all areas of society.

178. *The purpose of the Act* is to promote equality and prevent discrimination on the above-mentioned grounds, as well as discrimination based on other essential personal characteristics. The Act defines equality as equity, equal opportunities and equal rights, and underlines that accessibility is a precondition for equality. The Act is particularly aimed at strengthening the position of women and minorities and reducing and preventing barriers to equal participation for persons with disabilities.

179. Direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and instructions to discriminate against an individual based on the above-mentioned grounds are prohibited. The Act also includes provisions to protect individuals who bring a discrimination suit, as well as anyone who assists them, from facing unfavourable treatment (reprisals) due to their actions. In addition, the Act prohibits being an accessory to discrimination. Discrimination is defined as unjustified unequal treatment. Unequal treatment is considered justified and lawful if it has a just cause, is necessary to achieve said cause, and does not disproportionately affect the person(s) subject to the adverse unequal treatment.

180. The Act enables the authorities and others to introduce special measures for a limited period of time in order to promote equality.

181. The Act imposes certain obligations on public and private enterprises to ensure accessibility (universal design) and individual accommodation for persons with disabilities. *Universal design* is defined as designing or accommodating the main physical features of the enterprise in such a manner that the normal function of the enterprise can be utilised by as many people as possible. This duty applies to enterprises offering goods and services to the general public.

182. Norway adopted the Regulation for universal design of information and communication technology (ICT) solutions in June 2013, which covers both public and private sector entities, including NGOs. The Regulation was expanded to cover ICT in schools and other education facilities from January 2019.

183. *The Web Accessibility Directive* (WAD) was effectively implemented in January 2022. The introduction of WAD led to an increase in technical requirements, and public entities must state their compliance through a web accessibility statement (WAS). Norway has chosen a centralised mandatory solution for the web accessibility statement. The Directive requires the Authority for Universal Design of ICT to significantly increase the number of controls.

184. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act requires public authorities, employers and employer and employee organisations to make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote the purpose of the equality legislation in their enterprises. These duties were strengthened in 2020.

185. The Act includes a shared burden of proof and civil law penalties for violations of the prohibition against discrimination, in the form of compensation for economic and non-economic loss. It also contains a separate penal provision for aggravated contraventions of the prohibition against discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, religion or belief that are committed jointly by several persons.



**(d) The Working Environment Act**

186. *The Working Environment Act* prohibits discrimination in employment relationships on the basis of political views, trade union membership, age, or temporary or part-time employment. The prohibition applies to all aspects of employment and the employer's selection and treatment of self-employed persons and contract workers.

**(e) Housing legislation**

187. Norway's *housing legislation* prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender, pregnancy, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age.

**(f) The Penal Code**

188. *The Penal Code* contains several provisions addressing *hate crime*. Under the Penal Code, hate speech and discriminating against persons by refusing them goods, services or access to public performances, displays or other gatherings constitute criminal offences when based on the victim's colour of skin, national or ethnic origin, religion, life stance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or disability. In determining whether threats, physical assault, bodily harm and vandalism are aggravated and thus carry higher maximum sentences, particular weight shall be given to whether the offence was motivated by characteristics as mentioned above. Additionally, it is generally considered an aggravating factor during sentencing if a criminal offence was motivated by intolerance towards persons with the aforementioned characteristics or other circumstances related to groups requiring special protection.

**B. Institutional framework and effective remedies****(a) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud**

189. *The Office of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud* was established in January 2006. It is an independent body administratively subordinate to the Ministry of Culture and Equality. However, the Ministry cannot instruct the Ombud concerning professional activities.

190. *The Ombud's task* is to combat discrimination and promote equality regardless of factors such as gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age. The Ombud must also ensure that Norwegian law and administrative practices conform with Norway's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

191. *The Ombud's role* includes promoting equality and preventing discrimination in society at large. Among other things, this entails identifying and drawing attention to factors that hinder equality and equal treatment, raising awareness and educating the public, providing general information and guidance, advising employers on ethnic diversity in working life, and monitoring the nature and extent of discrimination.

**(b) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal**

192. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal* was established by law in January 2006 and enforces the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and the prohibitions against discrimination in the Working Environment Act and the housing legislation.

193. The Tribunal is not subject to instruction by the Government. It is accessible to the general public and its services are free of charge. The decisions of the Tribunal are administratively binding but may be overturned by a court of law. The Tribunal may impose coercive fines to ensure compliance with its orders, and can also award compensation for economic and non-economic loss in discrimination cases. *The Authority for Universal Design*

of ICT contributes test results regarding specific ICT solutions as supporting documentation to the decisions made by the Tribunal.

(c) **Organisation within the central public administration**

194. The Ministry of Culture and Equality plays a leading role in *the efforts to promote an equal rights perspective* in all policy areas and at all administrative levels. However, each government ministry is responsible for promoting equal rights and preventing discrimination within its sector, in accordance with the principle of sector responsibility. In recent years, the competence of the Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs has been strengthened in the field of equality and anti-discrimination. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion is responsible for coordinating integration policies for immigrants and their children. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity plays a key role in coordinating the efforts to ensure that persons with an immigrant background receive equitable public services. Compliance with the requirements of universal design of ICT is enforced by the Norwegian Digitalisation Agency.

**C. Gender equality and specific vulnerable groups**

(a) **Efforts against hate speech**

195. The Government's *Strategy against Hate Speech*<sup>16</sup> was in effect from 2016 to 2020. The vast majority of the measures in the strategy have been implemented and continue to be followed up. In 2021, the Government established a national grant scheme for measures to combat racism, discrimination and hate speech.

196. The government-appointed *Commission for Freedom of Expression* has reviewed the social, technological, legal and economic frameworks for freedom of expression in Norway and presented its report on 15 August 2022.<sup>17</sup> The Commission concluded that the current situation for freedom of expression in Norway is largely favourable. For most people, expressing themselves and engaging in public debate has become significantly easier than it was before, largely due to technological advancements, particularly the internet. Moreover, there is a wide range of voices and perspectives in the public discourse, including from minority groups. Contrary to public perception, available studies do not support the view that public debate is dominated by hate and incitement. The Commission does, however, highlight certain areas of improvement, including the challenges that persons belonging to minority groups may face when they express themselves in public. The Commission states that the open and informed public discourse will be undermined if certain voices and perspectives are systematically excluded. The report has been submitted for consultation and is currently being followed up by the Ministry of Culture and Equality in collaboration with the other relevant government ministries.

(b) **Gender equality**

197. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act* prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender in all areas of society.

198. In order to achieve gender equality in the workplace and at home, it is important for fathers to take a larger share of responsibility for childcare and family life. To promote gender equality, the *parental benefits scheme* is designed to give parents incentives for a more equal division of the parental leave period. Today, working parents are entitled to 49 weeks with 80 per cent coverage or 59 weeks with 100 per cent coverage. Three weeks are reserved for the mother and must be taken prior to birth. The remaining part of the parental leave is divided into three: 10 weeks are reserved for the father, 10 weeks are reserved for the mother, and the remaining period can be divided between the parents.

199. In Norway today, 6 out of 10 *students* are women. Social benefits such as paid parental leave, flexible working hours and well-developed childcare facilities have made it easier to

---

<sup>16</sup> Available here: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/the-governments-strategy-against-hate-speech-20162020/id2520975/>.

<sup>17</sup> NOU 2022: 9 Open and Enlightened Public Discourse.

combine family life with paid employment. The employment rate in 2023 was still somewhat higher for men (82.9 per cent in the age group 20–64 years) than for women (77.8 per cent in the age group 20–64 years). More women (35 per cent) than men (17 per cent) work part-time. Adjusted for working hours, women’s average monthly pay amounts to 88.3 per cent of the average pay of their male counterparts.

200. In 2003, Norway was the first country in the world to require *balanced gender representation* on the boards of public limited companies. This means that the boards of such companies must comprise a minimum of 40 per cent men and women. Overall, the representation of women has risen from approximately 7 per cent in 2003 to approximately 42 per cent in 2016.

201. *Universal conscription*, i.e., conscription for women as well as men, took effect on 1 January 2015, extending conscription to women on equal terms with men. Universal conscription applies to women born in Norway from 1997 onwards. The first conscripted women commenced their military service in the summer of 2016.

**(c) Equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons**

202. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act* prohibits discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in all areas of society.

203. There have been significant developments in gay and lesbian rights in Norway in recent years. Same-sex marriage has been legal in Norway since 2009, and same-sex couples have the same rights as others to adopt children. Lesbian couples are also entitled to in vitro fertilization treatment.

204. In July 2016, a new *Gender Recognition Act* entered into force. The Act grants all individuals the right to have their gender marker changed in public registers and passports through a simple and transparent procedure. Persons who are 16 or older can require their gender marker to be changed through a simple self-declaration procedure. Children and young people between the ages of 6 and 16 can follow a similar procedure, provided they have their parents’ consent. If only one of two parents with parental responsibility consent, the application may still be granted if it is considered to be in the best interests of the child. Parents may apply on behalf of intersex children who are 6 years old or younger.

205. *The Government’s Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023–2026)* was launched in 2023. It seeks to improve LGBT+ people’s quality of life, safeguard their rights and improve the recognition of gender and sexual diversity in society. The Action Plan has three priority areas: (i) LGBT+ people with a minority background and in religious communities, (ii) transgender people and people with gender incongruence, and (iii) sports for all.

206. Through the *Action Plan* and its 49 measures, the Government bolsters efforts for gender and sexual diversity nationally and internationally. The Government increased the grant scheme for NGOs working for gender and sexual diversity by more than NOK 21 million in 2023. In addition, the Government established a new grant scheme in 2023 intended to strengthen efforts to improve the mental health of LGBT+ people.

207. The Action Plan contains several measures to enhance knowledge on gender and sexual diversity in municipalities and public services, schools, the Police, and the Armed Forces, as well as in minority groups, religious communities, and sports associations.

208. The Action Plan also includes measures aimed at reinforcing the efforts to safeguard LGBT+ people’s human rights and inclusion, internationally. At the international level, Norway aims to push against the pushback on gender equality and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). LGBT+ perspectives are an integral part of our work to promote SRHR, worldwide.

209. The Ministry of Culture and Equality coordinates the implementation of the Action Plan across eleven government ministries. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs ensures knowledge-based and coordinated efforts across sectors at the directorate level.

210. The Government proposed a bill to prohibit *conversion therapy*, which was adopted and has entered into force. The Government has also conducted an official study on non-binary gender recognition.

**(d) Equal rights for persons with disabilities**

211. *The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act* prohibits discrimination on grounds of disability in all areas of society and contains provisions on universal design and individual accommodation. Norway is a highly digitized society making equal digital participation a prerequisite for citizens taking part in democratic processes.

212. *Norwegian Sign Language* is given official status through different laws. The Act relating to Language assigns public bodies the responsibility to promote and protect Norwegian Sign Language. Provisions in the Education Act are essential for the learning of Norwegian Sign Language, pursuant to which persons who are deaf or hard of hearing have the right to select Norwegian Sign Language as their language of instruction. The *National Insurance Act* includes provisions on the individual right to interpretation into sign language in daily life and work, free of charge. The *Public Administration Act* gives persons who are deaf or hard of hearing the right to sign language interpretation when interacting with government agencies. The Interpretation Act assigns public bodies the responsibility to engage interpreters when this is not ensured under other legislation but necessary to safeguard legal obligations and safe communication. The Act indirectly prohibits the use of children as interpreters and requires the use of qualified interpreters, including in Norwegian Sign Language.

213. Persons with disabilities encounter obstacles in their daily lives due to a lack of accessibility in their physical surroundings. Accessibility is crucial for ensuring full participation in society. *Universal design* is therefore particularly important for persons with disabilities. The priority areas in the Government's Action Plan for Universal Design 2021–2025 are transport, planning, accessible buildings, education and ICT.

**(e) Equal rights for ethnic and religious minorities**

214. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, religion and belief in all areas of society.

215. Studies show that persons from ethnic minorities are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and hate crime. Although the police receive few reports of hate crime, there is reason to believe that the true figures are much higher.

216. In 2023 the Government presented a new action plan against racism, the *Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination – New Efforts 2024–2027*. The priority areas in the plan are racism and discrimination in the labour market and in other areas that particularly affect young people. The plan contains several measures aimed at both public and private employers. Regarding young people, efforts to enhance the development of safe and supportive school environments will be reinforced.

217. The Government is also working on *three new action plans*; against antisemitism, against discrimination and hatred towards Muslims and an action plan against discrimination towards the Sami population.

218. *Freedom of religion* has been enshrined in the Constitution since 1964. The Constitution also sets out that all life stances and religious communities are to be equally supported by the State. The *Religious and Life Stance Communities Act* came into effect on 1 January 2021. The Act regulates the grants to the Church of Norway and other religious and life-stance communities. The Church of Norway receives a block grant from the State and local congregations are entitled to grants from their respective municipalities. Other religious and life-stance communities are entitled to a grant per member corresponding to the grants that the Church of Norway receives from the State and their respective municipalities per member. Approximately 740 religious and life-stance communities claimed financial grants under this scheme in 2023.

219. The *National Sami Competence Centre* (NASAK) was established in 2022 to provide guidance and increased competence in Sami language and culture in public services for

children and families: crisis centre services, child welfare services and family counselling services.

**(f) Immigrants, including asylum seekers and refugees**

220. According to *the Immigration Act*, a foreign national who applies for protection in Norway (an *asylum seeker*) must be offered accommodation while waiting for the immigration authorities to reach a decision.

221. The Government white paper *On integration policy: Making demands and meeting needs* from March 2024 presents the Government's comprehensive integration policy. The report outlines three overriding goals: 1) more immigrants enter into and gain a stable connection to the regulated labour market; 2) the systems of reception for new arrivals are flexible in face of large fluctuations; and 3) integration policy is effective, comprehensive and targeted. The white paper presents the policy targeting newly arrived immigrants soon after arrival in Norway, and the policy facilitating their participation in working life. Integration policy is also presented as a broad, cross-sectoral field, where living conditions, barriers to participation and immigrants' connections to local and wider society are key themes. The situation of children, and services for children and young people are discussed throughout. The white paper also provides an overall presentation of experiences with the high arrivals of displaced persons from Ukraine since February 2022 and summarises some lessons learned to date. Furthermore, the Government presents policies to improve the integration of migrant workers.

222. *Asylum seekers* residing in a reception centre are offered 175 hours of Norwegian language training free of charge from the municipalities and 25 hours of training in social studies. The goal is both to provide meaningful activities to counteract passivity and to ensure that persons living in Norway have basic knowledge of our society. Asylum seekers are entitled to healthcare services that address both physical and mental health problems, substance abuse issues, and dental care. This comprehensive healthcare provision ensures that all individuals seeking asylum can receive the medical attention they require during their stay. Additionally, Norway mandates tuberculosis screening within two weeks of arrival for asylum seekers from countries with high incidences of the disease, reflecting the country's commitment to public health and safety. To facilitate understanding and access to these services, *Helsenorge (the official website for information about and access to health services for residents of Norway)* provides relevant information in multiple languages on its platform, ensuring that asylum seekers are well-informed about their health rights and the services available to them.

223. If their application for protection has been rejected, the foreign national in question will be offered accommodation pending their exit from Norway. Irrespective of legal status, children up to the age of 18 have the same right to health and care services as other children, although those without legal residence are not eligible for inclusion on a regular General Practitioner roster. Adults without legal residence are entitled to emergency care and essential health services that cannot be delayed, including maternity, 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 health institution if the patient lacks the financial means. Additionally, everyone has the right to preventive care and treatment for communicable diseases that pose a public health risk, including vaccinations and treatment for such diseases, free of charge.

224. *Qualification programmes* intended to help immigrants acquire basic and relevant qualifications are designed to enhance their chances of finding a job and participating in society. The main schemes are *Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies*, the *Introduction Programme* and the *Job Opportunity Programme*. The Introduction Act previously regulated the Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies, and the Introduction Programme schemes. However, in January 2021, the Introduction Act was replaced by the Integration Act. One of the objectives of the Integration Act is for more refugees to gain formal education through the Introduction Programme.

225. The aim of the *Introduction Programme* is to provide each participant with basic Norwegian language skills and insight into Norwegian society, as well as preparation for

employment or continued education in Norway. The right and obligation to participate in this programme applies to refugees and their family members, in addition to persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and their family members. These rights and obligations only apply to those between the ages of 18 and 55 who need to acquire basic qualifications in order to secure employment or to participate in continued education.

226. The Introduction Programme is an individually adapted full-time programme to acquire basic qualifications. Participants in the programme are entitled to an *Introduction Benefit*. The benefit amounts to twice the basic amount of the National Insurance Scheme, annually (EUR 20,000 in 2024). Participants under the age of 25, who are living with one or both parents, receive one-third of the benefit. Participants under 25 years who are not living with their parents receive two-thirds of the benefit. The benefit is taxable.

227. During 2022, 17,800 persons participated in the programme, compared to 10,600 in 2021. 33 per cent of the participants were women. In November 2022, 65 per cent of the participants who had finished the programme in 2021 were employed or enrolled in education. A larger proportion of the men had found work or were attending education.

228. For *Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies*, the requirement of having completed a fixed number of hours of training is replaced with a requirement of a minimum level of Norwegian language proficiency in the new Integration Act. This level is the participant's *Norwegian language goal*. The indicative minimum level is B1 in all language skills (oral, listening, writing and reading). In 2022, 28,400 persons participated in the training, compared to 22,200 in 2021. One-third of the participants were from Ukraine.<sup>18</sup>

229. The right and obligation to participate in tuition-free Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies applies to foreign nationals between the ages of 18 and 67 who have been granted a residence permit under the Immigration Act which forms the basis for a permanent residence permit, or collective protection in mass flight situations. The right to participate does not apply to foreign nationals with a residence permit to work or engage in self-employment and their family members. Such persons have an obligation to participate in Norwegian language training and social studies, for which a fee may be charged by the local authorities.

230. Having completed language training or demonstrated corresponding language skills is a requirement for a permanent residence permit and Norwegian citizenship. Immigrants holding an EEA-EFTA work/residence permit are not obliged to take a language course. Since 2014, it has also been mandatory for the participants of the Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies scheme to take a test in social studies in a language they understand. The test is available in 23 languages. In 2021, 10,260 candidates took the test, with a passing rate of 80 per cent.

231. The aim of the *Job Opportunity Programme* is to increase the employment rate among immigrant women who need to acquire basic skills and who are not covered by other schemes or are in need of individualised training. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity administers the scheme. The main target group of the scheme is women outside the labour market who are not receiving supplementary public benefits, nor attending any form of language or labour market training. 74 per cent of the participants who completed the scheme in 2022 were employed or participated in education after completing the programme, compared to 79 per cent in 2021. The programme has a wide range of tools to address the different needs of immigrant women in several sectors. In 2021, 60 per cent of the women attended language training classes and 70 per cent of them participated in on-the-job training.

232. *Student financial support* may be granted to immigrants and foreign nationals who meet certain criteria defining ties to Norway. As a general rule, immigrants are eligible for student financial support if they have legal residence in Norway and if the studies do not comprise the legal basis for residence. For instance, immigrants who have been granted protection (asylum) or who have been granted a residence permit in connection with family reunification with a Norwegian or a foreign national are entitled to student financial support on the same footing as Norwegian citizens. Citizens of EEA or EFTA countries with

---

<sup>18</sup> Source: Statistics Norway.

permanent residence in Norway and/or with status as worker or family member of a worker in Norway are also eligible. Foreign citizens who meet the eligibility criteria receive the same support for maintenance, travel and tuition as Norwegian students. Norwegian student financial support includes additional grant schemes for the care of children and for sickness. There is also a special grant scheme for pupils in upper secondary education who have been granted protection (asylum) in Norway.

233. Some of the *labour immigrants* are in a vulnerable position in the labour market. Norway places great emphasis on ensuring that they enjoy the same pay and working conditions as Norwegian workers. A strategy for combating work-related crime has been implemented, which contains a number of measures to prevent social dumping and to ensure that labour immigrants are paid according to Norwegian standards.

234. The overarching labour market policy in Norway consists of three main labour market schemes: vocational training, work practice and wage subsidies. An individual work capability assessment determines whether or not an individual is offered the opportunity to participate in a labour market scheme.

235. *Unemployment benefits* for unemployed persons represent partial compensation for loss of income and are intended to provide an incentive to find a new job. In principle, labour immigrants have the same right to unemployment benefits as others. However, the duration of their residence permit determines the period during which they may receive such benefits. EEA nationals who have established a connection to working life in Norway by working here for a certain period and making National Insurance contributions may submit claims for Norwegian unemployment benefits based on unemployment benefit rights earned in another EEA country.

## **D. General measures adopted to reduce economic, social and geographic disparities**

236. *The Nordic welfare model* is characterised by a relatively large redistribution of wealth through the income tax system, universal welfare systems, a comprehensive, publicly funded education system, an active labour market policy and a flexible labour market. The welfare model has resulted in less poverty and inequality and a more equitable income distribution in Norway than in many other countries. Norway continues to build on this model and is reforming and further developing the welfare system, in cooperation with the social partners.

### **(a) Education and training**

237. *The education system* lays the foundation for social cohesion and economic growth and is vital for the development of a democratic, diverse and unified society. Equal opportunities and non-discrimination are basic principles and objectives for promoting full access, stable attendance and thorough learning. The education system is intended to give equal access to and accommodate optimal learning for *all* individuals, thereby helping to reduce social inequality and promote shared values.

238. Several measures target specific *vulnerable or disadvantaged groups* and individuals. Children and youth with special educational needs are accommodated in mainstream ordinary primary and lower and upper secondary schools and some specialised schools. This also includes certain measures and opportunities specifically for individuals with ethnic minority, national minority and/or indigenous backgrounds.

239. Several measures to ensure *access to higher education for all* are implemented in Norway. These include a comprehensive system for student financial support, subsidised student housing schemes and several other welfare benefits. Public higher education is also tuition-free in Norway, including for students from countries in the EU/EEA. All qualified applicants are ranked according to their merits from upper secondary education and/or training. It is also possible to be admitted on the basis of an assessment of prior learning.

240. Although the *literacy rate* in Norway is close to 100 per cent, literacy tests have shown that a small portion of the adult population lacks basic reading and writing skills. In order to meet the needs of this heterogeneous group, measures have been implemented by the formal

schooling system, in cooperation with employers' organisations and associations for adult students. Adults in Norway have a statutory right to primary and lower secondary education and adults over 25 years of age have a right to upper secondary education and training. Moreover, a national qualification framework for lifelong learning, based on formal qualifications, including a system for validation of non-formal competence, is established in Norway.

**(b) Employment**

241. Despite a weaker economy in Norway, the aim continues to be a high level of employment, low unemployment and an inclusive labour market with room for everyone who is able and willing to work. The main goals of *labour market policy* are therefore to facilitate high participation in employment and efficient utilisation of the available workforce by ensuring a well-functioning labour market and inclusive and well-organised workplaces. Extensive labour market and rehabilitation measures are aimed at contributing to high employment and low unemployment and combating exclusion by helping persons with labour market-related challenges find and retain a relevant job.

242. The *Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration* is responsible for implementing labour market policy. The Administration facilitates efforts to match job seekers with vacant jobs and to ensure comprehensive assistance and security for persons who require work-oriented assistance to find and retain employment.

**(c) The Norwegian National Insurance Scheme**

243. The National Insurance Scheme is a universal scheme covering all nine traditional branches of social security set out in *ILO Convention No. 102*. As a general rule, membership is compulsory for all persons who either live or work in Norway, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity, place of residence, gender, age, etc.

244. By definition, the social insurance schemes target vulnerable groups, as they are all designed to improve the living conditions for persons who are in one or more specified circumstances that often lead to economic hardship, e.g., old age, sickness, disability, unemployment and/or maternity.

245. An annual publication entitled *The Norwegian Social Insurance Scheme* provides a comprehensive presentation of the scheme, and is available on the Government's website. Reference is also made to Norway's most recent reports on the implementation of ILO Conventions Nos. 102, 128 and 130.

**(d) Social Services and housing**

246. The local government sector is responsible for services that ensure that all inhabitants in their respective areas experience good living conditions. The municipality is responsible for providing services according to the *Social Services Act*. Persons who are unable to support themselves by working or exercising financial rights are entitled to financial support, which is intended to make the person self-sufficient.

247. The municipality is required to find adequate temporary housing for people who are unable to find accommodation themselves. The municipality is required to give individually adapted assistance to disadvantaged in the housing market. The municipality is also required to keep an overview of the need for ordinary and adapted housing for disadvantaged in the housing market. Loan and grant schemes are available to give disadvantaged in the housing market better access to housing, irrespective of ethnic background.

**(e) Other measures to promote social inclusion and poverty reduction**

248. In October 2023, an expert group on children growing up in poor families submitted its recommendations to the Government about which types of measures should be prioritised to improve the living conditions of children growing up in poverty and break the cycle of inherited poverty. The *National Strategy for Children and Youth in Low-income Families*



(2020–2023)<sup>19</sup> will be renewed in 2024, and in 2025, the Government will present a white paper on social equality and social mobility among children and young people.

249. The Government has strengthened its cooperation and communication with advocates for users and other organisations and associations in the voluntary sector. These organisations are important cooperation partners for both the central and local government. There is a liaison committee to strengthen the dialogue between the Government and self-appointed representatives of socially and financially disadvantaged persons.

250. The Government has *cooperation agreements with cities* in Norway that have areas with major challenges in living conditions, especially high levels of children growing up in poor families. The area-based initiatives are adapted to the challenges in the different urban areas. These initiatives are similar in that they are to contribute to a lasting improvement of services and physical and social community qualities where the needs are the greatest. The initiatives create space for learning, sharing and improved ownership of problem-solving. The Government currently has agreements with 14 municipalities.

**(f) Measures to reduce geographic disparities**

251. *The Government's regional and rural policy aims* to achieve regional balance through growth capacity, equal living conditions and sustainable regions, nationwide. A well-developed infrastructure is vital to positive development in a country like Norway, with its sparse population and vast distances.

252. Even if Norway has a fairly good regional balance, some municipalities and areas have specific demographic challenges. In these areas, the Government is focusing on developing local communities with growth potential. This is done by focusing on business development in rural areas and strengthening development skills in the most sparsely populated areas. A successful regional policy requires measures in a wide range of policy areas, such as infrastructure, tax, health services, municipal income rates, education and innovation, in order to create more jobs and improve public and private services. The primary resource of a modern economy is the creativity and ingenuity of its people, particularly their ability to cope with socio-economic change through innovation.

253. Northern Norway faces particular challenges because of its sparse population, the vast distances between settlements and the small labour markets. A new *High North Strategy* was launched by the Government in 2017, focusing on international cooperation, economic development, competence, infrastructure, environment and security.

<sup>19</sup> [www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/bb45eed3479549719fb14c78eba35bd4/strategi-mot-barnefattigdom\\_web.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/bb45eed3479549719fb14c78eba35bd4/strategi-mot-barnefattigdom_web.pdf).

## Annex

[English only]

### Useful Websites

The Storting (Norwegian Parliament)  
The Norwegian Government  
The Supreme Court of Norway  
The Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration  
The Parliamentary Ombud's Committee for the Norwegian Armed Forces  
The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud  
The Ombud for Children  
The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution  
The European Wergeland Centre  
Statistics Norway

### Legislation\*

The Constitution of Norway  
The Norwegian Human Rights Act  
The Norwegian Penal Code  
Act relating to equality and a prohibition against discrimination (the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act)  
The Sami Act  
Act relating to municipalities and county authorities (the Local Government Act)  
Act Relating to the Ombudsperson for Children  
Act relating to the Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration\*\*  
Act relating to the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution  
Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act)  
Act relating to Universities and University Colleges  
Other Norwegian legislation in English

---

---

\* Unofficial English translations.  
\*\* In Norwegian.