



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Summary record of the 2879th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 13 May 2025, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Kiladze

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports of States parties *(continued)*

Seventh periodic report of Norway (continued) ([CRC/C/NOR/7](#); [CRC/C/NOR/QPR/7](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Norway joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation of Norway to the meeting, said that other members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **A representative of Norway** said that the system of core groups, such as the core group for vulnerable children and young people, had been introduced in 2021 to improve collaboration among ministries. However, there remained a need for better cross-sectoral collaboration in municipalities to ensure that children, other young people and their families received the necessary support. The division of activities into sectors at the national level could make it challenging to take holistic, coordinated action on the front line. The work of the ministries that made up the core group, each of which was responsible for its own budget, was currently supported by 14 agencies. Following an assessment in 2024, the core group had been found to be well established and therefore had the potential to become a permanent coordination mechanism. The core group did not consult directly with children and young people; work to identify issues concerning vulnerable children and young people was done by the ministries and agencies. Nevertheless, how to facilitate participation at the system level had been a topic for discussion in the core group.
4. **A representative of Norway** said that the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act addressed discrimination on grounds such as gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability and sexual orientation and, since 2018, also explicitly afforded protection from multiple and intersectional discrimination. An action plan on hate speech and discrimination against the Sami people, which had been developed in close cooperation with the Sami Parliament and the Sami people, including young people, had been launched in January 2025; the plan comprised 32 measures under the themes of dialogue, democracy, knowledge, safety and security.
5. The strategy for the equality of persons with disabilities, entitled “A Society for All”, which would run until 2030, addressed four focus areas – namely, education, healthcare, culture and leisure – while the related action plan contained 85 measures falling under the scope of eight ministries, including several measures for children and young people with disabilities. Of the measures, 34 had been completed and the rest were ongoing. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs had prepared a guide and videos to facilitate consideration of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in decision- and policymaking in municipalities and counties. Furthermore, municipalities and counties were required to set up councils to enable persons with disabilities to participate in decisions on matters of particular importance to them with a view to removing socially created barriers and combating discrimination in access to municipal services.
6. In 2025, the Government had allocated 280 million Norwegian kroner (Nkr) to two grant programmes, one for organizations of persons with disabilities and the other for holiday and leisure activities for those persons. The Government had also adopted the “Everyone Included” action plan to ensure that all children and other young people could take part in cultural, sports and outdoor activities.
7. Different definitions of disability meant that there was no single figure for the number of persons with disabilities in Norway, and most of the statistics covered persons over the age of 15. Statistics Norway reports on employment and education nonetheless provided insight into the experiences of persons with disabilities with discrimination, access to services and overall quality of life. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs also collected and published statistics on equality and discrimination.
8. **A representative of Norway** said that the Government submitted an annual white paper on the language, culture and community life of the Sami people to Parliament. The theme of the 2023 report had been skills and recruitment in early childhood, primary, secondary and higher education and training. The Government’s goal was for more people to

choose to pursue their entire education in the Sami language by increasing the number of qualified teachers in early childhood and primary education. In follow-up to proposals from the Sami Parliament, the Ministry of Education and Research would be establishing an expert group to improve early childhood education for Sami children. The biggest challenge was the shortage of educators and other personnel proficient in the Sami language. Counties and municipalities were required under the new Education Act to offer at least some instruction in Sami in Sami-speaking environments, and the right to instruction in Sami at the upper secondary level had been extended to Sami students who had received instruction in or had studied Sami at the primary and lower secondary levels. The newest curricula contained competence objectives with explicit Sami content.

9. The Government was financing the school counselling programme of the city of Oslo, where most Roma families lived, to improve learning outcomes, reduce absenteeism and increase primary and lower secondary education completion rates among Roma children; the programme was also open to Roma children living in municipalities bordering Oslo.

10. The town of Longyearbyen in Svalbard provided a good range of services; however, the unique conditions in the archipelago determined what services could be provided, as well as residents' expectations. While the town was becoming friendlier to families, it was not intended to be a lifelong community, and not all needs, including educational needs, could be met there. The rules on special education were not suited to a place like Longyearbyen, where adaptation measures could not be expected to do more than ensure that children with disabilities obtained a reasonable benefit from their education. Moreover, Longyearbyen was not designed for either adults or children with complex health and adaptation needs. For services beyond what could be provided locally, Norwegian citizens must contact their home municipality in mainland Norway.

11. **A representative of Norway** said that schools should create an environment where all students thrived and address problematic behaviour in an individualized manner in consultation with the students concerned and their parents or guardians. The national curriculum covered topics related to interpersonal relationships and emotions. The class on health and life skills, for instance, dealt with setting and respecting boundaries and with handling thoughts, feelings and relationships. In 2025, the Government had allocated money to support municipalities facing challenges such as youth crime and unsafe school environments.

12. **A representative of Norway** said that unaccompanied minors were given high priority in all stages of the immigration process. Any age-based differences in treatment had legitimate aims and did not amount to discrimination. For example, younger children, who needed more, or closer, attention were typically housed in care centres, whereas older children tended to be housed in asylum reception centres where they learned to be more independent. The Directorate of Immigration was striving to ensure that the care provided to unaccompanied minors aged 15 and older in asylum reception centres was appropriately managed – for instance, by increasing the number of qualified professional care workers. Funding had been earmarked for four such positions in each asylum reception centre.

13. All unaccompanied minors housed in care and asylum reception centres had the same right to healthcare services from the Norwegian healthcare authorities as other children residing in the country. The Child Welfare Act applied to all children in Norway, and asylum reception centres were required to notify municipal child welfare services when concerns about a child in their care arose.

14. The independent mechanism established in 2022 to monitor the care of unaccompanied minors living in asylum reception centres had detected violations of relevant regulations, and the Directorate of Immigration was following up on the cases. In 2025, the Government had increased the oversight mechanism's funding, enabling it to discharge its mandate at all centres.

15. Asylum reception centres were required to have plans in place to prevent and address violence against children and ensure their safety, and staff members, who were obliged to report violent conduct to the relevant authorities, were prohibited from using coercive measures for reasons other than self-defence. All centres were required to hold at least two voluntary group dialogues on violence a year. In addition, all persons applying for a position

at a centre were required by law to disclose any criminal record they might have. Centres were also required to adopt measures to identify and follow up with asylum-seekers who might be victims of trafficking in persons, domestic violence or child marriage. Where a suspected victim was identified, centres must facilitate cooperation with the local authorities, including the police and the Child Welfare Service, and ensure that a legal guardian or representative was appointed for unaccompanied minors.

16. Asylum reception centres were required to set up councils as a way of gathering the views of their residents. It was the special responsibility of guardians or representatives to ensure that the needs of their charges were satisfactorily met, although unaccompanied minors could also speak directly with the county governor during monitoring visits to their centre.

17. All unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors were offered an in-person or online asylum interview; an interview was also generally offered to accompanied asylum-seeking minors over the age of 7. All children received information at the national arrival centre about their right to be heard during the asylum procedure. Where an interview was not conducted, the child was represented by a parent, lawyer or other person. The Directorate of Immigration had prepared guidelines on child-friendly interview techniques for immigration police officers who registered asylum applications, including on raising topics that might point to an interviewee's particular vulnerability.

18. The Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board heard children differently from the Directorate of Immigration because, by the time cases reached it, the case files typically contained sufficient written documentation from the child's school or a healthcare facility to know the child's views. Nevertheless, the Board rigorously considered whether it had sufficient information about the child's views. In family reunification cases, children in Norway were heard by the local police or, when the children were abroad, by Norwegian diplomatic officials. The immigration authorities' practices in asylum cases involving children had been independently reviewed, and a report containing recommendations, including on the potential for improving how the authorities assessed the best interests of the child, had been issued in March 2024. A separate report on the assessment of the best interests of the child in family reunification cases had been drawn up by the Norwegian Organization for Asylum-Seekers and was under consideration by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Directorate of Immigration and the Immigration Appeals Board.

19. **A representative of Norway** said that a majority of the committee tasked by the Government with examining the use of preventive detention had recommended that preventive detention should no longer be applied to juvenile offenders; its report had been released for public consultation. Life imprisonment for minors was theoretically possible but in practice did not exist.

20. **A representative of Norway** said that Norway was a country of destination for victims of trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labour but that the level of trafficking was relatively low. The Government wished to replace anti-trafficking action plans with a strategy and was holding broad consultations with civil society to that end. The strategy, to be presented later in 2025, would include a wide range of measures to strengthen support for victims, prevent trafficking and improve the response by law enforcement, thus addressing recommendations made by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, including for the establishment of a national referral mechanism that defined the procedures and roles of all front-line actors who might come into contact with victims of trafficking. Public servants had a duty to report any signs that a child or someone who might be a child was being exploited or at risk thereof to the Child Welfare Service.

21. The Criminal Procedure Act did not contain a chapter specifically addressing children's rights; however, the guidelines on police questioning of children and particularly vulnerable persons issued in 2023 by the Director of Public Prosecution were designed to ensure that safeguards and procedural rights were respected and that children were treated with consideration. As a general rule, all persons, especially when underage at the time of an offence and unlikely to be released within 12 to 14 hours of being arrested, were entitled to a court-appointed defence lawyer for hearings and for proceedings related to arrest and

remand in custody. Persons charged with a criminal offence could, under certain circumstances, be appointed a lawyer in earlier stages of the investigation. Children could be appointed a lawyer to represent them during police questioning if they had been deprived of their liberty or faced the realistic possibility of certain penalties.

22. **A representative of Norway** said that the aim of the Education Act was to provide all children with equal opportunity to obtain an education of the highest quality in a safe learning environment. Since 2009, all children had the right to full-time early childhood education (kindergarten) from the age of 1. Currently, 89.4 per cent of 1- and 2-year-old children and 97.4 per cent of children between the ages of 3 and 5 attended kindergarten. The Government's goal was to ensure, in part through price caps, that all children had access to high-quality kindergarten by 2030, irrespective of where they lived, their background or their family's economic status. Children living in asylum reception centres were not entitled to a place in kindergarten, but a State grant was available to facilitate their attendance. School absenteeism could have many causes, and the Government was stepping up prevention efforts.

23. Counties and municipalities had a duty to ensure that students had access to education suited to their needs, in particular through the provision of tailored instruction, personal assistance, physical adaptation or technical aids, and were able to develop their abilities in order to obtain satisfactory results regardless of their functional level. Under the new Education Act, everyone had the right to pursue upper secondary education and to complete his or her education regardless of his or her individual needs.

24. The Government had allocated significant resources to ensuring continuing education for teachers. There was particularly high demand for training in special education. Both relevant directorates had been tasked with assessing the implementation of adapted education, including early intervention efforts, while the Ministry of Education and Research was exploring how the Government could best help municipalities, early childhood education centres and schools ensure that teachers had the necessary training.

25. **A representative of Norway** said that, in 2016, the Government had instructed the Directorate of Immigration to ensure that applicants for Norwegian citizenship were treated in accordance with the European Convention on Nationality, the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Stateless applicants who were born in Norway must be residing in the country at the time of their application for citizenship and have continuously resided there for three consecutive years prior to applying. There was no residency requirement for stateless applicants under the age of 18 born in Norway who were entitled to a permanent resident permit under the Immigration Act. The Government was working on a revision of the Immigration Act, which did not currently contain a definition of statelessness.

26. **A representative of Norway** said that Norway was actively contributing to global efforts to limit the rise in temperature to 1.5°C by striving to achieve its own climate goals, which included a reduction of emissions of at least 55 per cent compared to 1990 levels by 2030. Parliament was currently considering a further reduction target of 70 to 75 per cent by 2035 and of 90 to 95 per cent by 2050. If adopted, the additional targets would become the country's new nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement and would be enshrined in the Climate Change Act. Norway was using a combination of climate taxes, emissions trading, support schemes, technology standards and regulations to reach its climate goals and collaborating with the European Union to help fulfil the Union's commitments under the Paris Agreement. There was also the goal to halve emissions from oil and gas production on the Norwegian continental shelf by 2030 and to achieve net zero in that domain by 2050.

27. All levels of government were required under the Constitution or the Local Government Act to seek out the opinion of children. In practice, two youth representatives attended climate negotiations on a rotational basis. However, the Government was exploring ways of increasing the involvement of young people, as, for the first time, there were signs of a decline in climate engagement.

28. Following complex talks, agreement had been reached to ensure that Sami reindeer herders would continue to have access to land for winter grazing. The Government was committed to safeguarding their rights, and future decisions on land development would be grounded in constructive dialogue with stakeholders.

29. **A representative of Norway** said that Norwegian natural gas had helped countries on the European continent reduce their dependence on Russian gas.

30. **Ms. Marshall-Harris** (Country Task Force) said that she wished to know whether any measures were being taken to increase social interaction among children. In that connection, she wondered whether the funding allocated to youth clubs would be increased and whether national standards would be established for such clubs to ensure that the quality of the services they provided was consistent.

31. She would be grateful to learn whether any steps were being taken to prevent members of Indigenous communities from being displaced and ensure that any displaced persons had access to compensation. It would be useful to know whether the State Party sought the free and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples for any activities that affected them. She would be grateful for information on any measures being taken to promote the use of alternatives to detention for children in conflict with the law and to investigate reports that excessive force was used against children in detention.

32. **Ms. Scerri Ferrante** said that she wished to know whether the Immigration Appeals Board had competency for both criminal and administrative cases and whether it was authorized to hear appeals concerning all immigration-related matters, including age-assessment procedures and complaints relating to detention conditions. Given that the Board did not hear children directly, it would be interesting to know how the State Party ensured children's right to be heard in appeal hearings. It would be interesting, too, to know whether permanent living arrangements were offered only to children in residential care or also to children in alternative forms of care, such as foster care.

33. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** said that she wished to know what policies the State Party had formulated to help developing countries mitigate the impact of climate change and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. **Mr. Van Keirsbilck** said that he wished to know whether the State Party intended to engage with the United Nations in order to raise the question of the financial support provided to the human rights treaty bodies and the impact that reductions in that support had on their ability to carry out all their mandated activities, including the consideration by the Committee of individual and inter-State communications. He wondered whether the State Party had sought children's views on its possible ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. Lastly, he would be interested to learn whether the State Party planned to provide additional assistance to other countries to help them eradicate landmines and whether it intended to maintain the level of State funding allocated to international cooperation.

35. **Ms. Beloff** (Country Task Force) said that she wished to know why the State Party had not established separate judicial authorities and institutions for children aged between 15 and 18 who were in conflict with the law.

36. **The Chair** said that she wished to know whether any positive parenting programmes had been established, whether the State Party made use of artificial intelligence in protecting and promoting children's rights, including in the area of education, and whether it took steps to protect children from the threats posed by digital technology.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

37. **A representative of Norway** said that the Government had established the goal of training professionals working with children to identify children subjected to violence. Students of basic health- and social care were required to learn about social and health-related problems, including neglect, violence, abuse, substance abuse and socioeconomic problems. They were expected to know how to identify persons affected by those problems and what measures to take to assist them or refer them to the appropriate services.

38. A number of specialized centres provided guidance and training to the staff of the municipalities and services. For many years, evidence-based treatment for trauma had been made available to children and young people attending mental health clinics. Three quarters of the country's child and adolescent mental health clinics offered trauma-focused cognitive behaviour therapy to their patients. The Government allocated funding to assess the treatment for trauma provided to children aged between 7 and 12 in the municipalities.

39. The Government made continuous efforts to assess and improve the accessibility and quality of respite homes. The Norwegian Board of Health Supervision was an independent body responsible for monitoring and ensuring the quality of health and care services. In 2022 and 2023, the Board had conducted nationwide inspections of children's respite homes, following which it had issued a number of recommendations that were currently being addressed.

40. Starting in 1991, measures had been taken to transfer responsibility for the care of persons with developmental disabilities from the county municipalities to the local municipalities. Institutions for persons with developmental disabilities were gradually being closed and the residents moved to regular housing in their home municipalities.

41. In 2022, almost 20,000 children aged 17 or under had received care from one or more municipal health and care services. Almost 60 per cent of those children had required rehabilitation services. Children with disabilities were entitled to accessible and effective services, irrespective of the severity of the disability. The Government had established the goal of providing quality services to children with complex and long-term care requirements.

42. Responsibility for child welfare was shared by the State and local municipalities. The Ombudsperson for Children played a key role in raising awareness of children's rights and needs. The Norwegian Directorate of Health developed national guidelines and standards for health and care services, including specific guidelines for services for children and young persons with disabilities. The Directorate also collaborated with a number of stakeholders to provide guidance to health and care services and raise awareness of the rights of children with disabilities.

43. The vast majority of children and other young persons had never used illegal substances, although there had been an increase in cocaine use, especially among young men and boys. In the third quarter of 2024, the Government had presented a white paper relating to the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. The Government aimed to improve prevention measures and make it easier for people to receive treatment for substance abuse while maintaining the prohibition on illegal drugs. It was particularly focused on preventing substance abuse among children and young people.

44. The Directorate of Health was implementing a national substance abuse prevention programme for children and young persons to ensure that preventive measures were based on the best knowledge and practices. Funding for staff working in outreach roles in the municipalities and the police had been increased. Ensuring access to good living conditions was the most effective way of preventing mental health and substance abuse problems. The measures provided for in public health policy were key to preventing such problems.

45. Although most children in Norway reported that they had a good quality of life, there had been an increase in self-reported mental health problems among young persons, especially students, in recent decades. That trend had been particularly pronounced during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Evidence of an increase in mental health problems among children had also been reported by primary and specialist healthcare service providers. In dealing with such problems, the Government's goal was to ensure that all persons had access to evidence-based, low-threshold mental health services. In the municipalities, service providers ensured that people could easily obtain access to assistance without referrals or long waiting times. However, access to such services varied from one part of the country to another. The Government had increased the funding allocated to the municipalities to enable more of them to develop low-threshold services in line with local needs. Under the Health and Care Services Act, asylum-seekers enjoyed the same rights to services as the rest of the population.

46. Children's rights to health and care services were established in a range of laws, including the Patient and User Rights Act, the Specialist Health Service Act, the Health and Care Services Act and the Health Personnel Act. The municipal healthcare sector and regional health authorities had a legal obligation to provide health and care services. Patients had a statutory right to health and care services, and children had specific rights, including the right to medical check-ups.

47. **A representative of Norway** said that combating violence against children had been a high priority for years. In that regard, the Government's primary goal was to prevent children from being subjected to violence and sexual abuse in all settings. A number of action plans setting out specific measures had been implemented to achieve that goal, and a plan to combat violence against children and domestic violence had been adopted in 2024. The Government promoted grant programmes for municipalities to enable them to support working parents and organize home visits for first-time parents. It also funded the development of digital initiatives to support parents.

48. The main goal of the investigation conducted by the Board of Health Supervision into the public agencies' handling of cases of homicide, violence, abuse and neglect involving children was to identify shortcomings in the system, contribute to learning, strengthen preventive measures and improve collaboration across the various services. The Board would publish reports setting out recommendations for the authorities.

49. Young people in Norway were among the world's biggest users of social media and digital technology, prompting concern that they might be missing out on other activities that were important for a healthy upbringing. The Government took account of the Committee's general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment and was considering establishing a minimum age limit for users of social media. The Norwegian Media Authority was responsible for the Norwegian Safer Internet Centre, which served to raise children's and other young people's awareness of online risks.

50. A number of measures were being taken to protect children in schools. The Government intended to work more closely with social media and online gaming companies to ensure that children were protected from abuse and sexual harassment online. It was also mindful of the steps being taken by the European Union to develop legislation that would require online service providers to detect and prevent sexual abuse of children.

51. **A representative of Norway** said that the proposal for a new Children Act had been submitted to Parliament in April 2025. The proposed Act contained an introductory chapter that made reference to the four general principles set out in the Convention and contained provisions relating to children's right to be protected from all forms of violence and sexual abuse. Under the proposed Act, children of any age could refuse to allow parents to share videos and photographs of them, either online or by another means, and children would not have contact with a parent if such contact exposed them to a risk of being subjected to or witnessing violence or abuse.

52. To safeguard children's right to family life and reduce the risk of conflicts between separated parents, such parents would generally have shared daily responsibility for decisions concerning their children. However, parents would not be required to agree about every aspect of their children's lives and would retain the authority to make independent decisions, unless the matter was of such significance that it required the agreement of both parents. For instance, the proposed Act would require both parents to agree if one of them wished to relocate to another part of the country.

53. When the proposed Act was made law, the age at which children could join an association would be lowered from 15 to 12, and children of any age would have the right to refuse to join an association. Children involved in mediation would be offered a separate meeting with the mediator without having to obtain the consent of their parents.

54. A hearing had been organized to allow children to participate in the development of the proposed Act. The Government had also received information from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health on the implications for children and other young people of visits and residential arrangements following parental separation. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs had sent the Government a report outlining children's views on

subjects relevant to the new Act, which was likely to become law by January 2027. A number of associations representing children had submitted their views, too.

55. The Directorate operated a website that provided young persons with information on children's rights, obligations and opportunities. The website featured a service that allowed young persons to ask questions and receive responses from professionals working in various fields. Visitors to the site asked around 100,000 questions a year.

56. Families had access to a free family counselling service that helped them to deal with difficult situations and prevent family disputes. The Directorate offered a large number of online resources for parents, including articles, videos and other resources that focused on aspects of parenting. In 2025, Nkr 53 million had been allocated to a government support programme under which the municipalities could apply for funding for parental support. A total of Nkr 20 million had been allocated to support parents working to prevent crime in selected urban municipalities with poor living conditions.

57. **A representative of Norway** said that responsibility for children in foster care was shared by the Child Welfare Service, parents and foster parents. As that arrangement sometimes made it difficult for foster parents to provide proper daily care for children, the Government had proposed legal amendments that would enable them to make more day-to-day decisions on behalf of children. It had also proposed amendments to the Child Day-Care Act, the Education Act and the Patient and User Rights Act to give foster parents the direct authority to make decisions on behalf of children without requiring special authorization from the Child Welfare Service. Foster parents had the right to contest decisions to move a child.

58. The Child Welfare Act regulated the measures taken for children and parents following the issuance of a care order. The Service was required to monitor the development of children placed in care and provide guidance to their parents. Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect was an intensive treatment programme that provided support to families affected by violence and other forms of ill-treatment. Unless the best interests of the child dictated otherwise, the Service must help parents to regain responsibility for the care of their children.

59. As had been noted at the previous meeting, the Service, in making decisions concerning children, was required to document their views and how it had considered them. In that connection, it was required to specify the factual information and professional assessments used as the basis for its decisions. It was also required to indicate how much weight had been given to those views and whether the best interests of the children had been assessed.

60. **A representative of Norway** said that, under the Child Welfare Act, the use of force against children in alternative care must be documented and children in institutions must have access to complaints mechanisms. The Act provided that institutions must work to prevent coercion and other violations of children's personal integrity. If force or coercion was used, institutions must review the incident, together with the child, as soon as possible and fill out a standardized coercion protocol form. The form should set out what happened, what could have been done differently and why less intrusive measures would not have been effective. The child's voice must be heard throughout the process.

61. Around 20 per cent of children in child welfare institutions had exhibited serious behavioural problems, including the commission of serious offences or persistent substance abuse. The number of children placed in institutions for that reason, which had ranged from 150 to 170 a year, had remained relatively stable in recent years. The Government, which was committed to improving the care provided to that vulnerable group of children, had produced a new white paper that would provide for a new, more flexible approach to the management of child welfare institutions. In line with that approach, which was currently being piloted throughout Norway, measures would be taken to ensure that children received the care they needed on first being placed in an institution and would not be required to move because their needs changed or were considered too complex. Thorough interdisciplinary assessments would be conducted prior to every placement.

62. **A representative of Norway** said that improving living conditions for marginalized families was a high priority for the Government. Although the percentage of children growing up in low-income families in Norway was lower than in other European countries, it had increased, largely as a result of immigration, from 6.7 per cent in 2005 to 9.9 per cent in 2023. The Government had implemented a number of measures to reduce the cost of living for families with children in recent years. Since 2019, child benefit had been doubled to around Nkr 2,000 per child a month, and in August 2024 the maximum monthly fee for kindergarten had been reduced from Nkr 3,300 to Nkr 2,000. Children in their first, second and third years of school were entitled to 12 hours of free out-of-school care a week. The housing allowance had been increased in 2024 and 2025 to support persons struggling to meet their housing costs. The Government had also increased the size of starter loans offered by the municipalities to help low-income families to buy their own home.

63. Most municipalities had at least one youth club, and many organizations established youth clubs on a voluntary basis. Although the municipalities were responsible for funding such clubs, the Government had strengthened the programmes through which grants were awarded for the establishment and operation of youth clubs and other meeting places. According to reports, the funding provided through such programmes had contributed to the establishment or ongoing operation of around 250 meeting places in 2023.

64. The Government implemented integration policies to make it easier for immigrants to participate in the labour market and gain economic independence. The policies targeted both newly arrived refugees and immigrants who had lived in Norway for years. The Government was strengthening labour market programmes, placing a particular focus on developing young people's skills and providing training in workplaces. Under the Integration Act, immigrants could gain access to training. Measures were being taken to increase the employment rate among immigrant women who needed to acquire basic skills.

65. **A representative of Norway** said that the Government had taken a number of steps to improve the school environment. Efforts were being made, for example, to reduce the use of mobile phones in schools, as studies showed that such a reduction would decrease levels of bullying and improve academic results. Schools and kindergartens were obliged to take action if a staff member suspected that a child might be experiencing bullying. If the obligation was not met, the child could file a complaint with the office of the county governor. The Directorate for Education and Training provided online training materials and guidance on the use of artificial intelligence for teaching, learning and assessment.

66. **A representative of Norway** said that appeals against decisions issued by the Directorate of Immigration, including decisions relating to expulsion, asylum, family reunification and age assessment, could be submitted to the Immigration Appeals Board. It was not the case that the Board never granted hearings to children. However, when the Board determined that it had obtained sufficient information from interviews conducted with a child as part of the asylum application process, it could issue a decision without a hearing. If further information was required, hearings could be granted to a child.

67. Child migrants were detained only as part of the procedure for carrying out an immediately pending return, subject to the requirements of necessity and proportionality. Appeals against decisions to detain children could be submitted to a regional court. Minors above 16 years of age who did not have grounds to remain in Norway could be granted a time-limited residence permit that was valid until they reached the age of 18 if the authorities deemed that they would lack proper care if returned to their home country. Such permits were intended to reduce the number of asylum-seekers who embarked on the dangerous journey to Norway without fulfilling the criteria for international protection.

68. **A representative of Norway** said that minors were not imprisoned unless a number of stringent conditions had been met. Juvenile correctional facilities had been established to ensure that Norway met its international obligations to keep children separate from adults in prison and that children in such facilities were rehabilitated. The facilities had very high staff-to-prisoner ratios and took a multidisciplinary approach. Rather than being sent to prison, offenders who were between 15 and 18 years of age when they committed an offence could be liable for special penalties introduced for young persons in 2014. Tailored measures were taken to provide ongoing support to young offenders.

69. The National Mediation Service organized restorative meetings with offenders and conducted other restorative procedures. A number of legal amendments had been made to reduce the time that elapsed between the commission of an offence and the authorities' response. In several jurisdictions, efforts had been made to improve cooperation between the police, prosecution services, defence lawyers, the courts, the correctional service and the mediation offices.

70. **A representative of Norway** said that the Government had no plans to withdraw from the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction or to reduce the proportion of its gross national product allocated to overseas development assistance, a significant portion of which was earmarked for climate adaptation measures.

71. **A representative of Norway** said that the Government was of the view that United Nations organizations such as the human rights treaty bodies should receive the appropriate level of funding.

72. **A representative of Norway** said that gender-affirming treatment was not provided to children and other young persons solely on the basis of a diagnosis of differences in sex development. Such treatment was made available only when a diagnosis of gender dysphoria had been made, assessments had been conducted for a number of years and the patient had given his or her consent. The small number of newborns and young children with severe genital birth defects received life-saving emergency treatment. In such rare cases, children were closely monitored by a highly specialized service in Oslo or Bergen. Treatment was administered solely to maintain patients' physical health. It had been several decades since surgery had been performed on intersex children on the basis of so-called psychosocial recommendations.

73. The births that took place in hospital settings, including of children of refugees, were registered by the healthcare authorities. Mothers were responsible for registering the births of children born at home without the assistance of a doctor or midwife.

74. **Mr. Gudbrandsson** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that the Committee was very grateful for the comprehensive and detailed information that the delegation had shared with it.

75. **A representative of Norway** thanked the Committee for the constructive and enlightening dialogue.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.