



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Norway\*

#### I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the seventh periodic report of Norway<sup>1</sup> at its 2878th and 2879th meetings,<sup>2</sup> held on 12 and 13 May 2025, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2906th meeting, held on 30 May 2025.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the seventh periodic report of the State Party, under the simplified reporting procedure,<sup>3</sup> which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State Party. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the high-level and multisectoral delegation of the State Party.

#### II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State Party

3. The Committee welcomes the State Party's long-standing commitment in taking various legislative, institutional and policy measures to implement the Convention. In particular, the Committee welcomes the entry into force of the new Child Welfare Act and the new Education Act and the adoption of legislation to prohibit child marriage.

#### III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

4. The Committee reminds the State Party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee would like to draw the State Party's attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, in respect of which urgent measures must be taken: abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation (para. 19); children deprived of a family environment (para. 24); children with disabilities (para. 27); aims and coverage of education (para. 34); asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children (para. 38); and administration of child justice (para. 42).

5. **The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure the realization of children's rights in accordance with the Convention, and the Optional Protocol thereto on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol thereto on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, throughout the process**

\* Adopted by the Committee at its ninety-ninth session (12–30 May 2025).

<sup>1</sup> [CRC/C/NOR/7](#) and [CRC/C/NOR/7/Corr.1](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [CRC/C/SR.2878](#) and [CRC/C/SR.2879](#).

<sup>3</sup> See [CRC/C/NOR/QPR/7](#).



of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It urges the State Party to ensure the meaningful participation of children in the design and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals as far as they concern children.

## **A. General measures of implementation (arts. 1, 4, 42 and 44 (6))**

### **Legislation**

6. The Committee welcomes the new policy framework aimed at ensuring an assessment of best interests in the process of lawmaking and guaranteeing children's involvement in the process, and the reforms included in the new children's act, which will be enacted later in 2025. However, the Committee deeply regrets that Parliament decided to vote against the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure and urges the State Party to consider the matter as soon as possible, with the support of the Committee. The Committee recommends that measures be taken to ensure that children's rights are explicitly incorporated into all legislation, including the Public Administration Act, the Social Services Act, the Integration Act and the appropriate health-related laws designed to ensure the well-being of the population.

### **Comprehensive policy, strategy and coordination**

7. The Committee regrets that the State Party has not formulated a clear and comprehensive national plan of action for implementing the Convention at different levels, and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Adopt a comprehensive national plan of action that encompasses national, regional and central governments and the different sectors of services and ensure that the concluding observations of the Committee are thoroughly debated in Parliament;

(b) Design the national plan of action in collaboration, *inter alia*, with local and regional authorities, professionals from different sectors, civil society organizations – in particular children's organizations – the Ombudsperson for Children and the Norwegian Human Rights Institution, with the aim of ensuring a comprehensive, multisectoral and child rights-based approach;

(c) Strengthen multi-agency and integrated service delivery in line with legal reforms undertaken in 2022, by addressing obstacles such as inadequate resources, structural barriers and unclear responsibilities.

### **Allocation of resources**

8. Recalling its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen its budgeting process to include clear allocations to children, specific indicators and a tracking system to monitor and evaluate the adequacy, efficacy and equitability of the distribution of resources dedicated to the implementation of the Convention;

(b) Allocate sufficient budgetary resources for the implementation of children's rights, on the basis of a comprehensive assessment of the needs of children, in particular those in disadvantaged situations;

(c) Establish a mechanism to follow up on municipalities facing considerable challenges, eliminate regional disparities in service provision and ensure that all municipalities meet all their statutory requirements;

(d) Systematically involve and consult children in the processes of local and national budgeting, including ensuring the participation of children in vulnerable situations.

### Data collection

9. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2003) on general measures of implementation of the Convention and the previous recommendations of the Committee and other treaty bodies, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

- (a) Expeditiously improve its data-collection system and ensure that disaggregated data collected on children's rights cover all areas of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto, particularly with regard to ethnicity or Indigenous origin, and systematize data on the fulfilment of children's rights;
- (b) Take measures to ensure sufficient analysis of the situation of children exposed to intersecting forms of discrimination, including with regard to the rights of Sami children in the care of child welfare services;
- (c) Design and introduce data-protection safeguards to prevent the abuse of official statistics.

### Access to justice and remedy

10. The Committee takes note of the State Party's decision to strengthen children's opportunities to make complaints and appeal decisions in matters concerning them and to improve information to children about their right to appeal. In the light of the fact that the Ombudsperson for Children and the Norwegian Human Rights Institution are not mandated to receive individual complaints and that Parliament has instructed the Government to strengthen the national complaints mechanism, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

- (a) Ensure that all children have access to: (i) child-friendly and independent complaints mechanisms in all areas of law, and in schools, foster-care systems, alternative care settings and places of detention for reporting all forms of violence, abuse, discrimination and other violations of their rights; (ii) strengthened legal capacity, also by recognizing the right to independent representation and available resources for legal aid initiatives, including in education, health and care services; and (iii) age-appropriate information on access to counselling and remedies, including compensation and rehabilitation;
- (b) Raise awareness among children of their right to file a complaint under existing mechanisms;
- (c) Ensure systematic and mandatory training for all relevant professionals working with children on child-friendly procedures and remedies, children's rights and the Convention.

### Dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising

11. Recalling the Committee's recommendation to increase awareness of children's rights in policymaking bodies and municipal administrations,<sup>4</sup> the Committee is concerned about the lack of awareness and training among policymakers and professionals, in particular local policymaking bodies and municipal administration. The Committee recommends that the State Party take measures:

- (a) To ensure systematic awareness-raising and training for all municipal policymakers and local and regional administrations on the legal status of the Convention and the core tools for its implementation;
- (b) To strengthen the county governors' role in and resources for the dissemination of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations and the monitoring and supervision of training for local policymakers and administration by allocating sufficient human and financial resources;
- (c) To strengthen the responsibility of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs to raise awareness of and provide training on implementation of the

<sup>4</sup> [CRC/C/NOR/CO/5-6](#), para. 10 (c).

Convention and the way in which it can be used to strengthen children's participation in different sectors and levels of administration.

#### Children's rights and the business sector

12. While welcoming the Transparency Act, the Committee is concerned that due diligence duties on environmental issues are excluded from the definition of human rights topics covered by it. Recalling its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Committee recommends that the State Party expand the Transparency Act to include the future environmental impact.

### B. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

#### Non-discrimination

13. Welcoming the action plan on gender and sexual diversity (2023–2026), the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen measures, both online and offline, including awareness-raising campaigns, to combat and prevent expressions of racism, hate speech and discrimination against Sami children and children belonging to minority groups, including Roma and Romani/Tater children, and against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children, and encourage the reporting of hate crimes against children, punish perpetrators with commensurate sanctions and provide adequate compensation to victims;

(b) Accelerate the implementation of the action plan to combat discrimination against Sami people;

(c) Improve awareness about racism and discrimination among children with minority backgrounds;

(d) Continue to address discrimination faced, in particular, by asylum-seeking and migrant children, children with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children.

#### Best interests of the child

14. Welcoming the fact that the principle of the best interests of the child is enshrined in the State Party's Constitution and that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in the adoption of all policies, legislation and by-laws, but concerned that in different situations they are not given adequate weight, and recalling its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Develop national criteria and guidelines for determining the best interests of the child to be followed consistently by all authorities that make decisions affecting children;

(b) Strengthen measures to ensure that the right of children to have their best interests taken as a primary consideration is appropriately integrated into and consistently applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions and in all policies, programmes and international cooperation relevant to and having an impact on children, including in decisions concerning the placement of children in foster care, exposure of children to unsafe contact with their biological parents, the child justice system, asylum-seeking and refugee children, children on the move, immigration and family reunification.

### **Respect for the views of the child**

15. Welcoming that the child's right to be heard has been incorporated into several laws in recent years, and recalling its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

- (a) Develop strategies, action plans and common national guidelines on how and when the right to be heard must be guaranteed for all children and ensure that children's views and opinions are given due consideration in decisions concerning child welfare, asylum, expulsion and family reunification and in times of crisis;
- (b) Ensure the right of children in disadvantaged situations to be heard, including children with disabilities and children of a younger age;
- (c) Promote the meaningful participation of children within the family, within the community, at school and in the realm of local and national policymaking and decision-making affecting children;
- (d) Strengthen children's and youth councils and ensure that their outcomes and those of other types of participative bodies systematically inform public decision-making;
- (e) Obtain guidance and collect and disseminate data on participation;
- (f) Guarantee that children are able to interact with services without parental consent, and that they are able to receive information and express their views before information about them is shared, unless their best interests are affected.

## **C. Civil and political rights (arts. 7, 8 and 13–17)**

### **Nationality**

16. Concerned that stateless children born in the State Party are not automatically granted Norwegian nationality, and recalling its previous recommendations, the Committee urges the State Party:

- (a) To adopt a statutory legal definition of statelessness in line with international standards, and establish safeguards to facilitate the acquisition of nationality for children who would otherwise be stateless and a statelessness determination procedure;
- (b) To review and amend the Nationality Act with a view to ensuring automatic acquisition of Norwegian nationality for stateless children born in the State Party.

### **Children in the digital environment and the right to privacy and access to appropriate information**

17. Noting recent regulations on restriction of the use of mobile phones in primary and junior schools, and recalling its general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

- (a) Develop regulations and a national safeguarding policy to protect the rights, privacy and safety of children in the digital environment and to protect them from the harmful effects of excessive screen use, harmful content, online risks and targeted or age-inappropriate harmful advertising, including in the context of artificial intelligence;
- (b) Strengthen measures to protect the right to privacy of children in the digital environment, and the remedies available for children whose right to privacy has been violated.

**D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 35, 37 (a) and 39 of the Convention, and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography)**

**Abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation**

18. While welcoming the entry into force of the new Child Welfare Act in 2023, the Escalation Plan against Violence and Abuse of Children and Violence in Close Relations (2024–2028) and the national strategy for coordinated efforts against online abuse of children, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The increased risk of children becoming victims of online sexual exploitation and abuse and the increased number of incidents of sexual extortion online and grooming and of physical violence against children on social media;

(b) The higher risk of becoming victims of sexual exploitation faced by unaccompanied migrant children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and children belonging to minorities and Sami Indigenous groups compared with other children;

(c) The major differences between municipalities in how they work on preventing and following up on violence and sexual abuse against children;

(d) The sharp increase in sexual violence, including rape of and between children, despite various national action plans, escalation plans and measures.

19. **Recalling its general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Ensure the implementation of the proposals made in the government report entitled “Safe childhood, secure future” by allocating sufficient financial and human resources;**

(b) **Strengthen the child’s position in child welfare cases by ensuring that the child is heard, including by appointing a children’s representative, providing guidance on the assessment of the child’s best interests and strengthening competence requirements among the workforce;**

(c) **Ensure the implementation of the recommendations in the evaluation report on *Statens barnehus* (State children’s houses), in particular by strengthening the medical component, and strengthen collaboration with local child protection and follow-up recovery services;**

(d) **Ensure a systematic response to bullying in all its forms and provide adequate human, technical and financial resources for its implementation;**

(e) **Strengthen prevention efforts and protection, support and redress for children who are particularly vulnerable and exposed to violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, including unaccompanied children, children with disabilities, children who break with gender and sexuality norms and Roma and Sami children;**

(f) **Establish a statutory duty for municipalities to have action plans to combat violence against children and violence in close relationships;**

(g) **Take further measures, including campaigns with the involvement of children, to enhance awareness of child sexual abuse and exploitation and respond to all its manifestations, in particular online, including by strengthening professional capacity and software tools to detect and investigate such abuse and promoting training for parents and teachers about online risks and the risks associated with sexting, and to combat the stigmatization of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse;**

(h) **Ensure the mandatory reporting of all forms of violence and abuse against children by promoting awareness among parents, professionals and children themselves of the importance of reporting and early intervention in such cases.**

### **Harmful practices**

20. Welcoming the introduction of an absolute minimum age of 18 years for entering into marriage and the adoption of statutory provisions that marriages entered into with children under foreign law shall not, as a general rule, be recognized in the State Party, and recalling joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, the Committee recommends that the State Party ensure support for children who are at risk of or who have been subjected to honour-related criminal offences, forced marriage and female genital mutilation and take active measures to put an end to these harmful practices.

### **Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**

21. Recalling its general comment No. 13 (2011), the Committee is concerned about the recent legislation enacted by Parliament to expand the mandate of teachers and caretakers to apply force in schools and institutions, and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Respond to the rising number of incidents of violent and aggressive behaviour among children in schools and institutions by prioritizing preventive measures, including by designing response plans in partnership with children and by training staff;

(b) Ensure that, in guidelines and in practice, the use of physical force against children in mental healthcare, schools, child welfare institutions and police custody is allowed only as a measure of last resort;

(c) Strengthen measures to ensure that children in police custody and in welfare and mental health institutions are not subjected to ill-treatment, including disproportionate use of force, isolation, restraint and coercion;

(d) Ensure that the use of coercion measures against children, such as surveillance, isolation and confinement, in the educational, child welfare and health sectors is always documented and subjected to review;

(e) Ensure that the use of stop-and-search checks against children is justified, necessary and conducted in a child-sensitive manner.

## **E. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))**

### **Family environment**

22. The Committee welcomes the draft new children's act, which is aimed at ensuring stronger guarantees regarding the assessment of children's best interests and their right to express their views and be actively involved in decisions affecting them, especially in custody and visitation cases. It also welcomes measures to reduce conflict between parents during separation, including the promotion of mediation and co-parenting agreements. The Committee recommends that the State Party ensure legal safeguards for children at risk of harm in situations of parental conflict, including by ensuring thorough individual assessments of the child's best interests based on interdisciplinary expertise.

### **Children deprived of a family environment**

23. While welcoming the proposals on institutional reforms in the government report entitled "With the child all the way: child welfare institutions that have the child's trust", the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The removal and separation of children belonging to minority communities, children from a migrant background and children of African descent from their families;

- (b) The higher percentage of Romani/Tater children, compared with other children, who are placed in foster care with restricted parental visitation;
- (c) The geographical disparities in the level of family service delivery and access to parenting support in bringing up their children;
- (d) The shortage of foster families, the lack of in-service support for foster parents and, in particular, the insufficient effort to give due weight to children's view in decisions that may entail drastic changes in their life, such as being moved away from their foster families;
- (e) The lack of access for children with complex behavioural challenges and substance abuse problems to appropriate services, such as residential care treatment, including emergency placements;
- (f) The insufficient access to appropriate healthcare service for children placed in residential care institutions;
- (g) The insufficient monitoring of residential care institutions, including by regular interviews with the children on their lived experiences.

**24. Recalling the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Ensure that the placement of children in alternative care is a measure of last resort only, that such decisions are based on the needs and best interests of the child, are subject to adequate safeguards, clear criteria and judicial review, and that siblings are not separated unless it is in their best interests;**
- (b) **Ensure the periodic review of the placement of children in foster care and institutions, and monitor the quality of care therein, including by providing accessible channels for reporting, monitoring and remedying maltreatment of children;**
- (c) **Address disparities among regions regarding the placement of children in alternative care and emergency placements, and the disproportionate frequency of placements of migrant children and children belonging to minority groups, including Roma and Romani/Tater children;**
- (d) **Improve the availability and quality of foster care for children, and prevent frequent transfers of children in foster care, in line with the strategy launched in 2022;**
- (e) **Consider the bonds developed between children and foster families, give due weight to children's views in such a life-changing decision as being removed from their foster homes and grant children and foster families procedural rights to participate in legal decisions affecting the child;**
- (f) **Ensure that children with complex behavioural challenges and substance abuse problems have access to appropriate institutional support and services without undue delay, including through emergency placements;**
- (g) **Ensure greater capacity and more flexible services in the health sector to secure the right to necessary healthcare in child welfare institutions;**
- (h) **Prevent, and protect children from, physical or mental violence and sexual abuse in institutions, including by staff, by regularly eliciting children's accounts of their adverse experiences and intervening when appropriate.**

**Adoption**

**25. Welcoming the establishment on an independent committee to investigate historical intercountry adoptions, but concerned about reports of illegal intercountry adoption, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Strengthen measures to prevent intercountry adoption and illegal international adoption;**
- (b) **Provide remedies, reparations and support to victims;**



- (c) **Ensure that all international adoptions are monitored and comply with the Convention.**

## **F. Children with disabilities (art. 23)**

26. While welcoming the Government's strategy (2020–2030) and action plan (2020–2025) for the equality of persons with disabilities and its efforts to integrate children with disabilities into the education system and to provide the necessary healthcare services, the Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The lack of equal services, municipal disparities, inadequate adaptation and universal design of schools and recreational areas, insufficient accessible teaching aids, and prejudice, negative attitudes and inadequate knowledge about children with disabilities;
- (b) The unequal access to treatment, care and other opportunities for children with disabilities from a migrant, refugee or Sami background or belonging to national minorities, including the Roma and Romani/Tater communities;
- (c) The insufficient specialized healthcare for children with disabilities, particularly in remote areas;
- (d) The long waiting periods to obtain the necessary accommodation in schools;
- (e) Schools in rural areas that continue to be insufficiently equipped to meet the needs of children with disabilities;
- (f) Bullying experienced by children with disabilities;
- (g) Institutionalization of children with disabilities;
- (h) The insufficient resources to ensure monitoring of residential care of children with disabilities.

27. **Recalling its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State Party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, to set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:**

- (a) **To develop an action plan containing specific measures to protect children with disabilities, especially children with intellectual disabilities, from systemic discrimination, and to prevent such discrimination, with a particular focus on participation, involvement and knowledge;**
- (b) **To eliminate disparities among municipalities in the provision of health and support services for children with disabilities, and ensure access to such services for all children with disabilities, including children belonging to ethnic minority groups;**
- (c) **To improve healthcare services for children with disabilities, including specialized mental health services for children with psychosocial disabilities and children with disabilities in child welfare institutions;**
- (d) **To provide the necessary resources for children with disabilities in rural areas;**
- (e) **To launch awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating bullying practices against children with disabilities;**
- (f) **To prevent the institutionalization of children with disabilities and ensure their access to family and community-based services, including respite-care services;**
- (g) **To strengthen the monitoring of residential facilities for children with disabilities by ensuring sufficient resources;**
- (h) **To undertake awareness-raising campaigns aimed at government officials, the general public and families to combat the stigmatization of and prejudice against children with disabilities and promote a positive image of children with disabilities as rights holders.**

## **G. Health (arts. 6, 24 and 33)**

### **Health, health services and mental health**

28. Concerned that children without a residence permit are not considered eligible to be registered as patients with general practitioners and are entitled to emergency healthcare only, that there is a high incidence of mental illness among unaccompanied asylum-seeking children living in reception centres and that mental healthcare is not uniformly accessible or developed across regions, and recalling its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Provide de facto access for asylum-seeking children and children without residence permits to primary and mental healthcare services, and ensure that undocumented children have access to a family doctor;

(b) Allocate more and earmarked resources to ensure that children in all municipalities receive the same level of healthcare and specialist health services.

### **Adolescent health**

29. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention and general comment No. 20 (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen measures to prevent substance abuse among adolescents and ensure that adolescents have access to appropriate health and support services, including accessible and youth-friendly treatment for drug and alcohol dependence;

(b) Strengthen comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education in schools.

### **Intersex children**

30. Welcoming the State Party's commitment to protecting intersex children from violence and harmful practices, but concerned about persisting cases of medically unnecessary and irreversible surgery and other treatment on intersex children without their informed consent and about the lack of redress and compensation in such cases, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Explicitly prohibit and adequately sanction the performance of involuntary, deferrable medical or surgical treatment on intersex children, and provide reparations to children who have received unnecessary treatment, including by extending the statute of limitations;

(b) Provide social, medical and psychological services, as well as adequate counselling, peer support and reparations, to the families of intersex children;

(c) Systematically collect data with a view to understanding the extent of these harmful practices so that children at risk can be more easily identified and their abuse prevented.

## **H. Standard of living (arts. 18 (3), 26 and 27 (1)–(3))**

31. Noting with concern the continued increase in income inequality and poverty, particularly among children from a migrant background, and the living conditions of children in municipal housing, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure the application of a child rights-based approach, including the principle of the best interests of the child and the right to participation, in the development and implementation of policies and programmes to combat poverty;

(b) **Make statutory local action plans for combating poverty and conduct an assessment of the impact on child rights of all restrictive measures that affect asylum-seeking families with children;**

(c) **Strengthen the implementation of concrete measures to prevent growing inequality and poverty, ensure that children and their families living in poverty receive, without discrimination, adequate financial support and accessible services free of charge and introduce automatic adjustment of child benefit in relation to inflation and wages.**

## **I. Children's rights and the environment (arts. 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 24 and 26–31)**

32. **Noting with concern the State Party's ongoing and expanding oil and gas exploration, extraction and export and its current climate targets, which are not aligned with the Paris Agreement, and recalling its general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the State Party's international commitments and consider the impact of climate change on children's rights in the State Party's energy policy, including in relation to plans to expand oil and gas extraction;**

(b) **Ensure that national policies related to the granting of new licences by the State Party for the exploration and production of fossil fuels is in full compliance with the rights enshrined in the Convention;**

(c) **Urgently set out a detailed plan for phasing out fossil fuels and revise its climate and energy policies, in order to achieve a reduction in emissions of 55 per cent by 2030, in accordance with its commitments, and net-zero emissions by 2050;**

(d) **Ensure that children are heard and that their vulnerabilities, needs and best interests are taken into account in the development and implementation of national policies and programmes on disaster risk management, climate change and alternative energy, including national policies related to the granting of new licences and decisions concerning new extraction of fossil fuels.**

## **J. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)**

### **Aims and coverage of education**

33. **While welcoming the fact that the best interests of the child have been enshrined in law as a fundamental consideration in all actions and decisions concerning children in kindergartens and that children have the right to participate in all education matters that concern them, the Committee is concerned about:**

(a) **The failure to fully guarantee education in the Sami languages;**

(b) **Persisting regional disparities in the quality of education and the academic performance of students;**

(c) **The increase in bullying, school absenteeism and school-related mental health conditions;**

(d) **Violence against children in schools, including cyberbullying, discrimination and physical force and coercion by staff.**

34. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Ensure equal educational opportunities for all, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups, including children with a migrant background, refugees and asylum-seeking children and children from Indigenous and ethnic minorities;**

(b) Continue to strengthen measures to improve the quality of Sami-language education and take measures to improve the competence of teachers regarding the Sami and national minorities;

(c) Improve learning outcomes and reduce rising school dropout rates, particularly among migrant children, children belonging to minority groups, such as Roma and Sami children, and children in alternative care;

(d) Reduce school absenteeism or “school refusal” among children who have been subjected to bullying and harassment, children with disabilities and children with mental health conditions, and ensure that such children are supported to finish their education;

(e) Strengthen measures to combat violence in schools, including bullying, cyberbullying and online violence, and discrimination on the grounds of race, migration status, sexual orientation or gender identity in the school context.

#### **Inclusive education**

35. Welcoming the programme to boost competencies in “special education” and inclusive practice, but concerned that many children with disabilities remain disproportionately vulnerable to bullying and violence in schools, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen measures to ensure that all children with disabilities benefit from inclusive education in mainstream schools, including through the provision of specialized staff and individual support, reasonable accommodation, teaching materials adapted to the educational needs of children with disabilities, and educational psychological counselling;

(b) Ensure that municipalities have sufficient resources to ensure equal education for all students with disabilities.

#### **Rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts**

36. Recalling its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen measures to guarantee the rights of children with disabilities, children from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and children belonging to ethnic and religious minority groups to engage in age-appropriate and accessible recreational activities, sports, cultural life and the arts.

### **K. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40 of the Convention, and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict)**

#### **Asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children**

37. While welcoming the launch of new programmes aimed at improving conditions in asylum centres and enhancing the quality of health services for children, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The significant disparity in care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children between those aged 15 to 18, who remain under the care of the immigration authorities and receive lower-standard support, and those under the age of 15, who are cared for by the child welfare services, in violation of the principles of non-discrimination and the right of children to special protection;

(b) The failure to adequately or sufficiently hear children in expulsion cases that affect them and the possibility that they may not be heard in appeal cases;

(c) The introduction of many restrictive and costly changes for family reunification;

- (d) The issuance of temporary residence permits for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 16 to 18;
- (e) The age-assessment procedure, which is not in line with the principle of the presumption of minority;
- (f) The detention of children in connection with immigration cases;
- (g) The large number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have disappeared from reception centres and whose whereabouts remain unknown;
- (h) The failure to provide good quality of care in reception centres to asylum-seeking children who arrive accompanied by an adult without parental responsibility.

38. **Recalling its previous recommendations, and recalling joint general comments No. 3 and No. 4 of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families/No. 22 and No. 23 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017) on the human rights of children in the context of international migration, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Adopt legislation to ensure that adequate reception and care arrangements are available for all children, regardless of age, seeking to benefit from international protection;**
- (b) **Allocate more resources to reception centres where unaccompanied children live, and strengthen the inspection system;**
- (c) **Transfer responsibility to the child welfare services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 15 to 18, in order to ensure that they receive an equal standard of care to those under the age of 15;**
- (d) **Ensure a child-friendly asylum process, including safeguarding the right of every child to be heard, guaranteeing that the best interests of the child are specifically assessed and given weight in expulsion cases, and ensuring that children are not returned in breach of the non-refoulement principle;**
- (e) **Eliminate temporary residence permits for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 16 to 18 and provide an interim measure until the asylum process is decided upon;**
- (f) **Ensure that the age-assessment procedure is in line with the principle of the presumption of minority and gives the individual concerned the opportunity to challenge the outcome through a judicial procedure; that the age-assessment procedure is undertaken only in cases of doubt about the age of the individual concerned, is subject to the informed assent of the child, is conducted in a safe and child- and gender-sensitive manner, and is undertaken by an independent, multidisciplinary team with appropriate expertise; and that while the procedure is under way, the individual concerned is treated as a child and remains within the child protection system;**
- (g) **Prohibit the detention of children in connection with immigration cases;**
- (h) **Take immediate administrative measures to prevent and detect the disappearance of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and improve investigation thereof;**
- (i) **Ensure that asylum-seeking children who arrive at reception centres accompanied by an adult without parental responsibility receive the quality of care to which they are entitled under the Convention.**

#### **Children belonging to Indigenous groups**

39. **Welcoming the establishment of the National Sami Competence Centre and the amicable resolution of the dispute between the Sør-Fosen reindeer-herding community and Fosen Vind DA regarding the development of wind farms on the Fosen Peninsula, and recalling its general comment No. 11 (2009) on Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, the Committee urges the State Party:**

- (a) **To prevent the eviction and displacement of Indigenous peoples, including children, and provide redress to those evicted or displaced from their lands;**
- (b) **To put in place measures for early detection and timely intervention in cases of conflict in areas occupied by Indigenous peoples, undertaking peaceful dispute resolution and addressing the root causes of such conflicts;**
- (c) **To consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned, including children, in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them, and provide effective remedies in cases of violation of their rights;**
- (d) **To take effective measures to promote Indigenous languages, including through the provision of bilingual education to Indigenous children in their own Indigenous languages and in the official languages of the State Party.**

#### **Trafficking**

40. **Welcoming the setting up of the National Guidance Unit for Cases of Trafficking in Children, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Take further steps to improve the identification and assistance of child victims, including by continuing to take action to reduce the risk of children going missing from State care;**
- (b) **Harmonize the application of the definition of trafficking across all municipalities;**
- (c) **Ensure the identification, referral and recovery of children who are victims of trafficking, including digital trafficking, and their access to support services, including interpretation services.**

#### **Administration of child justice**

41. While noting that Parliament adopted a number of amendments, enacted in 2024, to introduce less punitive sanctions for juvenile offenders, the Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The fact that children between 15 and 18 years old may be treated as adult offenders;
- (b) The failure to introduce new alternatives to the detention of children;
- (c) The legal possibility of sentencing children to preventive detention and of prolonging such detention indefinitely, the use of police detention cells for pretrial detention and the increase in the number of children placed in police custody;
- (d) The current approach to the use of solitary confinement, restraints and force against children in custody;
- (e) The excessive use of force against children, such as physical restraint and immobilizing techniques to restrict movement;
- (f) The fact that forensic experts responsible for assessing a child's future risk of violence and psychiatric status are not required to have specialist competence in children's development.

42. **Recalling its previous recommendations and its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system,<sup>5</sup> the Committee urges the State Party to bring its child justice system fully into line with the Convention and other relevant international norms. In particular, the Committee urges the State Party:**

- (a) **To further strengthen legislative and administrative measures to ensure specialized justice for all children who are alleged to have infringed, are accused of**

<sup>5</sup> [CRC/C/NOR/CO/5-6](#), para. 35.

infringing or are recognized as having infringed criminal law, including through differentiated criminal proceedings and accessible information on their rights;

(b) To prioritize local prevention and, in the case of children accused of crimes, strengthen diversion measures;

(c) To abolish preventive sentencing orders for crimes committed before the perpetrator has reached the age of 18;

(d) To ensure that children are not held together with adults, such as in Eidsberg Unit of Indre Østfold Prison;

(e) To ensure that isolation is avoided to the greatest extent possible and that decisions regarding the use of solitary confinement and coercive measures against children explicitly state how the child's best interests and the requirement for the child to be heard have been addressed;

(f) To strengthen legal safeguards and ensure that forensic mental health assessments of children facing criminal charges are conducted by experts who have been trained on the particular needs and rights of children.

**Children in armed conflict, including the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict**

43. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Raise the minimum age to 18 for recruitment to the Home Guard Youth;

(b) End the return of children to countries where they are at risk of, or may have already suffered, recruitment or involvement in armed conflict;

(c) Provide appropriate arrangements for physical and psychological recovery and rehabilitation to all children who may have been recruited or used in armed conflicts abroad and ensure their social reintegration.

#### **L. Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure**

44. The Committee recommends that the State Party ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure.

#### **M. Ratification of international human rights instruments**

45. The Committee recommends that the State Party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the following core human rights instruments: the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

#### **N. Cooperation with regional bodies**

46. The Committee recommends that the State Party continue to cooperate with the Council of Europe on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State Party and in other States members of the Council of Europe.

## **IV. Implementation and reporting**

### **A. Follow-up and dissemination**

47. The Committee recommends that the State Party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented and that a child-friendly version is disseminated to, and made widely accessible for, children, including those in the most disadvantaged situations. The Committee also recommends that the seventh periodic report and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

### **B. Next report**

48. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the eighth periodic report of the State Party in due course, in line with the envisaged predictable reporting calendar, and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State Party. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines<sup>6</sup> and should not exceed 21,200 words.<sup>7</sup> In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State Party will be asked to shorten the report. If the State Party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the Committee cannot be guaranteed.

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<sup>6</sup> [CRC/C/58/Rev.3](#).

<sup>7</sup> General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16.