

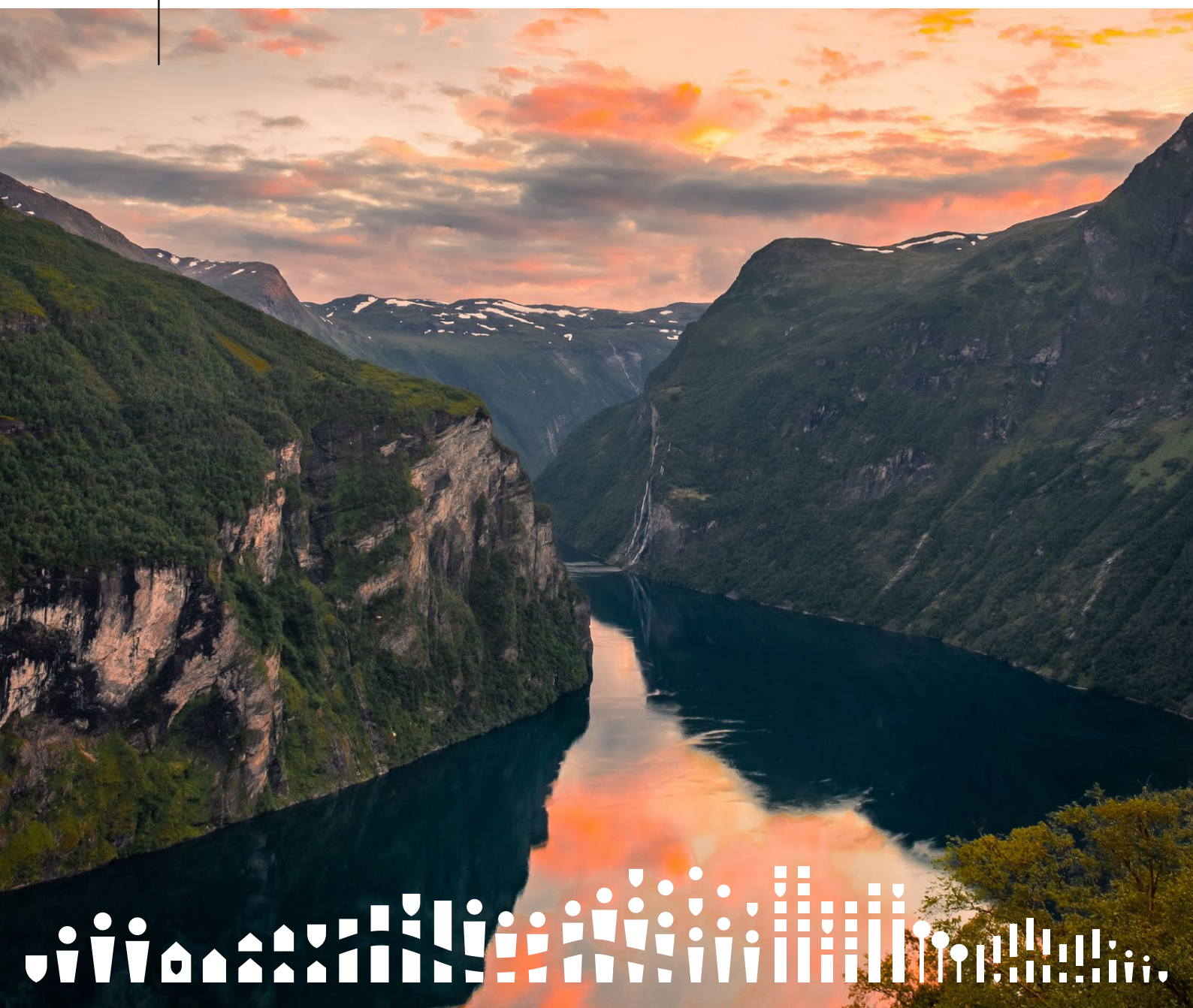


Norwegian Ministry  
of Local Government  
and Regional Development

Report

# The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Sixth Periodic Report





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# Preamble

## Foreword

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The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (the Framework Convention) in 1994. The Framework Convention entered into force in 1998 and was ratified by Norway in 1999. The states parties that have ratified the Framework Convention are required to report to the Council of Europe on their implementation of the Framework Convention every five years.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has the main responsibility for implementing the Framework Convention, and has prepared the sixth periodic report in cooperation with other the ministries concerned.

This sixth report describes the measures that have been implemented over the past five years, with reference to the Council of Europe's recommendations. The report covers matters pertaining to Jews, Kvens /Norwegian Finns, Roma, Romani people/Taters and Forest Finns. These groups are recognised as national minorities in Norway. For the second time, Norway will also report on Sami affairs under the Framework Convention. This change was made in connection with the previous report at the request of the Sami Parliament and does not imply that the rights of the Sami as an indigenous people or follow-up of the state's obligations towards indigenous peoples are limited or given less priority. With regard to the situation of the Sami people, reference is also made to Norway's report on ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, submitted to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2023.

In line with the Council of Europe's outlines for the states' sixth report on the implementation of the Framework Convention, this report has been divided into two parts:

### **Part I Measures to raise awareness about the sixth monitoring cycle**

### **Part II Measures to improve the implementation of the Framework Convention and implement recommendations from the sixth cycle**

The report is based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The recommendations of the Committee of Ministers have been adopted at the suggestion of the Advisory Committee, and reflect and partly overlap with the Advisory Committee's own recommendations. To avoid repetition and duplication, the Advisory Committee's recommendations have therefore not been included where they correspond with recommendations from the Committee of Ministers. This applies mainly to the Advisory Committee's key findings and to certain recommendations under the various articles of the Framework Convention. Part II of the report, which reviews the Council of Europe's recommendations article by article, indicates which recommendations have been made by the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee, respectively.

Norway's sixth periodic report on the implementation of the Framework Convention is available in Norwegian and English and can be found on the Norwegian Government's website.

Other documents pertaining to all of Norway's periodical reports on the Framework Convention are available on the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development's website: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/urfolk-og-minoriteter/nasjonale-minoriteter/midtspalte/rapporter-og-rammekonvensjonen/id458136/>

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## Consultations with the Sami Parliament and representatives of Sami interests

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The consultation provisions in the Sami Act are an important tool for facilitating good democratic processes between the Norwegian Government and the Sami people. International law requires the Norwegian authorities to consult with representatives of Sami rights holders and interests in matters that may directly affect them. The Government must ensure appropriate procedures for consultations, regardless of which level of government holds decision-making authority in the matter.

In 2005, procedures were agreed for consultations between central government authorities and the Sami Parliament. The procedures were established by royal decree. In June 2021, the Norwegian Parliament adopted legal provisions on consultations with Sami interests in a new Chapter 4 of the Sami Act, which replaces the procedures from 2005. The rules entered into force on 1 July 2021.

Enshrining the consultation scheme in law made the regulations more accessible to the authorities and the Sami parties. It was clarified that municipalities and county authorities are also required to consult with Sami rights holders and interests. However, the Sami Parliament does not have the right to be consulted in cases where the Sami Parliament has a right of objection under the Planning and Building Act or the energy and water resources legislation. Other Sami parties, such as the reindeer husbandry industry, which do not have the right of objection, will nonetheless have the right to be consulted in such matters.

# Truth and Reconciliation Commission

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On 20 June 2017, the Storting approved the appointment of a commission to investigate the Norwegianisation policy that was practised towards Sami and Kvens/Norwegian Finns. Forest Finns were later also included in the commission's remit. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission submitted its report to the Storting on 1 June 2023. The report was discussed in the Storting on 12 November 2024. The decision by the Storting contains 17 petition resolutions. The first petition resolution concerns the Storting expressing its deepest regret for the abuses the Norwegianisation policy entailed for the Sami, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns. The other 16 petition resolutions have been forwarded to the Government for follow-up. The petition resolutions address areas including strengthening language and culture, as well as establishing a national centre on Norwegianisation and injustice, reviewing and assessing amendments to the Norwegian Names Act to enable Sami and national minorities to more easily reclaim their original names, and ensuring the protection of Kven and Forest Finn cultural heritage on an equal footing with Sami cultural heritage. The follow-up of the report also includes other national minorities where relevant. The Government is also required to submit annual reports to the Storting on its follow-up of the Storting decision and present a white paper on the follow-up in each parliamentary term. The first such white paper will be presented in 2027.

Before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report was discussed in the Storting, the work on the report was followed up in various ways by a number of public bodies. This included several events aimed at raising awareness of the report and the affected groups.



# PART I

## Measures to raise awareness about the fifth monitoring cycle

### PART I

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Measures taken to raise awareness of the results of the fifth monitoring cycle and of the Framework Convention.

1. On which website(s) have the fifth cycle opinion and the related Committee of Ministers Resolution been published and in which language(s), including minority languages? Please provide relevant links.

The fifth report and the pertaining Committee of Ministers Resolution have been published in both Norwegian and English on the Norwegian Government's website (*Reports on the Framework Convention – regjeringen.no*).

2. Follow-up activities organised at national, regional and local level, including activities organised jointly with the Council of Europe, such as debates, seminars, evaluations, impact assessments, studies, etc. and their outcomes.

At national level, policy, measures and funding from the national budget that apply to national minorities are discussed in the Government's budget proposal. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development coordinates the sectoral ministries' policies and measures relating to national minorities. The individual ministries are responsible for implementing the Framework Convention within their respective sectors.

Many of the measures described in this report are implemented at regional and local level. Reference is made to the description of the individual measures.

In November 2022, a follow-up meeting was organised in collaboration with the Council of Europe's Division for National Minorities and Minority Languages. The meeting was attended by around 40 participants of whom about 20 were representatives from the Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Romani people/Taters and Forest Finns. The Roma minority, the Jewish minority and the Sami Parliament (the Sami Parliament) were invited to attend. Participants from the Council of Europe included Elise Cornu, Head of the Division of



National Minorities and Minority Language and Executive Secretary to the two treaty bodies, Vesna Crnić-Grotić, member of the expert committee from Croatia, Petter Wille, member of the Advisory Committee from Norway and Pia Lane, professor and member of the expert committee from Norway. Participants from Norway included Nancy Porsanger Anti, then State Secretary from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Director General Bjørn Olav Megard of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development's Department of Indigenous and National Minority Affairs, and delegations from other relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Culture and Equality. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the immediate recommendations from the 2020 cycle of both the Minority Language Charter and the Framework Convention. See Norway's report<sup>1</sup> and the Council of Europe's report<sup>2</sup> from the meeting.

A cooperation committee was established in early 2024 for public authorities whose work encompasses national minorities. The committee was established by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) and its purpose is to exchange information about and coordinate measures and initiatives aimed at national minorities.

### **Dialogue meeting with Kven artists**

In 2024, Arts Council Norway and Arts and Culture Norway held an open dialogue meeting in Vadsø with Kven artists and cultural actors to listen and learn about this minority, as well as to provide them with information about the Norwegian Culture Fund's grant schemes. More enquiries and applications have been received from Kven communities as a result of the meeting.

### **Mapping of Sami art and culture**

Arts and Culture Norway has collaborated with the Sami Parliament and the Saami Council to map cultural organisations' work on Sami art and culture in Norway. The published report also highlights the organisations' expertise in Sami art and culture and relevant competence-raising measures.

### **Diversity in the Cultural Schoolbag**

In 2024, Kulturtanken – the Cultural Schoolbag Norway, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training organised a forum on diversity in the Cultural Schoolbag, with a focus on national minorities and the Sami. Representatives from the various minority organisations attended and gave presentations.

### **Children and experiences of racism and discrimination**

A report on children and young people's experiences of racism and discrimination was published in March 2024. The report is based on qualitative interviews with children and young people from national minority and indigenous backgrounds. Jewish, Roma and Sami young people have participated in the interviews.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/2c8f69f165e047809d46708684f71b2a/midtveisrapportering-pa-minoritetssprakpakten-1-januar-2023.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-follow-up-meeting-in-norway-final/1680ab2e5a>

## Research survey on harassment and discrimination against the Sami

In 2024, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health was commissioned to conduct a systematic rapid review of research on harassment and discrimination against the Sami. The purpose of the rapid review was to map and describe existing research that has examined harassment and discrimination against the Sami in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The review will help to highlight the challenges and contribute to the knowledge base, as well as identify research gaps in this field.

## Living conditions of queer Sami people and queer historical practices, language and terminology in Sápmi

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has been commissioned to implement measures from the Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity to increase the knowledge base on queer people with minority backgrounds and queer historical practices, language and terminology in Sápmi. The project will be completed in 2026.

## National conference on racism and discrimination 2024

In March 2024, Bufdir hosted an annual conference in connection with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. One of the two main topics of the conference was young Sami and national minorities' experiences of racism and discrimination. Towards the end of the conference, Kven, Forest Finn, Jewish, Romani people/Tater and Sami youths then took part in a panel discussion about the challenges they experience and measures that could generate more knowledge and expertise about national minorities and indigenous peoples.

3. The participation of minority organisations and other non-governmental organisations in the authorities' implementation and monitoring of the Framework Convention, and their involvement in the preparation of the sixth periodic report

Drafts of both reports will be sent to the organisations for input. The organisations receive operating grants, which can facilitate those writing shadow reports. Both the Framework Convention and the Charter are submitted for public consultation. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development encourages the organisations to prepare shadow reports and subsidises the translation of such reports.

Overview of funding under the grant scheme for national minorities 2021–2025

2021	7 989 000
2022	8 197 000
2023	8 610 000
2024	10 117 000
2025	12 001 000

## **Bufdir's gender equality council**

In 2021, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) established a gender equality council comprising representatives of 14 special interest organisations and gender equality centres. The council will help ensure that Bufdir maintains a holistic perspective in its gender equality work through input and guidance on everything from overall focus areas and strategy work to specific assignments and processes. The Association of National Minorities in Norway has been a member of the council since its establishment in 2021. From 2024, the Kven youth organisation *Kvenungdommen* has also had one member on the council. The situation of national minorities in Norway has been one of the council's main topics in 2024.

4. Other measures to promote awareness of the Framework Convention among persons belonging to national minorities, public officials and the general public.

## **Curricula with learning objectives on national minorities**

The new core curriculum and new curricula that came into force in 2020 emphasise knowledge about indigenous peoples and national minorities. Several curricula contain learning objectives on indigenous peoples and national minorities, and on culture, diversity and identity. Students should gain insight into their rights and international obligations, which include the Minority Language Charter and the Framework Convention. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training organised national curriculum conferences in 2024 as part of the implementation of the new curriculum. A panel discussion was held with representation from young Sami people and the national minorities. The Directorate also works to promote awareness of national minorities and their rights through various support material available on its website [udir.no](https://udir.no).

# PART II

## Measures to improve the implementation of the Framework Convention and implement recommendations from the fifth cycle

### Article 3

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1. Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right freely to choose to be treated or not to be treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.
2. Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and enjoy the freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present Framework Convention individually as well as in community with others.

**Recommendation 46:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to raise awareness of the Framework Convention and the protection it offers among officials at all levels, in particular the municipal level, and among society in general, for example through public awareness campaigns.*

To ensure that the public administration has thorough knowledge about national minorities, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has developed an e-learning programme on the Sami people and national minorities, which was launched in June 2022. The target group is public case officers and the aim is to provide information about who the minorities are, their history (in brief) and what rights they have according to international conventions and Norwegian laws and regulations.

Efforts are being made to raise awareness of national minorities and their rights in schools. A panel discussion with participants from Sami and national minority backgrounds was held at a major conference on the curriculum for school owners, heads and teachers in April 2024. The goal was to raise awareness of these groups and their rights.

**Recommendation 47:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to consider applying the Framework Convention on an article-by-article basis to non-Norwegian Roma.*

When ratifying the Framework Convention, Norway specified which national minorities in Norway would be covered by the provisions of the Convention. A group of Roma who have lived in the Oslo area since the 1960s, and who have ancestral ties to Norway further back in time, were recognised as a national minority. No requirement was set for each individual in the group to have Norwegian citizenship. The key factor was actual residence in Norway over a long period of time. A new entitlement was also introduced whereby individuals recruited into the group from other countries, for example through marriage, could be covered by measures such as language training programmes aimed at the group as a whole. Beyond this, it is not relevant to allow any of the articles of the Framework Convention to apply to non-Norwegian Roma.

**Recommendation 48:** *The Advisory Committee welcomes the cooperation between the Sami Parliament and the Norwegian authorities which has resulted in the Sami falling under the protection of Framework Convention.*

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has included information about Sami issues in the report, following dialogue with the Sami Parliament.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 4

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1. The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right of equality before the law and of equal protection of the law. In this respect, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.
2. The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.

The measures adopted in accordance with paragraph 2 shall not be considered to be an act of discrimination.

**Recommendation 59.** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to take the necessary steps, in cooperation with persons belonging to national minorities and the Sami, to allow the Tribunal to begin collecting disaggregated data on those who submit complaints, especially on ethnicity, so that the authorities might track and react to any rise in complaints against a particular group.*

The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal has not collected data that is disaggregated on the basis of the complainants' ethnicity. This is because the Tribunal cannot see that it has grounds for processing data for this purpose under the data protection regulations. The Tribunal therefore notes that the case concerns ethnicity without carrying out further disaggregation.

The National Police Directorate publishes an annual report that provides an overview of the police's receipt and processing of complaints. The report covers a number of different grounds for complaint. These include discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, in line with Section 6 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, including national origin, descent, skin colour and language.

Since the complaints scheme was established in 2006, the police have received very few complaints related to discrimination. The relatively low number of complaints related to discrimination over the years gives reason to assume that there are hidden statistics. The police actively provide information about the police complaints scheme when they are in various forums and receive enquiries about dissatisfaction with the police from different minority communities. This has also been a topic in dialogue meetings with organisations representing various minorities.

**Recommendation 60:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to raise awareness of anti-discrimination standards and remedies and build trust among persons belonging to national minorities in the anti-discrimination institutions, for instance through strengthening the mandate to impose sanctions in a wider range of fields, providing training for those responsible for applying legislation, including the judiciary, on culture, customs and way of life of the Sami and national minorities, and to continue to provide the resources to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal to fulfil their respective mandates effectively.*

## **Grant scheme to combat racism, discrimination and hate speech**

Since 2021, Bufdir has been tasked with administering a grant scheme that provides support for measures to combat racism, discrimination and hate speech. The objective of the grant scheme is to facilitate local, regional and national initiatives and activities aimed at countering racism, discrimination and hate speech based on ethnic origin, religion and life stance. The grant scheme aims to promote anti-racism, diversity and dialogue, as well as contribute to knowledge and awareness in the majority population about racism, discrimination and hate speech. The target group for the scheme is people who are exposed to or expose others to racism, discrimination and hate speech on the grounds of ethnic origin, religion and life stance. Various projects concerning national minorities and indigenous peoples have received funding since the scheme started up in 2021.

## The work of the police

The National Police Directorate has drawn up a national action plan for the police's work on diversity, dialogue and trust. The plan encompasses diversity, equality and anti-discrimination efforts in a broad sense. The Sami and national minorities, as well as people with an immigrant background, are mentioned specifically. Several of the measures in the action plan apply across different minorities and also include the Sami people and other national minorities.

Annual reports on the action plan and other measures in the field of diversity and gender equality are included in a separate appendix to the police's annual report. The Norwegian Police Directorate maintains a regular dialogue with the Sami Parliament and, in 2023/2024, developed a guide on countering the harassment of Sami people and the website *samehets.no* in collaboration with the Sami Parliament (described in more detail later).

## The courts

The Sami Forum in the courts of Norway was established by the Norwegian National Courts Administration in 2015. Through its work, the forum aims to help strengthen due process for Sami people in the courts and the Finnmark Commission. The Sami Forum has prepared a guide for handling Sami cases in the courts, which was most recently revised on 29 April 2024. The purpose of the guide is to help ensure that the courts employ the same thorough and high quality work in Sami cases as in other cases.

Several seminars on Sami issues have been organised in collaboration with various institutions. These have focused on Sami culture, language, reindeer husbandry and sense of justice, and have been held in different locations such as the Supreme Court, Røros and Tana courthouse. The main themes have included the importance of the Sami courts and the development of Sami law.

## The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal

In recent years, the Government has worked actively to achieve a more diverse tribunal. This entails finding members for the tribunal who provide diverse representation within the rules that apply to its organisation.

When appointing new members in 2024, the Government has endeavoured to appoint members who contribute to achieving a more diverse tribunal. The composition of case officers in the tribunal's secretariat is also important.

Both the tribunal and the tribunal's secretariat are engaged in competence development in the various fields from which the grounds for discrimination arise. Competence development can also include understanding the systems in the areas of society and contexts in which the complainants are present, such as welfare services and working life. Individual case officers in the secretariat will to some extent build up particular expertise in specific subject areas or grounds. Experienced employees in the secretariat will therefore possess considerable expertise in the various grounds for discrimination, although this cannot be equated with personal experience of discrimination in the field.

It can also be mentioned that the secretariat has worked actively to recruit diversity, and to ensure that their job advertisements invite and encourage diversity.



In 2024, the Government commissioned an official legal study to assess, among other things, whether the enforcement system fulfils international requirements for 'Access to justice'. The report concludes that the enforcement system largely functions in line with its intentions and that the international requirements for access to justice have been met.

The Government is closely monitoring the financial situation of the enforcement system. The resources of both the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal and the Ombud have been significantly strengthened over the past six years.

**Recommendation 65:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to open a dialogue with representatives of national minorities and the Sami on the kind of equality data needed on which to devise targeted measures and to identify together with them appropriate methods of collecting such data.*

Due to historical considerations, Norway has a long-standing official policy of not registering data on the basis of ethnicity, and this is therefore not relevant at this time.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 5

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1. The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.
2. Without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation.

**Recommendation 77.** *The Advisory Committee welcomes the funding granted to national minorities, and encourages the authorities to continue their positive approach in this respect, in active consultation with minority organisations and persons belonging to national minorities.*

Since the last report, Arts Council Norway has appointed new specialist committees for the period 2024-2025. The specialist committees are delegated full powers to decide which applications will receive grants from the Norwegian Culture Fund. Who sits on the committees, in terms of their background and expertise, plays a role in which applications receive grants. In its appointments, Arts Council Norway has emphasised that the

committees seen as a whole should have expertise in and/or representation from national minorities.

**Recommendation 82:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to continue working with the Forest Finns to establish a museum of Forest Finn history and culture, and to involve their organisations and representatives in order for them to effectively participate in the management of such a museum.*

The Norwegian Forest Finnish Museum (NSM) is an independent foundation responsible for the management and dissemination of forest Finn cultural heritage. The foundation elects its own board and staff, and maintains a dialogue with Forest Finn communities and organisations. The museum manages collections of buildings, artefacts and photographic material, distributed between several arenas in the eastern part of Innlandet County, including *Finnetunet*, a traditional farmstead consisting of buildings and artefact collections showing building practices, farm environments and living conditions in the 1900s. However, the museum has not had an arena suitable for year-round dissemination activities. It therefore applied to the Ministry of Culture and Equality and, in 2021, was awarded a grant of NOK 106.6 million under the budget item for national cultural buildings for a new building adjacent to its existing arena *Finnetunet* at Svullrya in Grue Municipality. The grant was increased by a further NOK 20 million in 2023. The new building for dissemination activities is under construction and is expected to open in autumn 2025.

Based on applications from NSM, the Ministry of Culture and Equality has increased the annual operating grant to NSM from NOK 3.4 million in 2023 to NOK 9.8 million in 2025.

**Recommendation 89:** *The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to continue working with Kven/Norwegian Finn organisations and representatives to continue to provide project and operating grants, as well as working with Kven/Norwegian Finns outside the traditional area of settlement to ensure their access to funding for the promotion of their culture.*

Arts and Culture Norway administers the grant schemes for the Kven language and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture. Grants can be awarded to voluntary organisations, private individuals, municipalities, institutions and enterprises, both within and outside the traditional settlement area of the Kvens/Norwegian Finns. Arts and Culture Norway has a dialogue with Kven/Norwegian-Finnish organisations.

On its website, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has specified that pupils who require instruction in Kven or Finnish as a second language, cf. Section 3-3 of the Education Act, shall not have to document their background.

## Vadsø Museum – Ruija Kven Museum

Vadsø Museum – Ruija Kven Museum opened in 2022 and is the museum responsible for Kven/Norwegian-Finnish history and culture, while at the same time communicating local history for Vadsø and the surrounding areas. The Kven Language Centre *Kvensk Språksenter Vadsø* is located in the museum.

## Kven Theatre / Kvääniteatteri AS

*Kvääniteatteri* was formally founded in September 2022 and was established in connection with Halti Kven Cultural Centre in Nordreisa, Nord-Troms. The theatre has received funding since 2022, but was granted ongoing operational funding from 2023 under the Ministry of Culture and Equality's budget (NOK 4.2 million in 2025). The theatre has an important function as a communicator of Kven history, culture and identity both nationally and internationally. The theatre states that it will 'develop the Kven language through theatre art' and 'contribute to safeguarding the language, building identity and culture, and highlighting challenges for the Kven in particular and minorities in general'.

**Recommendation 95:** *The Advisory Committee welcomes the high levels of support granted to the Sami for the preservation and development of Sami culture and that the Samediggi is primarily responsible for disbursing the funding. It encourages the authorities to continue to take an active part in finding solutions for the return of Sami cultural artefacts from Norwegian and other European museums.*

## Preservation and development of Sami culture

The Sami Archives in Kautokeino is a department of the National Archives of Norway and has a national responsibility to ensure that private archives documenting Sami culture, history and society are preserved and made available.

In 2024, the Sami Archives launched a preservation plan for private Sami archives. It outlines more than 400 private archives that the Sami Archives believes should be preserved. The plan stipulates that both the Sami Archives and other preservation institutions such as museums must safeguard the Sami archives mentioned in the preservation plan. The Sami Archives has therefore invited other preservation institutions to collaborate in a Sami archive network. The National Archives of Norway is responsible for managing and preserving the archives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It has awarded funding to a number of organisations, museums and public bodies for projects working to collect and preserve data, archives, place names and photographs.

We refer to measures to promote Sami literature through Arts Council Norway's schemes 'The grant scheme for literature projects' and 'the purchasing schemes' in the report on the Minority Language Charter Article 7(a).

## Saemien Sijte in Snåsa

The Ministry of Culture and Equality allocated funding to build a new building for the South Sami museum and cultural centre *Saemien Sijte* in Snåsa. *Saemien Sijte* opened to the public in June 2022 and includes exhibition spaces, areas for conservation, workshops for various duodji and (traditional Sami handicraft), and storage facilities for unique Sami cultural artefacts.

Saemien Sijte is an important initiative for research and dissemination of South Sami culture, history, language, identity and heritage. The new building has made it possible to return the artefacts from the South Sami area through the *Bååstede* project (see more about the project under Recommendation 95, Article 5).

### **The Sami national theatre Beaivváš and the Sami upper secondary schools**

Statsbygg has been commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Ministry of Education and Research to build a new building for the Sami National Theatre *Beaivváš* in Kautokeino. *Beaivváš* is currently co-located with the Sami Upper Secondary School and Reindeer Husbandry School in Kautokeino.

The new theatre and school building, named *Čoarvemátta*, opened to the public and students in August 2024. The school offers both programmes for general studies and vocational programmes, including the Sami subjects of duodji and reindeer husbandry.

*Beaivváš* is an important initiative to strengthen Sami identity, language and culture, and to preserve and develop Sami storytelling and performing arts. It is a touring theatre that strives to use all the Sami languages as stage languages. The co-location is an important measure to strengthen the Sami language and culture, especially among young people in Kautokeino.

There are two Sami upper secondary schools, both of which are owned by the state. It was decided in 2024 that follow-up of the state-owned Sami organisations would be bolstered by establishing a separate Sami department in the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. The Directorate will therefore have greater capacity for ongoing follow-up of the schools. This includes the implementation of curricula and educational work. The department will be established in Tromsø, which will bring the Directorate closer to the Sami expert environments and will also support the Directorate's other work with Sami language and culture.

### **RiddoDuottarMuseat in Karasjok – Plans for a new building**

The Ministry of Culture and Equality has commissioned Statsbygg to plan a new building for the Sami museum *RiddoDuottarMuseat* in Karasjok. The pre-project phase is ongoing. The pre-project comprises exhibition areas for the Sami art collection owned by the Sami Parliament and currently stored in Karasjok, as well as areas for receiving artefacts that will be returned to the North Sami area in the *Bååstede* project.

### **Repatriation from abroad**

Many Sami cultural artefacts, including ceremonial items such as drums, are displayed in museum collections outside Norway, and there is no complete overview of the items. Some of the most important artefacts can be found in German and Danish museum collections, as well as in France, Italy, the USA and elsewhere.

The Sami Parliament and Norwegian authorities are endeavouring to find solutions for the return of Sami cultural artefacts from Norwegian and other European museums. Anders Poulsson's drum was seized in Finnmark in 1692, and was returned from the National Museum in Copenhagen to the *RiddoDuottarMuseat* (RDM) in Karasjok in 2022.

In 2023, a South Sami drum, the Frøyningsfjelltromma from the 17th century, was returned from the Meinigen Museum in Germany to the Saemien Sijte museum in Snåsa.

### **The Dávvirat Duiskkas project and Sami collections in Germany**

The project started in autumn 2021 as a five-year collaborative project with a dedicated allocation in the national budget. *Dávvirat Duiskkas* was initiated, financed and organised by the Ministry of Culture and Equality, the Sami Parliament is the project owner, while the Sami Museums Association, as part of the Norwegian Museums Association, is project manager. The Ministry and the Sami Parliament participate in the steering group, and the embassy in Berlin is an observer together with the Norwegian Museum Association (*Norges Museumsforbund*). The project has close collaboration with Ajtte in Sweden, Siida in Finland and other stakeholders.

The goal of the project is to map Sami cultural heritage in German museums and cultural heritage institutions, link collection history and artefact-specific knowledge, and encourage mutual knowledge and competence development and the dissemination of Sami culture in both a historical and contemporary perspective. The project also aims to improve cooperation between Sami and German museums on relevant joint activities such as duodji workshops, exhibitions, seminars, etc., which can help make the Sami culture and way of life better known in Germany, and help the Sami people become better acquainted with Sami cultural artefacts in German collections.

### **Repatriation within Norway's borders**

Repatriation issues within Norway's borders are generally resolved in dialogue with the Sami Parliament, museums and other relevant institutions as well as the local communities involved.

In 2021, the Lapp Codicil was moved from the National Archives' storage facility in Oslo to the Sami Archive in Kautokeino. The Codicil forms the basis for the legal rights of the Sami people. It contains provisions on citizenship, taxation and the right of Sami reindeer herders to take reindeer across the border.

The Sami Parliament, the Norwegian Folk Museum and the Museum of Cultural History at the University of Oslo signed the Bååstede agreement in 2012. Bååstede means 'back' and the agreement entailed the return of more than 1,600 artefacts from Norwegian museums to museums under the administration of the Sami Parliament. The project has given the Sami people greater control over their cultural heritage and increased awareness and knowledge of Sami artefacts. Two ceremonial drums have been returned to the Arran Museum (Lule Sami) and the Saemien Sijte Museum (South Sami), respectively, through the project. The new building for the South Sami museum Saemien Sijte in Snåsa, which opened to the public in June 2022, has made it possible to return the South Sami artefacts from the Bååstede project.

Good preservation conditions are a prerequisite for moving the artefacts. The Ministry of Culture and Equality has contributed a one-off grant for investment in storage and exhibition facilities at two other recipient museums to enable them to receive artefacts through the Bååstede project: the Centre of Northern Peoples, Kåfjord, North Troms and Várdobáiki, Evenes, Nordland.

**Recommendation 101:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to ensure that decisions relating to lands traditionally used by the Sami are taken with their effective participation, that they have a substantial influence on these decisions, taking into account the diversity of views within the Sami people, and that industrial development on such land does not negatively affect the Sami's possibilities to maintain and develop their culture in those areas. In this regard, the effects of the June 2021 amendment to the Sami Act should be evaluated with the effective participation of the Sami.*

We refer to the discussion of the consultation scheme in part one of the report, pages 4 and 5.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development will revise the Guidelines for municipalities and county authorities on consultations with Sami interests from 1 July 2021. The review includes reviewing experiences with the regulations and guidelines.

The guidelines on planning and licensing of onshore wind farms (*Planlegging og konsesjonsbehandling av vindkraftanlegg på land*) was published on 27 August 2024. They clarify how participation is to be carried out in licensing processes and how consultations in cases under the Planning and Building Act and the Energy Act can be coordinated.

**Recommendation 113:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to take active steps on their part to pursue the historic reconciliation process with regard to the Romani/Tater minority, with the effective participation of all parties concerned, and in particular to rebuild trust in the collective reparation scheme. It also urges the authorities to take steps to build confidence between the Romani/Tater organisations, persons belonging to the minority and the authorities, with a view to distributing funds from the collective reparation with the full and effective participation of the Romani/Tater minority.*

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development invites the national minorities' organisations to annual bilateral meetings, in addition to the contact forum. Arts and Culture Norway administers the collective redress for the Romani people/Tater and has established a specialist group consisting of four representatives from the Romani people/Tater organisations, in addition to three members appointed on free grounds. The expert group provides advice and input for the management and development of the scheme. Arts and Culture Norway is in the process, in cooperation with the expert group, of considering stronger participation. The process will be finalised in 2025. The museums in Sør-Trøndelag have received funding in 2025 for a project to relocate an intact Tater settlement, including the main building, stables and furnishings, to Sverresborg Open Air Museum in Trondheim. It will be restored and used for dissemination activities concerning the transition of the Taters from a nomadic way of life to permanent settlements.

**Recommendation 120:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to improve awareness among persons belonging to the Romani/Tater and Roma minorities of the new Child Welfare Act, for example by holding outreach events and establishing Romani/Tater and Roma mediators in the child welfare services personnel. The authorities should continue to raise awareness among child welfare personnel of the rights of national minorities in this respect, to ensure that national minorities' family ties and cultural identities are preserved in the child welfare service's work.*

The new Child Welfare Act entered into force on 1 January 2023. The Act has an overarching provision (Section 1-8) stating that the child welfare service must take children's ethnic background into account in all its work. This means that due consideration must be given to the child's ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious background during all phases of a child welfare case. The intention is to contribute to increased awareness in the services, better child welfare assessments and more accurate decisions in the best interests of the child.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 6

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1. The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.
2. The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.

**Recommendation 135:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to periodically review the Action Plan on Antisemitism in cooperation with the Jewish minority, to ensure it continues to respond to current challenges effectively, and in addition, look into further measures to counteract antisemitism.*

The Action Plan against Antisemitism 2021-2023 was evaluated in 2023. In brief terms, the evaluation showed that the measures and efforts to combat antisemitism largely correspond to the challenges we face in Norway when it comes to antisemitism.

The Government has drawn up a new action plan against antisemitism, in dialogue with representatives of the Jewish minority in Norway. The action plan contains 22 measures to counter antisemitism in a number of sectors, and was presented on 11 November 2024. The action plan applies to the period 2025-2030 and includes measures to



increase knowledge about the Jewish way of life and antisemitism, as well as measures to strengthen the Jewish population's own organisations. The authorities intend to follow up the measures in the plan in cooperation with the Jewish minority.

**Recommendation 136:** *The Advisory Committee firmly encourages the authorities to intensify their efforts to tackle intolerance and promote intercultural dialogue. Measures should be primarily targeted at persons belonging to the majority as well as the Sami, national minorities and other groups, including Muslims and migrants and should also seek to raise awareness about the Sami and national minorities.*

## The Cultural Schoolbag

The Cultural Schoolbag is a nationwide programme to ensure that all school pupils in Norway experience professional arts and culture at school.

*Kulturtanken* is the government's administrative body for child and youth culture, and has national responsibility for the Cultural Schoolbag.

It is responsible for promoting Sami and national minority art, culture and language through its programme for all school pupils in Norway. The aim is for children and young people to experience art and culture in their own languages and in their own cultural contexts, and to increase knowledge and understanding of Sami and national minority culture and history.

Sami issues and all the national minorities were topics in DKS productions in 2023. All regions presented content about these groups, but the amount and types of minorities covered varies geographically. Both county authorities and municipalities describe looking for content that is perceived as relevant based on the demographics in their respective areas, and the National Forum for the Cultural Schoolbag has also raised this matter in joint discussions and experience sharing.

*Better information on Ung.no about national minorities and indigenous peoples*

In 2024 and 2025, Bufdir will strengthen its work to combat racism and discrimination on Ung.no, the Government's information channel for young people. In this connection, Bufdir will organise input meetings with representatives of young national minorities and indigenous peoples to ensure that topics such as antigypsyism and antisemitism are included, and that the information is accessible, relevant and quality assured.

## Websites about national minorities at udir.no

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is updating and further developing its support material about national minorities for kindergartens and schools on udir.no. The aim of the material is to help kindergartens and schools to interact with children, pupils and families from the national minorities in an expedient manner, and for kindergartens and schools to teach all children and pupils about the national minorities. The involvement of national minority organisations is emphasised throughout the work. The organisations from the national minorities have been informed that this work will begin and that they will be involved.

## **The national curriculum, support resources and guides**

The new core curriculum and new curricula that came into force in 2020 contain more and better content about indigenous peoples and national minorities. The core curriculum, which applies across subjects and years, states that all pupils must learn about the Sami people and national minorities. It is also emphasised that the school should 'help each student to maintain and develop their identity in an inclusive and diverse community'. There are a number of learning objectives that are intended to either develop pupils' competence about the Sami and national minorities and/or help to promote tolerance, respect and understanding.

Section 12-3 of the Education Act states that 'the school shall not accept offensive behaviour, such as bullying, violence, discrimination and harassment' and that 'the school shall make continuous efforts to ensure that all pupils have a safe and good school environment'.

Democratic Preparedness against Racism, Antisemitism and Undemocratic Attitudes (Dembra) is a publicly-funded programme that offers guidance, courses and online resources for schools and teacher education programmes. The aim is to strengthen schools' work on democratic preparedness to combat various group-focused enmities, such as prejudice, xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia and extremism. Dembra has pages dedicated to indigenous peoples and national minorities.

## **Sami pathfinders**

Sami pathfinders is a scheme administered by the Sámi University of Applied Sciences on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The pathfinders are students who travel around Norway and give lectures about the Sami, primarily at upper secondary schools. The purpose of the scheme is for Sami youth to pass on knowledge about their culture in direct communication with other young people. The aim is for such contact to contribute to positive attitudes, counteract prejudice and harassment, and increase knowledge about the Sami and Sami culture. The pathfinder scheme also runs the website [samiskeveivisere.no](http://samiskeveivisere.no), which is an information channel with specialised content on Sami language, culture and society.

The growing interest in learning more about the Sami has put the pathfinder programme in great demand. As a result, the scheme was expanded from four to six pathfinders in autumn 2024.

## **Jewish pathfinders**

Inspired by the Sami pathfinder scheme, the Jewish community has received funding from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development since 2015 for a Jewish pathfinder scheme through the 'Information measures against antisemitism' initiative. The initiative involves young Jewish Norwegians visiting schools and engaging in dialogue with pupils about their lives and experiences as young Jews in Norway, the Jewish minority in Norway and topics such as identity, belonging and discrimination.

## **Jewish Museum in Oslo – investment funds**

The Jewish Museum has received funding under the state budget for 2025 to restore the building to its original state and use it for dissemination activities, events and administration.

**Recommendation 148:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to elaborate and adopt an action plan to combat antigypsyism, in close cooperation with the Roma and Romani/Taters, as well as the non-Norwegian Roma where appropriate. The plan should also target anti-nomadism. The authorities should, on this basis, collect data on crimes with an antigypsyist motive and ensure that alleged offences are promptly and effectively investigated, and where appropriate prosecuted and sanctioned. The measures in the action plan should be evaluated periodically in close cooperation with the minorities concerned.*

In November 2023, the Government presented an Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination for the period 2024-2027. The action plan covers all groups and has special measures targeting working life and for young people.

Roma representatives have called for a separate action plan against antigypsyism. The Roma are a small minority in Norway and it has been assessed that the most effective efforts to combat antigypsyism are within the framework of the Government's comprehensive and targeted efforts against racism and discrimination based on ethnicity and religion.

The majority of the Storting's Standing Committee on Local Government and Public Administration has advised the Storting that a separate action plan against antigypsyism should not be drawn up. The majority recognise the challenges faced by Norwegian Roma and Romani people/Tater but believe that efforts to combat antigypsyism should be strengthened within the framework of existing and future action plans against racism and discrimination. The majority justifies this on the grounds that a new action plan may draw resources away from ongoing and vulnerable measures, and emphasises the importance of continuing the work in close dialogue with the affected groups.

### **Romano Kher**

The Roma Culture and Resource Centre (Romano Kher) is also a clear contribution to the fight against stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and antigypsyism/racism towards Roma.

**Recommendation 149:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to redouble their efforts to tackle hate crime and hate speech, especially online, including through collecting disaggregated data on the motives of hate crimes in order to assess any trends on hostility targeting national minorities or other individuals or groups within society.*

### **National Competence Centre on Hate Crime**

The National Competence Centre on Hate Crime was established in 2021. The centre will help to raise competence in the police districts and can provide guidance in specific cases. Such competence comprises various aspects of the police's work, including prevention, intelligence, dialogue and trust-building initiatives, investigation and prosecution. Since its establishment, the centre has conducted training for selected employees in all police districts in Norway.

The National Competence Centre on Hate Crime has national responsibility for handling tips about online hate speech. Special guidelines have also been given to the centre on safeguarding the Sami perspective.

## **Samehets.no**

In April 2024, the Sami Parliament in collaboration with the National Police Directorate, launched the website [samehets.no](https://samehets.no). The collaboration was initiated to follow up measures in the Sami Parliament's action plan against harassment of the Sami people. The website is aimed at Sami people who have experienced harassment and provides guidance on what to do in various situations.

The purpose of the guide is to help raise public awareness and knowledge of harassment against Sami people and to foster understanding among victims or witnesses of such harassment of the different places they can turn to. The overall goal is to help reduce the number of unreported incidents, bring harassment of Sami people out into the open, reduce the burden on those subjected to such harassment and contribute to its prevention.

## **National action plan against harassment and discrimination of the Sami people**

The Government presented the first national action plan against harassment and discrimination of the Sami people in January 2025. The action plan contains 32 measures in all from seven ministries. The measures are centred around three priority areas: Dialogue and a well-functioning democracy; Knowledge and expertise; and Safety and security.

As part of the action plan against harassment and discrimination of the Sami people 2025-2030, a separate guidance service will be tested in Northern Norway. A separate branch of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) will be established in Northern Norway with special expertise in Sami language and issues. The aim of the project is to give Sami people who experience discrimination a place to turn for guidance and assistance, and for the branch to help ensure the development of equal services for Sami people. Competence development and outreach activities will be important activities.

## **Knowledge acquisition on racism and discrimination**

The Government will acquire knowledge about how and to what extent racism and discrimination are expressed and affect experiences and participation in different social arenas.

The knowledge acquisition consists of three sub-projects that will:

- Explore racism and discrimination with a focus on the significance of external characteristics such as skin colour, clothing and religious symbols.
- Map the extent and characteristics of racism and discrimination in the voluntary and cultural sectors in Norway.
- Use artificial intelligence (AI) to map hate speech on social media and explore opportunities and limitations related to how AI can be used to limit threats to democracy online.

As part of the work on the action plan against hate speech and discrimination of the Sami people, a systematic rapid review was conducted to summarise existing research on harassment and discrimination of the Sami in Norway, Sweden and Finland over the past ten years.

**Recommendation 156:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to increase the number and strengthen the mandate of Roma community facilitators in the framework of the new police action plan on diversity, dialogue and trust, and to urgently increase training of law enforcement about national minorities, especially the Roma, and to engage with the minorities concerned to ensure cooperation with them and increase awareness of legal remedies.*

The police action plan for diversity, dialogue and trust stipulates that all police districts and special agencies in the police should have established a dedicated diversity coordinator role, with special responsibility for diversity work. A national network for diversity coordinators has been established to contribute to the exchange of experience across the police organisation.

When it comes to contact with the Roma, this is a special responsibility for Oslo Police District and Eastern Police District, since the majority of those belonging to the national minority live in Oslo and central Eastern Norway. The National Police Directorate is kept specifically informed, and this dialogue is actively pursued in these police districts.

In 2024, concerns were raised about the police establishing an overview of people from the Roma community, which was conducted in connection with specific criminal investigations and only for crime prevention purposes. The Norwegian Data Protection Authority reviewed the case and concluded that their investigations did not reveal any processing of personal data in violation of the Police Databases Act. The Authority considered it clear that the act provides a legal basis for the overview, and it was particularly emphasised that the basis for processing had been criminal offences and specific complex investigations.

It is nonetheless noted that this case has been challenging for the Roma community, regardless of the assessment of legality.

**Recommendation 157:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to work with Roma representatives and organisations to address gender-based violence against Roma women in a non-stigmatising way.*

Through the EEA cooperation, Norway contributes to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the recipient countries, but the cooperation also has ripple effects for efforts in Norway. Norwegian organisations gain, among other things, an arena for exchanging knowledge and experience, as well as opportunities to develop new ideas and inspiration for their work. The framework for cooperation is based on the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence

Against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) and provides a thorough knowledge base for the development and implementation of policy in both the recipient countries and in Norway. During the EEA programme activities in Bulgaria in 2023, a handbook was prepared in cooperation with the Council of Europe, public authorities and NGOs on how to address the rights and needs of women with a Roma background in efforts to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The handbook is part of the project 'Stepping up efforts to prevent and combat violence against Roma women and women from minority groups facing discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion'. It provides important knowledge about how Norway can work in a nonstigmatising manner and offers inspiration to improve Roma women's access to protection against domestic violence. In the further development of measures to safeguard the rights and needs of Roma women, it will be important to ensure the active participation and representation of Roma women.

**Recommendation 162:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to continue working with the Samediggi and Sami to combat gender-based violence against Sami women in a nonstigmatising way.*

The Government has launched the escalation plan 'Safety for all' (*Trygghet for alle*) (2024–2028) to combat violence and abuse against children and domestic violence. The plan, which was considered by the Storting in May 2024, includes a chapter on violence and abuse in Sami communities, prepared in collaboration with the Sami Parliament. The measures in the escalation plan will help to strengthen the prevention, protection of and assistance to victims, as well as the prosecution and treatment of perpetrators of violence. Among other things, this involves ensuring that employees in all relevant services acquire knowledge and expertise in the Sami language, culture and social conditions.

A collaborative forum on violence and abuse in Sami communities has been established, led by the regional resource centre for violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention region north (*Regionalt ressurscenter om vold, traumatisk stress og selvmordsforebygging Nord – RVTS*), with participants from various Sami organisations and public agencies. The purpose of the forum is to help develop efforts to combat violence and abuse in Sami areas and the exchange of experience and expertise between the participants.

The Children's House scheme (*Statens barnehus*) plays a key role in ensuring that children's due process is safeguarded and that help for children who are victims of violence and abuse is well coordinated. To help ensure that Sami children receive services adapted to their own language and culture, the Government has established a special Children's House in Finnmark, which opened on 1 January 2024. It covers Finnmark County and also has a nationwide responsibility for Sami children throughout Norway. The Children's House scheme has premises in Kirkenes and Alta, and the Karasjok centre will open in summer 2025.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security collaborates with the Sami Parliament on research into violence in Sami communities. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) has carried out a project on violence and abuse in Sami communities. The report '*Når taushet brytes: Om vold i nære relasjoner og seksuelle overgrep*

*i samiske samfunn* (Concerning domestic violence and sexual abuse in Sami communities) was launched in January 2025. It includes an overview of existing research and academic literature on violence and abuse in Sami communities. NKVTS has also received funding for a research project on violence and abuse in reindeer herding Sami communities. The project is a collaboration between NKVTS and SANKS (Sami Norwegian National Advisory Unit – Mental Health and Substance Use).

Digital learning resources such as *'Jeg vet'* ('I know') and *'Snakke med barn'* ('Talking to children') are adapted to Sami language and culture to provide children and professionals with knowledge and tools for dealing with violence and abuse.

To provide better shelter services for Sami women, men and children, the Government proposed in spring 2025 to enshrine in law that the special rights of the Sami should be safeguarded in the shelter services. The aim is to improve shelter services for Sami women, men and children.

### **Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development organises an annual contact forum, which is a meeting place for national minority organisations and the central government authorities. The forum discusses issues of common interest to the minorities. At the contact forum in autumn 2024, the type of protection afforded to national minorities by the Framework Convention was raised as a special topic.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development holds annual meetings with the organisations individually, in addition to meetings on specific cases where necessary. Annual meetings with young representatives from the national minorities were introduced from 2023.

In November 2023, the Government presented a new Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination for the period 2024-2027. The action plan encompasses all groups and is particularly targeted at the path into, and ladder upwards, in working life. It targets racism and discrimination experienced by young people and emphasises the efforts of municipalities and local communities. The action plan will contribute to the Government's goal of building a society with stronger community ties and equal opportunities for all.

## **Article 7**

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*The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.*

Freedom of expression is protected by Article 100 of the Constitution of Norway, while freedom of assembly is enshrined in Article 101. These are general rights, regardless of whether you belong to a national minority. Although freedom of thought and conscience is not specifically mentioned in the Constitution of Norway, when introducing Chapter E on human rights, the Storting assumed that this freedom was well safeguarded through freedom of religion in Article 16. Furthermore, both the European Convention on Human



Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which protect all the rights mentioned in Article 7, are incorporated into the Human Rights Act. The provisions of these conventions take precedence in the event of conflict with other legislation.

## Article 8

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*The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to manifest his or her religion or belief and to establish religious institutions, organisations and associations.*

Article 16 of the Constitution of Norway protects the right to religious freedom in Norway.

## Article 9

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1. The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.
2. Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.
3. The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.
4. In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.

**Recommendation 173:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to cooperate with the Norwegian Public Broadcaster (NRK), whilst respecting the freedom of the media and NRK's editorial independence and with the effective participation of these minorities, to increase high-quality broadcasting about and for national minorities, especially Roma and Romani/Tatars, including potentially in the Romanes and Romani languages.*

The Norwegian Public Broadcaster NRK's language remit has been strengthened from 2023 with a requirement to offer content in national minority languages.

In order to keep abreast of the language situation for Roma, NRK held a meeting and dialogue with the Language Council and the Roma Culture and Resource Centre (Romano Kher) in 2023. According to NRK, the dialogue has led to the purchase of content for 2024.

NRK has also stated that the Romani people/Tater language council has started standardisation and collection work for Romani, and that the council will appoint an advisor on minority languages.

The Norwegian Media Authority concluded in 2023 that NRK fulfilled the requirement to have programmes for national and linguistic minorities. The Norwegian Media Authority is of the opinion that NRK's topics and programmes about and for national minorities include many examples that focus on highlighting and promoting their culture and languages, which also helps to fulfil the objective of ensuring that national minorities participate actively and can express and further develop their language and culture.

**Recommendation 180:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to increase funding of Kven language media to ensure its sustainability and presence in the digital media. Long term investment in journalism courses for Kven speakers needs to be considered by the authorities to ensure the viability of Kven as a language of communication in the media.*

*Ruijan Kaiku* is a free and independent media house that primarily produces stories for and about the national minority Kven and Kven issues, but also current affairs for Finns in Norway and other related minorities in Norway and the Northern Cap. The media house receives operating grants from the budgets of the Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The level of the grant is assessed in connection with annual work on the national budget.

**Recommendation 181:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to support Romanes language productions, and to seek to expand this offer in cooperation with the Roma.*

The short film *Lavina* (2022) is the first Norwegian-produced film in Romanes. The film was a collaborative project between film director Farzad Samsami, who works at Romano Kher, and the Romano Kher centre. The film was shown on NRK on 8 April 2024 and can be accessed through NRK TV's website.

The Romano Kher centre has a studio that has worked on various projects and programmes. In 2023, they received project funding from Arts Council Norway to involve and provide paid work to more young Roma in the studio. Projects have included *Romane chabenate*, a series that provides insight into the Roma food culture, the news programme *Nevimos Norvego* where Roma presenters provide relevant news about the Roma minority in Norway in Romanes, and also the podcast 'A Roma Perspective' with young Roma voices.

#### **Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 10

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1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.
2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.
3. The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary with the free assistance of an interpreter.

**Recommendation 190:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to look into the specific language dynamics and preferences within the Kven/Norwegian Finn minority, including in the education system and other areas of public life, and use this as a basis for future language policy.*

### The Language Act

The new Language Act, which came into force on 1 January 2022, states that as expressions of language and culture, Kven, Romani and Romanes are equal in value to Norwegian.

In autumn 2022, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, in collaboration with the ministries concerned, carried out a review of the requirements of Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the Charter) in relation to the Lule Sami, South Sami and Kven languages. The work shows that national regulations, practices and measures do not currently fulfil enough of the provisions of Part III of the Charter when it comes to the Kven language.

### The education system

In the new Education Act that came into force in 1 August 2024, the right to instruction in Kven and Finnish as a second language has been extended so as to apply to pupils with a Kven/Norwegian-Finnish background at primary and lower secondary schools in Troms and Finnmark, regardless of how many pupils at the school want such instruction, cf. Section 3-3 of the Act. Grants for training in the subject are the same for both the Kven and Finnish languages. Grants for learning materials are awarded for the development of learning materials in both languages. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training also awards application-based project funding to kindergarten owners and kindergartens in Troms and Finnmark to promote work on the Kven language in kindergartens.

UiT – The Arctic University of Norway offers half-year and full-year programmes in Kven and bachelor's and master's degree programmes in Kven and Finnish. Along with formal teacher education or the one-year programme in educational theory and practice, 30 or 60 credits qualify for teaching in schools.

The Directorate provides project funding to kindergarten and school owners who have employees taking further education in Kven. Grants are application-based and are intended to cover expenses in connection with temporary staffing.

**Recommendation 191:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue working with Kven/Norwegian Finn organisations to continue to revitalise the Kven language, for example by developing a new action plan with targeted measures for revitalisation, including further language nests and language centres, promoting the use of Kven in local administrations and further innovative methods to bring the language into everyday use.*

The targeted plan for the Kven language (2017–2021) was evaluated in 2022/2023. The review showed that a lot has happened in the field since the targeted plan was presented. It was announced in March 2025 that a new action plan for the Kven language will be drawn up.

One of the measures in the targeted plan was to support the establishment of Kven language centres. In addition to supporting the four active language centres, Arts and Culture Norway awarded a grant in 2023 for the establishment of a new language centre in Alta, and in 2024, awarded pre-project funding to Kåfjord Municipality for the establishment of a Kven language centre there.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 11

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1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronym) and first names in the minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in their legal system.
2. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to display in his or her minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public.
3. In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other

topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications.

**Recommendation 197:** *The Advisory Committee invites the authorities to maintain an open and constructive dialogue with the Forest Finns and Kven/Norwegian Finns about the possibilities for amending the Personal Names Act, and allowing the minorities concerned to reclaim their ancestral names.*

Section 4 of the Norwegian Names Act authorises the use of protected surnames to which a person has a 'special connection' through family or otherwise, regardless of the restrictions on protected surnames set out in Section 3. The rules in the Names Act have been devised with the aim of making it easier for people with links to national minorities to be able to take names previously borne by their family.

The Act is designed such that it is now possible for people belonging to a national minority to take a name that has fallen into disuse due to the earlier Norwegianisation policy. In the Ministry's view, it is difficult to see that the challenges pointed out with regard to documentation should be remedied by statutory amendment. The tax office, and the county governor as an appellate body, can exercise generous discretionary judgement, especially where the reason for a name falling into disuse may be Norwegianisation policy.

**Recommendation 203:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to promote close consultations among local authorities with representatives of national minorities and the Sami regarding the display of multilingual topographical indications as a demonstration of the diverse character of the region, traditionally and at present.*

The Ministry of Culture and Equality administers the Place Name Act, which protects Sami and Kven place names in line with international agreements and conventions.

Section 11 of the Place Name Act stipulates that Sami and Kven place names used by people who permanently reside there or who have a business connection to the place must, in general, be used by the public authorities, for example on maps, signs and in registers, together with Norwegian names where relevant.

The municipality decides what the place name should be and is responsible for submitting proposals for names for consultation among the residents. Organisations or individuals associated with the name can appeal the decision.

In 2019, *Gielem Nastedh* in Snåsa Municipality was awarded funding for the collection and digitisation of South Sami place names through the grant scheme 'Project and development funds for archival purposes'.

#### **Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 12

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1. The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.
2. In this context the Parties shall inter alia provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to textbooks, and facilitate contacts among students and teachers of different communities.
3. The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.

**Recommendation 215:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to take active steps to increase societal awareness about national minorities and the Sami, for instance by expanding the 'Pathfinders' scheme to other national minorities, while working with national minorities and the Sami, as well as educators and schools, to ensure the existing curricula, plans and resources in place are implemented in practice and to ensure the effectiveness of these initiatives in fostering knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of national minorities and the Sami.*

With support from Arts and Culture Norway, Romano Kher has set up a training programme for young Roma people to become guides for the centre's photo exhibition 'Le rom ando Norvego – Roma in Norway'. The exhibition will be presented to school classes and public employees, among others.

New curricula for primary and secondary education were introduced from the 2020 school year. Pupils learn about national minorities and Sami/indigenous peoples in several subjects. The framework plan for the content and tasks of kindergartens states that children should learn about children from other cultural backgrounds. All kindergartens should highlight Sami culture and help enable children to develop respect for and a sense of community related to Sami cultural diversity.

In collaboration with the Sami Parliament, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has posted information and guidance on its website [udir.no](https://udir.no) about Sami content in various subjects. The Directorate has also posted support material on Sami in kindergartens, Sami in the before and after school programme (SFO) and Sami in schools. In 2024, the Directorate published a competence package targeted at managers and staff on multilingualism in kindergartens, with a particular focus on supporting multilingual children in using their mother tongue and, at the same time, actively promoting and developing the children's Norwegian or Sami language skills.

The Directorate works in several ways to promote awareness and knowledge of the national minorities and the Sami people.

Teacher education programmes must ensure that teachers have the necessary expertise. Among other things, Section 1 of the Regulations Relating to the Framework Plan for Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education for Years 1–7 states that

*(4) The primary and lower secondary teacher education programme should [...] qualify them to help reinforce the role of schools as institutions of formative development and learning in a democratic and diverse society.*

*(5) The primary and lower secondary teacher education programme for Years 1–7 should qualify the students to provide instruction in Sami affairs, including knowledge of the status of indigenous peoples globally, and safeguard Sami pupils' right to education in accordance with the Education Act and the current national curriculum for primary and secondary education and training.*

The text is identical in the corresponding provisions in the Regulations Relating to the Framework Plan for Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education for Years 5–10.

## Other education and research measures

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has updated information about 'Our national minorities' in line with new curricula in primary and secondary education. The Directorate updates support and guidance for owners, managers and staff in kindergartens and schools about the national minorities on its website [udir.no](http://udir.no). This is to help ensure that employees have the necessary knowledge to interact with children, pupils and families from the national minorities in a positive way and to include minority perspectives in kindergartens and school education.

The Directorate administers grants and project support for various initiatives for national minorities in primary and secondary education. This includes grants for the development of teaching materials in the subject of Kven or Finnish as a second language and project support for work to promote Kven in kindergartens in Troms and Finnmark counties. There have been a record number of applications for both programmes. The Directorate also provides funding to projects aimed at strengthening the inclusion of Roma children and pupils in kindergartens and schools in certain municipalities.

**Recommendation 225:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to take further steps to ensure equal access to education for Roma children, for example through developing a bilingual kindergarten for Roma, using Romanes and Norwegian as languages of instruction, to enable Roma children to attend preschool and learn Norwegian before starting primary education while still receiving education in their first language.*

The School guidance service has a preschool programme at Romano Kher. The programme is for children with a Roma background who are going to start school the following autumn. The programme focuses on both Romanes and Norwegian.



The Directorate also provides project support to individual municipalities for their efforts to provide good primary and lower secondary education for pupils with a Roma background and the development of language materials in Romanes.

**Recommendation 226:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to guarantee compulsory education for all children and further reduce school absenteeism and early dropouts among Roma children, including through increasing the number of Roma school guides and ensuring they are employed on secure, long-term contracts; to this end, the Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to conduct an in-depth, gender-sensitive study on both internal and external causes of early dropouts and absenteeism, closely involving members of the Roma communities, as well as all competent authorities at state and municipal levels, with a view to adjusting educational policies and measures.*

The School guidance service for Roma pupils has been strengthened in recent years. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training provides project support to individual municipalities for their efforts to provide good primary and lower secondary education for pupils with a Roma background. The project funding will be used both to provide a tailored programme for the pupils and to work systematically to reduce school absenteeism and dropouts among pupils with a Roma background. Participating municipalities report that school participation is steadily increasing.

**Recommendation 227:** *The Advisory Committee firmly encourages the authorities to continue to make efforts to accommodate those children and parents or guardians with itinerant lifestyles in the education system in a way that balances the right to education and the right to choose itinerant ways of life.*

The Ministry of Education and Research and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training are working on these issues.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 13

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1. Within the framework of their education systems, the Parties shall recognise that persons belonging to a national minority have the right to set up and to manage their own private educational and training establishments.
2. The exercise of this right shall not entail any financial obligation for the Parties.

Section 22-1 of the Education Act stipulates that private primary and lower secondary schools must be approved by the Ministry of Education and Research in order to operate

a school under this Act, and that such approval shall be granted to schools that fulfil the requirements of the Act. Persons belonging to national minorities have the same right as others to apply for such approval.

The independent Schools Act allows for private schools (primary and lower and upper secondary schools) to be approved upon application on one of the grounds (purposes) set out in Section 2-1 of the Act. Persons belonging to national minorities have the same access as others to apply for approval of private schools, or to apply for admission as a pupil to a private school. The Independent Schools Act stipulates that private schools must be open to anyone who meets the admission requirements.

Similarly, private higher education institutions can be established on application for accreditation under the Universities and University Colleges Act. The Sámi University of Applied Sciences, which is unique in that it has (North) Sami as its language in all functions – administration, education and research – is nonetheless state-owned and receives framework funding under the Ministry of Education and Research's budget.

## Article 14

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1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language.
2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language.
3. Paragraph 2 of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official language or the teaching in this language.

**Recommendation 241:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to provide long-term and structural funding to Kven language kindergartens, to provide incentives – including financial – to continue to learn Kven or Finnish beyond grade 8, and to ensure that there are trained teachers able to provide high quality teaching at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels. The production of teaching materials should also be expanded to ensure there is sufficient, high-quality provision at primary and secondary levels of education.*

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has provided project support to kindergartens in Troms and Finnmark to promote Kven for many years. There was a record number of applications in 2023 and 2024 and the Directorate awarded significantly more funding than in previous years. In 2024, 18 centres received support.

With the new Education Act, which entered into force on 1 August 2024, the right to instruction in Kven or Finnish as a second language for primary and lower secondary school pupils with a Kven/Norwegian-Finnish background in Troms and Finnmark was established as an individual right. The Directorate has developed support pages for schools on its website [udir.no](https://udir.no) about the right, and developed information and motivational films about the right and the subject to ensure that students and families know about and want to make use of the right. One of the motivational films that has been developed is aimed specifically at young people with a view to motivating them to continue with the subject. The County Governor of Troms and Finnmark receives funding from the Directorate for enhancing the competence of teachers in the subject Kven or Finnish as a second language and for other measures to promote the subject. The Directorate also provides project funding to kindergarten and school owners who have employees taking an introductory course in Kven. There has been growing interest in this scheme in recent years. Some of this funding enables schools to go on cross-border school visits to Finland and northern Sweden, and some to schools teaching Meänkieli.

Section 10-8 of the new Education Act stipulates a general duty to provide information for municipalities and county authorities. For municipalities, this will also apply to the right to instruction in Kven or Finnish as a second language. Upper secondary schools that provide education in Kven or Finnish can receive grants for education. For primary and lower secondary schools, the grant only applies to municipalities in Troms and Finnmark.

In 2018, the Ministry of Education and Research granted funding to the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) to develop a teacher education programme in Kven. The programme has been offered at the Alta campus, both as an elective in the primary and lower secondary teacher education programmes and as a further education programme for teachers.

UiT offers half-year and full-year programmes in Kven and bachelor's and master's degree programmes in Kven and Finnish, which, supplemented with the one-year programme in educational theory and practice, qualify for teaching in schools. The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund has a scheme for the cancellation of student debt for those who complete at least 60 ECTS credits in Kven as part of, or in addition to, a teacher education programme.

In 2022, the Directorate took over responsibility for the grant scheme for the development of teaching materials for Kven or Finnish as a second language. This has led to a large increase in applications. In 2023, the Directorate allocated almost NOK 9 million to five projects, and almost NOK 4 million was allocated in 2024. The projects extend over several years.

**Recommendation 242:** *The authorities should also take steps to assess the level of demand for Kven or Finnish language education in areas outside the traditional area of settlement where Kven/Norwegian Finns may live in substantial numbers, and on this basis decide on appropriate measures relating to Kven or Finnish language education in such areas.*

No action has been taken in this area as yet.

**Recommendation 243:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to work with the Roma community on the standardisation of Romanes and the development of teaching resources, and to promote Romani and Romanes taking into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the Romani/Taters and the Roma.*

In 2024, the *School guidance* service worked on an initiative to standardise Romanes (grammar book), as well as developing teaching resources (*Bildetema* – a multilingual picture dictionary in Romanes). The service has also received a grant to make an information film about the Roma people. The service collaborates with Romano Kher on these initiatives. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training have provided support.

### ABC book for Romanes

In 2022, an ABC book in Romanes was published, *ABC Romani shib*, written by Professor Emeritus Rolf Theil, in close collaboration with the Roma Culture and Resource Centre (Romano Kher) and with support from the Language Council and Arts Council Norway. This is the first ABC book in the Romanes language to be published in Norway. The book can become an important learning resource for Roma children and will help to promote Romanes as a written language in Norway.

### Grammar book for Romani

The Language Council of Norway and Arts Council Norway wanted to use some of the Arts and Culture Norway's funds for the collective redress of the Romani people/Tater for a larger project that can strengthen the Romani language. In 2022, this was concretised into a plan to develop a descriptive grammar (a grammar book) for Romani. The grammar can also be used as a basis for developing teaching materials in Romani, and will therefore be an important element in the revitalisation of the language. The Language Council is the secretariat for the project's advisory group, in which the National Association of the Tater People and the National Association for the Romani People are represented and can provide input on draft manuscripts.

**Recommendation 253:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to bring the Kindergarten Act into line with the Education Act in terms of the availability of instruction through the medium of North Sami language.*

At the suggestion of and in consultation with the Sami Parliament, the Government will set up an expert group to assess how to improve the kindergarten programme for Sami children.

**Recommendation 254:** *The authorities should also expand possibilities for teacher training in Sami language at all levels, including through financial incentives to students where appropriate.*

The Government presented a white paper in 2023 on Sami language, culture and society (*Samisk språk, kultur og samfunnsliv. Kompetanse og rekruttering i barnehage,*

*grunnopplæring og høyere utdanning*), which among other things addresses the need to extend the recruitment basis to Sami teacher training. In the national budget for 2024, the Sámi University of Applied Sciences and UiT – The Arctic University of Norway received funding to establish Sami as a subject in teacher education programmes for students across the country. Sámi University of Applied Sciences also received funding to strengthen initial training programmes in the North Sami language, while Nord University received funding to strengthen the academic environments in Lule Sami and South Sami.

The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund has a scheme for the cancellation of student debt for those who complete at least 60 ECTS credits in Sami as part of, or in addition to, a teacher education programme.

The new Universities and University Colleges Act, which came into force on 1 August 2024, includes a provision on Norwegian and Sami academic language, whereas the previous act only included a provision on Norwegian academic language. As such, the act puts Sami language on an equal footing with Norwegian.

Regulatory provisions were submitted for consultation in autumn 2024. The Government has proposed stipulating that students at the institutions with special responsibility for Sami research and higher education, i.e. Nord University, Sámi University of Applied Sciences and UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, have a corresponding right to use Sami in their bachelor's and master's theses.

In the spring of 2023, the first two Lule Sami primary and lower secondary school teachers graduated from Nord University, followed in the spring of 2024 by the first three South Sami primary and lower secondary school teachers, all of whom had completed the primary and lower secondary teacher education programme for years 1–7 at master's degree level. In autumn 2024, the very first master's programme in South Sami language and literature studies started up at Nord University in Levanger in collaboration with UiT – the Arctic University of Norway.

**Recommendation 255:** *The Advisory Committee urges the authorities to further cooperate with the Samediggi to ensure a full range of textbooks are available in North Sami for primary and secondary education, which are adapted culturally and to the new curriculum in place since 2020.*

The Sami Parliament is responsible for developing Sami teaching materials in North Sami, South Sami and Lule Sami for primary and secondary education from year 1 to year 13, when it comes to both ordinary and specially adapted teaching materials.

The Ministry of Education and Research makes annual allocations to the Sami Parliament for educational purposes, including the development and production of teaching materials in Sami languages.

#### **Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 15

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*The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.*

**Recommendation 267:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to pursue work with national minority organisations to improve the Contact Forum, and to continue to hold bilateral meetings and to maintain an open and ongoing dialogue with each national minority group, respecting the diversity, including diversity of views, of each group in preparation for the annual Contact Forum. Adequate opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to have their voice heard and have a substantial influence on all decisions and issues affecting them should be ensured in this regard.*

Prior to the Contact Forum, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development asks the organisations for input on topics and arrangements, and the matter is also raised at the annual bilateral meetings with the organisations that wish to schedule such a meeting. The Ministry has also established an annual event for young national minorities at which the Ministry also receives input for the Contact Forum. The input is largely incorporated into the programme for the Forum. More time has been set aside for input from the organisations during the event. Evaluations from the Contact Forum in recent years give the impression that participants are largely satisfied with the topics and arrangements.

**Recommendation 272:** *The Advisory Committee welcomes the Ministry's investigation of discrimination on the housing market, and expects it to carry this out in close cooperation with persons belonging to national minorities. The social housing strategy appears to lack Roma as a specific focus group, which is regretful; the Advisory Committee nonetheless expects the authorities to bear in mind the needs of Roma as it progresses the strategy. In the absence of data, the Advisory Committee would also encourage the authorities to include camping sites within the scope of its investigation, and to build on this initiative and investigate cases of discrimination on the labour market.*

In spring 2024, the Government presented a white paper on housing policy – Report No. 13 to the Storting (2023–2024) *Bustadmeldinga – Ein heilskapleg bustadpolitikk for heile landet* (Housing policy report – Comprehensive housing policy throughout the country). During the work on the white paper, the Ministry mapped various aspects of discrimination in the housing market and found that almost 20 per cent have experienced discrimination in the rental market. National minority groups are not specifically mapped.

The housing laws (the Housing Cooperatives Act (*Borettslagsloven*), the Cooperative Housing Act (*Boligbyggelagsloven*), the Ownership Section Act (*Eierseksjonsloven*) and the Tenancy Act (*Husleieloven*)) all contain a general prohibition on discrimination on the

grounds of ethnicity or religion. The non-discrimination provision applies to everyone and does not single out individual groups in the population.

The new Social Housing Act (*Boligsosialloven*) came into force on 1 July 2023. The purpose of the Act is to prevent challenges with social housing and ensure that people who are disadvantaged in the housing market receive assistance to obtain and retain suitable housing. According to the law, all groups have the same right to an assessment of their housing situation. Housing subsidies, start-up loans, grants for housing measures and municipal rental housing are social housing policy instruments designed to help people or households who are disadvantaged in the housing market to obtain and retain suitable housing. National minority groups can seek assistance if they are unable to obtain or retain suitable housing themselves, on a par with others.

The Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination contains a dedicated measure targeting discrimination in the rental market.

**Recommendation 273:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to commission or conduct studies on the effective participation of the Sami and national minorities in economic life, in particular concerning Roma on the labour market, and gather disaggregated data, especially taking into account gender and age, cooperating closely with persons belonging to national minorities to assess the level of unemployment, and tackle any disparities on this basis.*

Norway has long had an official policy that information about citizens' ethnic background(s) shall not be registered.

Statistics Norway (SSB) is generally very cautious about producing statistics based on personal data that may be perceived as sensitive or that may contribute to stigmatising vulnerable groups in society. Both the Norwegian population statistics and the periodic population and housing censuses are based on register information. The most important source is the National Population Registry. People from all ethnic groups who fulfil these conditions are registered in the National Population Registry, but it is not possible to identify them as members of individual groups, beyond country of birth.

To the extent that any form of quantification of ethnic background or other special categories of personal data is produced, this is either based on self-reporting, including in the Sami Parliament's electoral roll or registration of Sami language users in the National Population Registry, or based on geography and language use.

There are no plans to collect statistics or conduct studies on labour market participation according to whether individuals belong to national minorities.



**Recommendation 280:** *The Advisory Committee strongly encourages the authorities to look into any potential inequalities in health outcomes for national minorities and Sami in Norway, both in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, and in general, in close cooperation with Sami and persons belonging to national minorities. The authorities should also look into any potential impact of not sufficiently disseminating materials in minority languages during the pandemic, and on the ability of healthcare institutions to provide healthcare in minority languages.*

The Centre for Sami Health Research is currently conducting its third data collection in the SAMINOR population survey (SAMINOR 3), and the public health surveys conducted by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) are also important sources of knowledge. In 2024, FHI published a chapter on health in the Sami population as part of its Public Health Report. In the report, FHI also discusses the challenges of registering and obtaining better health data relating to the Sami population and analysing it.

As regards the COVID-19 pandemic, the Coronavirus Commission's second report points out the consequences of the pandemic for the Sami people. The Sami population appears to seek out health services in line with the rest of the population, but as a group, they are less satisfied with the healthcare system.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 16

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*The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present Framework Convention.*

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 17

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1. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful contacts across frontiers with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage.
2. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organisations, both at the national and international levels.

**Recommendation 290:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to step up their support for Kven/Norwegian Finnish international cooperation.*

Funding in the national budget for the Kven language and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture has been significantly increased from 2020 to 2025. According to the Regulations on grant schemes for the Kven language and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture, grants can be awarded to cross-border projects on the Kven language and culture.

**Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

Not relevant.

## Article 18

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1. The Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to the national minorities concerned.
2. Where relevant, the Parties shall take measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation.

**Recommendation 290:** *The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to step up their support for Kven/Norwegian Finnish international cooperation.*

See answer above.

**Recommendation 295:** *The Advisory Committee calls on the Norwegian authorities to take an active role in facilitating a regional dialogue on the conclusion of the Nordic Sami Convention, with a view to improving cross-border cooperation between Norway, Finland and Sweden on Sami issues and ensuring the protection of the rights of the Sami.*

The negotiated convention text from 2017 states that the convention will be submitted to the three Sami parliaments, and the preamble presupposes that ratification is conditional on support from the Sami parliaments in the three states. Only when the Sami parliaments have given their approval can the three states sign and ratify the convention.

Norway, Sweden and Finland and the Presidents of the Sami Parliaments most recently discussed the status of the Nordic Sami Convention at the meeting between the ministers responsible for Sami affairs and the presidents of the Sami parliaments in Oslo on 22 October 2024. At this meeting, all parties made it clear that they will return to the matter when it becomes relevant. None of the parties had anything new to report on the matter. It is natural to wait until work on the Finnish Sami parliament act has been finalised.

## **Other relevant developments made to implement the article:**

### **Sami Artists' Council (SDR)**

There is extensive cross-border art and culture cooperation in Sápmi, in addition to cooperation in global indigenous networks. The Sami artist organisations have members from all over Sápmi and are united under the umbrella organisation Sami Artists' Council (SDR). All members of the Sami artists' organisations can apply for and receive project and grant funding through the Sami Artists' Council's schemes, which are funded by the Sami Parliament. The same applies to the Artists' and Authors' Remuneration Fund.

### **Digital access to Sámi heritage archives project**

Sami documentary heritage is managed by archives and collections in several countries. The Sami Archives and archival institutions and universities in Sweden and Finland carried out the collaborative project 'Digital access to Sámi heritage archives' in the period 2018-2020. The project mapped key Sami archives in Europe and developed digital solutions that link the archives together. Ethically and legally acceptable solutions were also developed for utilising the archive material digitally. The project forms the basis for the Nuohtti search portal, as described below.

### **Nuohtti – search portal for Sami archival material**

In 2023, Nuohtti was established as a search portal for Sami archival material across institutions and national borders (nuohtti.com). Through the portal, it will be possible to search for documents, sound recordings and photographs found in European preservation institutions related to the Sami people and Sami culture. The portal is a collaborative project between the Sami Archives at the National Archives of Norway, the Sami Archives at the National Archives of Finland and the National Archives of Sweden.

### **Norway's presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2022**

During Norway's presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2022, indigenous culture was one of four prioritised focus areas. The goal was to promote and highlight Sami culture and its importance in Nordic cooperation. Among other things, a conference on Sami intangible cultural heritage was organised in connection with the implementation of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003. The conference was a collaboration between the Sami Parliament in Norway and Arts Council Norway, and other partners from Finland and Sweden.

### **Cultural cooperation in the High North**

The Ministry of Culture and Equality allocates funding for work to develop cross-border cultural cooperation in the High North, as part of the Government's High North efforts. In 2025, funding will be allocated to schemes including the international indigenous festival *Riddu Ridđu*, which in addition to the festival itself in July, works purposefully to promote Sami art and culture on various stages nationally and internationally throughout the year, and the Sámi Artist Network *Dàiddádallu*, which has members from all over Sápmi.

## **The Venice Biennale**

In 2024, the Government helped to put Sami art and culture on the agenda in several international arenas. The Office of Contemporary Art (OCA) was commissioned by the Norwegian Government to present art and artists from Norway at the Venice Biennale. In 2022, the exhibition 'The Sámi Pavilion', featuring three Sami artists, made up the joint Nordic (Sweden, Finland and Norway) pavilion. The exhibition was the official Nordic contribution to the 2022 biennial.

## **Arctic Arts Summit**

In 2022, the major international conference Arctic Arts Summit was organised in Yukon, Canada. The conference is an important meeting place for discussions about the role of culture and cultural policy in the development of the Arctic, where indigenous culture plays a central role. Norway has helped to devise and plan the event. The Ministry of Culture and Equality made funds available to the Sami Parliament, which, through the allocation, could enable broad participation and presence of Sami and northern Norwegian artists and cultural actors.

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