



## Direct Request (CEACR) - adopted 2024, published 113rd ILC session (2025)

*Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) - Norway (Ratification: 1990)*

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**Article 1 of the Convention. Groups covered by the Convention.** The Committee notes that, according to Statistics Norway, the Sami population in Norway as of 2021 was 53,710. It also notes that in its 2023 Report, the Sami Parliament refers to the lack of individual-based statistics on Sami conditions, indicating that the current official statistics do not cover all the areas where the Sami population is located. Moreover, the Sami parliament indicates that statistics on the conditions of Sami pupils at school are very limited, which means that education challenges faced by Sami children are rarely discussed.

The Committee recalls the importance of producing statistical data on the socio-economic conditions of indigenous peoples as an essential tool for effectively guiding and defining policies relating to them. ***It therefore encourages the Government to provide updated statistical information on the number of Sami people in the country disaggregated by gender, age, and geographical location, as well as on their socio-economic situation (for example, employment, education, and access to health services).***

**Article 3. Human Rights. Gender-based violence against Sami women.** The Committee notes that, according to the 2023 Sami Parliament's report, 49 per cent of Sami women report that they have been subjected to violence of a physical, mental, or sexual nature at some point in their lives. Sami women also reported a higher incidence of sexual violence during childhood up to age 18, this is 17 per cent compared with 11 per cent of the women in the general population. The Sami parliament also indicates that the Government has taken specific measures to address domestic violence in Sami communities in consultations with the Sami Parliament, but that more efforts are needed to help women victims of violence among the Sami. In this regard, the Government indicates that since 2018, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has worked with relevant actors to re-establish a permanent crisis centre service for the Sami population to treat victims of domestic violence. ***The Committee requests the Government to inform on the specific measures taken to provide culturally adequate assistance to Sami women victims of domestic violence, indicating the number of Sami women who have benefited from such assistance, as well as on measures to prevent gender-based violence.***

**Article 4. Special measures for the protection of the Sami culture.** The Committee takes due note of the actions taken by the Government for the restitution of Sami cultural artefacts to the Sami people that were kept in national and international museums, as well as to ensure the conservation of such artefacts in museums administrated by the Sami. The Government also refers to the translation of Sami literature into Norwegian to disseminate such literature and making it more accessible to the non-Sami population. ***The Committee welcomes these initiatives and requests the Government to continue providing information on further measures taken to safeguard and promote the Sami culture, in collaboration with the peoples concerned.***

**Articles 7(3) and 15. Impact studies and consultation. Electrification of the liquid natural gas (LNG) plant of Hammerfest (Finnmark).** The Committee notes that the Sami Parliament refers to the lack of consultation on the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy's decision on the electrification of Hammerfest

LNG plant in Finnmark. In the view of the Sami Parliament, this project will have major consequences for Sami culture and livelihoods as it requires extensive encroachment on land to build power lines and wind power plants in Sami areas. ***The Committee requests the Government to provide information on the results of any study undertaken, in cooperation with the peoples concerned, to assess the social, spiritual, cultural, and environmental impact of the project related to the electrification of the Hammerfest LNG plant and, in case of a relevant impact, to indicate if consultations have been envisaged with the Sami communities that could be affected by the implementation of this project.***

***Article 15(2). Mining activities in indigenous lands.*** In its previous comments, the Committee recalls that the 2009 Act No. 101 on mining and extraction of mineral resources (The Minerals Act) establishes procedural rules for mining operations in Finnmark and sets the amounts of fees to be paid to the affected landowner. It noted the Government's intention to consider reviewing the Minerals Act to include specific rules to protect Sami interests in mining operations outside of Finnmark, and that consultations with the Sami Parliament were initiated for this purpose. The Government indicates that it is working on a new Minerals Act, which shall include proposals for landowner remuneration regarding mineral extraction in Sami reindeer herding areas, also outside Finnmark. ***The Committee requests the Government to provide information on the progress made in the review of the Minerals Act, including on the results of the consultations held with the Sami Parliament in this respect. It also requests the Government to indicate how it is ensured that Sami communities, both inside and outside Finnmark, can participate in the benefits generated by activities for the exploration or exploitation of mineral resources pertaining to their lands.***

***Article 23. Subsistence economy and traditional activities. Reindeer husbandry*** With reference to the review of Act No. 40 relating to reindeer husbandry (Reindeer Husbandry Act), the Committee notes the Government's indication that the Reindeer Husbandry Act was amended in 2019, following several consultations with the Sami Parliament and the Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway. The legislative amendments refer to the prioritisation of ecological sustainability, individual tagging of reindeer, availability of reindeer numbers and the functioning of the Reindeer Husbandry Board. The Government indicates that the purpose of the new regulations is to secure framework conditions in the reindeer husbandry. It clarifies that, during the consultations, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Sami Parliament reached partial agreement on some of the issues consulted, while no agreement could be reached with the Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway.

The Committee further notes the Government's indication that in 2019 the Ministry of Agriculture and Food conducted an evaluation of changes in the public administration of reindeer husbandry based on interviews with the public administration, the Sami Parliament, and the Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway. The evaluation concluded that the reorganisation of regional reindeer husbandry administration has resulted in a more transparent and effective administration of its core tasks. It also pointed out to the need to strengthen the involvement of the reindeer husbandry industry in the administration.

***The Committee requests the Government to send a copy of the adopted amendments to the Reindeer Husbandry Act and to provide information on the impact of this new legislation on the practice of reindeer husbandry by the Sami people. It also requests the Government to provide statistical information on the number of Sami people who dedicate to this activity.***

***Article 25. Health services adapted to the needs of indigenous peoples.*** The Committee notes that the Government indicates that the Ministry of Health and Care Services has delegated to the Northern Norway Regional Health Authority the responsibility to provide specialist health services to the Sami population. The Northern Norway Regional Health Authority developed in 2020 a strategy for specialist health services for the Sami population. The Sami Parliament was closely involved in the preparation of the strategy and will continue to be involved in its implementation. The Government further indicates that the Northern Norway Regional Health Authority has also established Sami interpretation services, so that all regular general practitioners and patients can book an interpreter in advance. Consultations have been held with the Sami Parliament with a view to identifying criteria for a new scheme for

care services for Sami users, based on the Sami language and culture. Finally, the Committee notes that the Government is planning to implement the initiative called Competence Boost 2025 which consists of different measures to strengthen the quality of services for users with Sami language and cultural background, by ensuring that health workers located in Sami areas acquire competences related to Sami language, healing traditions and ways of life. ***The Committee welcomes all these measures and encourages the Government to continue to ensure that adequate health services are made available to the Sami population that take into consideration their culture, language, and particular needs. It requests the Government to continue providing information on the measures taken in this regard, including under the framework of the Strategy for specialist health services for the Sami population, and their results.***

***Article 27. Education.*** The Committee notes the adoption in 2023 of a new Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act). It notes with ***interest*** that this Act consecrates the right of Sami pupils to receive primary and secondary education in Sami language (sections 3.2 and 6.2). The Act also recognizes the right of Sami participants in training and education programmes for adults to receive training in Sami (section 19.4). For this purpose, a curriculum for primary and secondary education that takes into account the Sami language and needs will be developed in cooperation with the Sami Parliament (section 1.5). The Government indicates that the Ministry of Education is reviewing its framework plan for kindergartens, taking into consideration the needs of Sami children. Financial support has been given for the establishment of kindergartens with Sami departments and kindergartens offering Sami language instruction. The Committee also notes that the Sami Parliament highlights the need for an educational offer for Sami pupil with special needs.

***The Committee requests the Government to continue providing information on the measures taken to promote the preservation and use of Sami languages in schools and education institutions for adults, indicating the existing challenges encountered in this regard. The Committee also requests the Governments to provide information on the number of children who receive primary and secondary education in Sami language, as well as statistical data on school enrolment and completion rates among Sami children.***

***Article 28. Use of Sami language.*** The Committee welcomes that the 2021 Act relating to Language recognizes Sami languages as indigenous languages in Norway, and of equal value as Norwegian (section 5). The purpose of this Act is to ensure that public bodies take responsibility for using, developing, and strengthening Sami languages (section 1). The Committee also notes that the Government indicates that the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation has the obligation to offer content in the Sami languages. The Sami Parliament indicates that it has adopted a language strategy to boost the use of Sami language throughout the nation by promoting the use of Sami language in education, professional training, and recruitment. It also refers to the lack of availability of Sami language services in public institutions. ***The Committee encourages the Government to continue adopting measures, in cooperation with the Sami parliament, to promote the use of Sami languages, as recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It requests the Government to inform on the challenges encountered in this respect and the results achieved.***

***Article 32. Contacts and cooperation across borders.*** The Committee notes the information provided by the Government on different activities to support collaboration for indigenous peoples' development among countries with Sami population, including in the context of the Arctic Council and the Interreg-Aurora EU cross-border cooperation programme in the northernmost part of Europe. It also takes due note that, in June 2023, the Norwegian Supreme Court issued a decision recognizing the right of the Saarivouma sameby (a group of Swedish Sami reindeer herders) to conduct reindeer husbandry in Norway (HR-2021-1429-A, (sak nr. 20-164328SIV-HRET)). ***The Committee requests the Government to continue providing information on the initiatives taken to facilitate contacts and cooperation between Sami communities across borders, including in relation to economic and cultural activities.***