

# **The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**

**Implementation of recommendations for immediate action**

1 January 2023

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# 1 Recommendations for immediate action

## 1.1 Introduction

Reference is made to the Eight Evaluation Report on Norway on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

The Committee of Ministers did has invited the authorities of Norway to submit information on the implementation of recommendations for immediate action by 1 January 2023. We welcome this and would hereby like to follow up on this recommendation by submitting our midterm report. We will also take this opportunity to thank the Committee of Ministers and the Committee of Experts for all of its efforts in drafting the opinion.

This report provides information on each recommendation by immediate action as presented in the Eight Evaluation Report on Norway. The recommendations follow the order in the Report.

In Norway, the Ministry of Culture has general responsibility for adopting and implementing a comprehensive language policy and hence also has overall responsibility for indigenous and minority languages. The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for primary and secondary school, upper secondary and tertiary vocational education and higher education sectors, kindergartens, cultural schools, vocational education, research and training and adult learning. The Ministry of Health and Care Services is responsible for providing good and equal health and care services for the population of Norway.

However, administrative responsibility for the Charter has been organised as part of the responsibility for Sami and minority policy under the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The latter ministry now has primary responsibility for implementing the Charter. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has prepared the midterm report in cooperation with other ministries concerned.

Other documents relating to all Norway's periodical reports on the Charter 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/minoritetsprakpakta/id86936/>*

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## **1.2 Take measures to ensure stronger presence of Kven in the media, including reintroducing Kven in radio broadcasting.**

The government proposes in a White paper, Prop 1 S (2022-2023), to emphasize NRK's obligations to offer content in the Sami and minority languages, in addition to Norwegian as a language supporting society. The change entails a specified obligation for NRK to offer content in Sami languages, national minority languages and sign languages, but without quantitative requirements.

In 2021, the Norwegian Media Authority (Medietilsynet), stated that NRK had to strengthen its offer to national minorities if NRK was to function as a tool for the representation and visibility of these groups.

To this NRK stated that it is demanding to obtain a comprehensive overview of what is offered to national minorities across different media, and the many different environments for the production of content in NRK.

NRK has therefore given certain regional editorial offices a special responsibility for the individual minority cultures to be covered more systematically in NRK's content. NRK states that the regional responsibility has been developed further in 2021, through regular contact and dialogue meetings with the minority community.

The editorial office "NRK Troms", is responsible for kven content. The forest finn culture naturally belongs to "NRK Innlandet" (the hinterland). "Region Sørøst" (Region Southeast) has a special focus on Roma and Romani/tater culture, while the office at "NRK Tyholt" has a dialogue with the Jewish communities.

In 2021, NRK employed a journalist with Kven language skills who has created content and articles written and subtitled in kven. This has, in addition, led to NRK offering video- and sound clips with kven speech, including a weekly summary of national and international news with both kven speech and text. The summary is published on [Nrk.no/kvensk](https://nrk.no/kvensk).

For the third year in a row, the Kven New Year's speech was broadcast on nationwide television in 2021. The speech was also made available at [Nrk.no/kvensk](https://nrk.no/kvensk). NRK reports good viewing figures for the TV broadcast and for the digital one. In 2021, NRK collaborated with the Language Council on the awarding of the Kven language prize, and the award was broadcast on "NRK kvensk". NRK states that the collaboration with the Language Council was successful and provides opportunities for more collaborations in the future.

Throughout 2021, the local broadcasts in Troms and Finnmark have had regular features about kven culture. NRK understands that it is an important goal to reach children and young people with the kven content and is working on this.

The national minorities were not on the receivers list in the hearing of the White paper. The ministry of culture has apologized for that. "Norske kveners forbund" nevertheless picked up on the hearing and gave input that were taken into account. NRK's responsibility for the language and culture of national minorities was emphasized and strengthened.

## **1.3 Improve the situation of Kven in primary and secondary education and enhance the offer of Kven language nests in kindergartens.**

Through the evaluation of the targeted plan for the Kven language, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training participates in the work. The Directorate hope to get input on new

measures and improvement of existing measures to promote kvens in all parts of the education sector.

The NOK 800 000 over the national budget for projects for Kven in kindergartens has been given permanently each year over a long period of time. Now all kindergartens in Troms and Finnmark receive information about the funds. The purpose is to get more applicants so that more children can meet kvens in kindergarten.

#### **1.4 Ensure that there are incentives for students who have opted for Kven as a second language in the compulsory education to continue these studies at upper secondary level, as this is the recruitment base for teacher training for Kven.**

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has made a motivational film to get more students to start with the subject. A film aimed at young people has also been made to continue with the subject. The films will be published and distributed in January 2023.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training provides project support to kindergarten and school owners who have employees who take basic courses in Kven. Information about the offer is increased.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has included the grant scheme for teaching aids in Kven or Finnish as a second language in the ordinary grant scheme for teaching aids in collecting subjects (but earmarked) from 2022. The Directorate received more applications than before, and will have a dialogue with the organisations to look at the call again so that it is more targeted.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is conducting a pilot with the development of learning resources on digilaer.no to increase access to learning resources in the subject.

#### **1.5 Ensure that the new administrative division does not have a negative impact on Lule Sámi in education.**

On 1 January 2020, Tysfjord municipality was divided into two. The municipality was a Lule Sami language administration municipality. Half of the municipality (south) was combined with Hamarøy municipality, which became part of the Lule Sami language administrative district on 1 January 2020. The other half of Tysfjord municipality (north) was incorporated into Narvik municipality. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation consulted with Narvik municipality, the Sámediggi and local Sami interests as to how Narvik municipality was to make provision for the speakers of Lule Sami who were transferred to Narvik. The Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation made special funds available to Narvik municipality in 2020 to provide for these language users.

The ministry is not familiar with any negative impacts in the Lule Sami education in the former Tysfjord municipality.

**1.6 Ensure that there are incentives for students who have opted for Lule Sámi as a second language in the compulsory education to continue these studies at upper secondary level, as this is the recruitment base for teacher training for Lule Sámi.**

The Sami Parliament has its own scholarship schemes for students in upper secondary education.

The government will submit a white paper to the Storting on Sami language, culture and social life, which will deal with competence and recruitment – especially for kindergarten, primary school, upper secondary school and higher education and research. The white paper is to be submitted in spring 2023. The white paper will, among other things, deal with how we can increase the recruitment of students with a Lule Sami background for teacher training. The government has received input from a number of universities and colleges, from municipalities and other important actors.

**1.7 Ensure that health and social care facilities such as hospitals and retirement homes offer services in North Sámi.**

A Sami interpreting service has been established in the Northern Norway Regional Health Authority. There is also a permanently employed North Sami interpreter at Hammerfest Hospital who has office hours from 07:30 to 15:00 on all weekdays. The Ministry of Health and Care Services is also aware that it is planned to hire a day interpreter at the University Hospital North Norway (UNN).

There are six part-time North Sami remote interpreters who work in shifts so that there is always an interpreter on duty all weekdays between 08:00 – 22:00. Today, all interpreters can interpret via audio/video. The interpretation service at SANKS also has an agreement with one of the remote interpreters who assists with interpretation assignments at Sámi klinikk when needed, i.e. the interpreter is then physically present during assignments. All General Practitioners (GPs) and patients can pre-book an interpreter.

Since 2019 NOK 1,2 million has been allocated in the National budget for competence-enhancing measures in the care services for Sami users (e.g. retirement homes and home services). The purpose of the grant scheme is to help build up, implement and strengthen the quality of the health and care services for users with Sami language and cultural background through professional development and competence enhancement. The measures shall be aimed at areas that include inhabitants with both Southern, Northern and Lule Sami language and culture.

**1.8 Ensure that there are incentives for students who have opted for North Sámi as a second language in the compulsory education to continue these studies at upper secondary level, as this is the recruitment base for teacher training for North Sámi.**

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increase the recruitment of students with a North Sami background for teacher training. The government has received input from a number of universities and colleges, from municipalities and other important actors.

### **1.9 Encourage the use of Romanes, in speech and writing in public life, particularly in education in co-operation with the speakers.**

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is part of a working group together with the Language Council and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to look at cooperation to promote Romanes – in general and in education in particular. Any measures must be drawn up in close cooperation with the minority itself. The offer of preschool at Romano kher is the result of cooperation in the working group and dialogue with the minority. There is a common desire to promote Romanes in education.

### **1.10 Promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romanes among the objectives of education, teacher training and media.**

See 1.9.

### **1.11 Encourage the use of Romani, in speech and writing in public life, particularly in education, in co-operation with the speakers.**

The working group mentioned under Romanes, Chapter 2.9, has been expanded to include Romani to look at possible measures to make it easier to promote Romani in general and in education in particular. The work is in the very beginning phase and any measures must be discussed and prepared in cooperation with the minority itself. There is a common desire to come up with measures that can promote Romani in education, if the minority themselves so wish.

### **1.12 Promote the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to Romani among the objectives of education, teacher training and media.**

See 1.11.

### **1.13 Provide forms and means for the teaching and study of South Sámi at all appropriate stages, including by distance learning.**

The government will submit a white paper to the Storting on Sami language, culture and social life, which will deal with competence and recruitment. The white paper is to be submitted in spring 2023. The white paper will, among other things, deal with how we can increase the recruitment of students with a South Sami background for teacher training.

**1.14 Ensure that there are incentives for students who have opted for South Sámi as a second language in the compulsory education to continue these studies at upper secondary level, as this is the recruitment base for teacher training for South Sámi.**

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